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Hiawatha Leadership Academy Enters Minnesota's Nation-Leading Q Comp Program

~The 32nd charter school to enter professional development and achievement-based pay system

MINNEAPOLIS - Minnesota Education Commissioner Alice Seagren announced today that the Hiawatha Leadership Academy will implement Minnesota's nation-leading Q Comp performance and professional pay program. The school will receive \$50,440 in total revenue for implementation in the 2009-10 school year.

"I commend Hiawatha Leadership Academy on their decision to participate in this important education reform," said Commissioner Seagren. "Q Comp will give participating teachers an opportunity to enhance their skills and take part in real-time, research-based professional development, which will help raise student achievement."

In 2005, Governor Tim Pawlenty proposed and the state legislature approved Minnesota's Q Comp program. Q Comp provides up to \$86 million for districts that join the program. The Q Comp program has funds available for school districts, school sites and charter schools to implement a program for the 2009-10 school year. This funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis until all available funds have been exhausted.

Q Comp is designed to advance the teaching profession by providing structured professional development and evaluation, as well as an alternative pay schedule that compensates teachers based on performance, not just seniority. The program brings together career advancement, professional development and compensation linked to academic achievement. It includes a locally agreed-upon peer evaluation process for every teacher that is based on skills, responsibilities and student academic growth. This plan is voluntary and will add up to an additional \$260 per student in participating districts.

"Q comp has been a transformative program for my teaching staff. Teachers are rewarded based on student academic performance rather than how many years they have in the system. Performance pay in tough economic times has a huge impact on teacher morale for their hard work and academic results" said Chief Executive Officer and School Leader Shannon Blankenship.

Hiawatha Leadership Academy prepares students for college in South Minneapolis. Hiawatha Charter School opened in 2007.

The Q Comp program gives participating school districts the flexibility to meet local needs within a comprehensive model of improved teaching and learning. The Hiawatha Leadership Academy administration and teacher representatives have agreed to the following:

Provide career ladders or career advancement opportunities for teachers: The career ladder includes one position with various duties and compensations:

Academic Dean: As a teacher leader, the Academic Dean serves as the coordinator of the Q Comp program. The Academic Dean will observe all licensed staff and lead professional development.

Job-embedded Professional Development: As the focus for the Q Comp plan, the district has selected the following schoolwide student achievement goal from the Educational Improvement Plan (EIP): The percentage of K-2 students, by grade-level cohorts, who meet or exceed grade level (a grade equivalent score of 0.8, 1.8, or 2.8 respectively) on the Stanford 10 in spring 2009 will increase by 10% in reading and 10% in mathematics over the percentage of students who took the assessment in fall 2008 and received a grade equivalent score of 0.0, 1.0, or 2.0 respectively. This will establish baseline data.

The school has grade level teams and a school leadership team. The school leadership team is comprised of one teacher representing each grade level, the Academic Dean, the principal, and one or two other teachers. All grade level teams and the school leadership team will each meet for 90 minutes weekly.

Objective and comprehensive teacher evaluation: The evaluation team of the principal and the Academic Dean will jointly complete a formative evaluation three times per year, based in part on multiple direct classroom observations of each teacher per evaluation cycle. The evaluations will also be based on other ongoing observations of each teacher in non-classroom settings such as team meetings, parent interactions and teacher self-reflections – direct classroom observation will be the most important observation indicator. The two evaluators will conduct some of their evaluation efforts jointly and some independently.

The process for teacher evaluation will work as follows:

- The principal and Academic Dean will meet initially and on an ongoing basis to discuss the rubric and ensure a shared understanding of what each rubric component and skill level means and how it should be scored.
- The principal and Academic Dean will explain the evaluation process to teachers at a weekly meeting and answer questions.
- The principal observes each teacher in the classroom every two weeks.
- The Academic Dean observes each teacher in the classroom once per cycle.
- There are three cycles annually.
- The principal and Academic Dean also observe each teacher in meetings, parent interactions (e.g., home visits, conferences, meetings), non-classroom student interactions and peer interactions.
- Other teachers observe each other as part of the school's 360-degree peer feedback process.
- With input gathered from all of the above activities, the principal and Academic Dean meet each cycle to score each teacher using the school's teacher evaluation rubric.
 - The principal and the Academic Dean both contribute to and jointly determine the score to assigned each teacher for each rubric component so that there is one set of scores.
- Once a teacher's score has been determined, the principal and the Academic Dean meet with the teacher to explain the rubric scores, identify areas for growth and answer questions.
- If the teacher receives an evaluation score of Proficient or higher on each of the rubric components in the final two cycles of the year, he/she will be awarded performance pay.

Performance Pay: A teacher's compensation will be based on the following factors:

- \$300/33.33% for schoolwide gains will be awarded to each teacher if the site meets the goals outlined in Component 2.
 - \$150/50% for meeting the schoolwide reading goal.
 - \$150/50% for meeting the schoolwide mathematics goal.

- \$300/33.33% for measures of student achievement will be awarded to each teacher whose classroom has at least 90% of students making fall to spring gains on the Developmental Reading Assessment of at least normal expected growth.
- \$300/33.34% for teacher evaluation will be awarded to each teacher who earns an evaluation score of Proficient or higher in the final two cycles of the year.

Alternative Professional Pay: The school awards contracts to all employees annually. There is not a *steps and lanes* salary system in place.

Hiawatha Leadership Academy is the 32nd charter school to be approved for the Q Comp program. The other charter schools to implement Q Comp are: Community School of Excellence • Dugsi Academy • Nova Classical Academy • Noble Academy • Harvest Prep Academy • The Best Academy • Cyber Village Academy • Paideia Academy • Seven Hills Classical Academy • Academy for Science and Agriculture • HOPE Community Academy • Lakes International Language Academy • Crosslake Community School • New Visions School • TRIO Wolf Creek Charter School • Emily Charter • El Colegio Charter School • STRIDE Academy • Minnesota Transitions Charter Schools • Northfield School of Art and Technology (ARTEch) • Beacon Academy • Duluth Public Schools Academy • Sojourner Truth Academy • Ridgeway Charter School • E.C.H.O Charter School • Hmong Academy • Tarek ibn Ziyad Academy • Birch Grove Community School

School districts that began implementing the Q Comp program during the 2009-10 school year: Rushford-Peterson School District • Lakeview School District.

School districts that began implementing the Q Comp program during the 2008-09 school year: Annandale • Mahtomedi • North Branch • Edina • Minneapolis (various sites) • Chisago Lakes

School districts that began implementing the Q Comp program during the 2007-08 school year: Princeton • Rosemount-Eagan-Apple Valley • Roseville (three sites) • Orono • Minneapolis (various sites) • Brooklyn Center

School districts that began implementing the Q Comp program during the 2006-07 school year: Grand Meadow • Albert Lea • Alden-Conger • Brainerd • Wayzata • Eden Prairie • Red Rock Central • International Falls • Le Center • St. Louis Park • Osseo • Lac Qui Parle • North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale • Clearbrook-Gonvick • Proctor • Burnsville • St. Anthony-New Brighton • Minnetonka • Delano • Centennial • Pine River • Brandon • South Washington County • South Saint Paul • Farmington • Roseville (various sites) • Minneapolis (various sites)

School districts that started implementing the Q Comp program during the 2005-06 school year: Minneapolis (various sites) • Hopkins • St. Francis • Mounds View • Fridley • La Crescent-Hokah • Marshall

Several additional districts have indicated they are planning to submit Q Comp applications.