

NEWS RELEASE

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HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS RECOGNIZED FOR TOP GRADUATION RATES AMONG TOP 25 U.S. METRO MARKETS

TAMPA BAY, FL (August 1, 2007) – Hillsborough County Public Schools was recognized by the Tampa Bay Partnership for achieving the highest graduation rate among the Top 25 Metro Areas in the U.S. A “Bigger, Bolder, Better Special Achievement” Award was presented to Superintendent MaryEllen Elia by Tampa Bay Partnership Chair Dr. Judy Genshaft at the Partnership’s Board Meeting held July 27, 2007 at the USF Research Park.

Education quality and success is critical to our economy,” said Dr. Genshaft, President of the University of South Florida. “The Tampa Bay Partnership is thrilled to recognize the efforts of Hillsborough County Public Schools. Graduation from high school provides the basic gateway to students and I applaud the entire Hillsborough County School District for this achievement.”

The ranking was based upon EPE Research Center & Education Week’s Diplomas Count 07. A comparison of Central City School District Graduation Rates in Top 25 Metro Areas, based upon this data, was compiled by the Tampa Bay Partnership Center for Business Intelligence (see attached chart.) The comparison showed Hillsborough County Public Schools ranked #1 with higher graduation rates than San Francisco, Seattle, San Diego, Phoenix and Washington, DC.

“The business community celebrates the achievement of the Hillsborough County school district,” said Roy McCraw, Regional President for Wachovia and Vice Chair of the Tampa Bay Partnership. “Encouraging our students to complete their education is vital to having a qualified workforce to attract quality companies and jobs to our region.”

“Quality education is a key factor in our region’s success,” added Steve Mason, President & CEO of BayCare Health System and Treasurer with the Partnership. “Understanding how we compare to other major markets around the country and recognizing our successes is important for our region’s competitiveness.”

About Tampa Bay Partnership:

The Tampa Bay Partnership is the regional organization that brings the communities of Tampa Bay together to accelerate life’s possibilities through advocacy, marketing, research and leadership. Founded in 1994, the Tampa Bay Partnership provides regional economic development for the metro areas of Tampa/St. Petersburg/Clearwater, Lakeland, and Sarasota/Bradenton/Venice and the counties of Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Sarasota.

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TOP 25 METRO AREAS BY POPULATION
Central City School Districts Graduation Rate Comparison

**Based on EPE Research Center Methodology and Education
Week's Diplomas Count Project Utilizing 2003-2004 Data**

Rank	Metropolitan statistical areas	District	Graduation Rate %	Enrollment
1	Tampa, FL	Hillsborough County	75.1	181,900
2	San Francisco, CA	San Francisco Unified	73.1	57,805
3	Seattle, WA	Seattle School District	67.6	47,588
4	San Diego, CA	San Diego Unified	61.6	137,960
5	Phoenix, AZ	Phoenix Union High School District	58.3	23,989
6	Washington, DC	District of Columbia Public Schools	58.2	65,099
7	Boston, MA	Boston School District	57.0	60,150
8	Riverside, CA	Riverside County Unified	56.5	42,012
9	Houston, TX	Houston Independent School District	54.6	211,499
10	Portland, OR	Portland School District 1J	53.6	48,344
11	Chicago, IL	City of Chicago School District 299	51.5	434,419
12	Pittsburgh, PA	Pittsburgh School District	50.7	34,658
13	Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia City School District	49.6	189,779
14	Miami, FL	Dade County School District	49.0	371,785
15	St. Louis, MO	St. Louis City School District	47.7	40,827
16	Denver, CO	Denver County 1	46.3	72,100
17	Atlanta, GA	Atlanta City	46.0	52,103
18	Los Angeles, CA	Los Angeles Unified	45.3	747,009
19	New York, NY	New York City Public Schools	45.2	1,023,674
20	Dallas, TX	Dallas Independent School District	44.4	160,584
21	Minneapolis, MN	Minneapolis School District	43.7	43,397
22	Cincinnati, OH	Cincinnati City School District	42.0	40,374
23	Baltimore, MD	Baltimore City Public School System	34.6	94,049
24	Cleveland, OH	Cleveland Municipal School District	34.1	69,655
25	Detroit, MI	Detroit City School District	24.9	153,034

Source: EPE Research Center & Education Week's Diplomas Count 07

<http://mapsg.edweek.org/edweekv2/default.jsp>

The Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) Research Center uses the Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) method to calculate graduation rates. The CPI represents graduating from high school as a process rather than a single event. Specifically, it captures the four key steps a student must take in order to graduate - three grade-to-grade promotions (9 to 10, 10 to 11, and 11 to 12) and ultimately earning a diploma (grade 12 to graduation)

The 2nd Annual Diplomas Count is produced with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation,

Tampa Bay Partnership Center for Business Intelligence

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