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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG AND CHANCELLOR KLEIN DISCUSS HOW NEW YORK CITY'S CHILDREN FIRST INITIATIVES ARE REFLECTED IN PRESIDENT OBAMA'S NEW EDUCATION REFORM AGENDA**

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein today described how the Administration's core education reforms are reflected in the agenda advanced by President Barack Obama in his first major education address, which he delivered on Tuesday before the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in Washington. President Obama challenged states and school districts to create improved standards and assessments, reward outstanding teachers, reduce student dropout rates, and promote innovation through initiatives such as charter schools. All of these have been critical goals for New York City public schools under the Mayor and Chancellor. The Mayor and Chancellor were joined at the Harlem Village Academy High School in East Harlem by school founder and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Deborah Kenney, Principal Nick Timpone, and Social Studies students to discuss how the City's education reform initiatives that they have been a part of since 2002 reflect and align with President Obama's own education reform priorities.

"President Obama hit the mark earlier this week when he said that economic progress and educational achievement are linked," said Mayor Bloomberg. "In New York we know that the students of today are the workforce of tomorrow. This is why we challenged the status quo on education in New York City, which for decades was a broken public school system. Today, we offer parents more choices, hold schools accountable for results, and reward excellence. It's working—our students are doing better in reading and math, and graduation rates are at historic highs."

"Our successes in New York City illustrate how important it is that schools embrace the innovations championed by President Obama," said Chancellor Klein. "Today, more than 50 years after we banned unequal schools, African-American and Hispanic students are still far too likely to be deprived of the education they deserve. Education is our foremost civil rights issue and a fundamental economic issue. No one knows that better than the President, who wouldn't be where he is today without his first-rate education."

*(more)*

### *Developing Standards and Giving Teachers the Information They Need*

President Obama called on states to develop standards that will prepare students for college and successful careers and to give teachers the information they need to ensure their students are on track to meet these standards. In New York City schools:

- Students take regular diagnostic assessments, which schools can customize to fit their curriculum. Teachers can view the results of these assessments online five school days after giving them. Teachers use this information to tailor their instruction to the specific strengths and weaknesses of their students throughout the school year.
- The ARIS data system allows teachers to view all the important information about their students—test scores, grades, attendance, parent contact information—in one place, from any computer. Teachers can also quickly analyze the performance of entire classes to determine the areas in which students are struggling or to assess whether students are improving. Through this same system, teachers can form online communities to share ideas and resources with colleagues across the City.
- All schools receive a letter grade, from A to F, based on the progress their students are making. This ensures that schools are accountable for holding every student to the same high standards.

### *Rewarding Effective Teachers*

President Obama also stressed the importance of rewarding effective teachers. In New York City schools:

- Teacher salaries have increased by 43 percent since 2002. Innovative programs offer talented experienced teachers additional compensation if they mentor their peers or move to a high-needs school from another district.
- A groundbreaking program negotiated with the United Federation of Teachers rewards teachers at high-needs schools that significantly raise student achievement. Last year, teachers at about 120 schools earned bonuses totaling \$20 million.

### *Turning Around the Worst Schools*

Also in his speech earlier this week, the President called on students to stay in school, and stressed to lawmakers, parents, and teachers that turning around the worst schools is critical to reducing dropout rates. In New York City:

- Since 2002, nearly 300 new small schools have opened – many in buildings where large, failing schools have been closed because of poor performance.
- Small secondary schools created since 2002 are graduating 76 percent of students on time, compared to 62 percent citywide. Traditional schools replaced by new schools

graduated 35 percent in 2002.

- More than 8,500 struggling students who had fallen behind in traditional high schools have graduated from transfer high schools and young adult borough centers and completed General Equivalency Diploma (GED) programs since 2005.

*Increasing Parents' Choices and Schools' Autonomy, and Trying Other Innovations*

Like many school reformers, President Obama highlighted innovations—like school autonomy and longer instructional days—and the choice provided by charter schools. In New York City:

- Principals are more empowered than ever to make choices about how they structure curriculum, how they spend their budgets, and what supports they want for their school. In exchange for this autonomy, principals are held accountable for student learning.
- The school day includes 37.5 additional minutes of instructional time per day compared to 2002. Teachers use this time to work with struggling students in small-group settings.
- Only 17 charters were operating in New York City at the start of the Bloomberg Administration. Today, 78 charter schools serve 24,000 students, and 25 more charter schools are approved to open in the five boroughs as soon as September, making New York City the most charter-friendly district in the country.

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