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Community Schools, Thriving Students

Oakland Unified School District Press Advisory *For Immediate Release*

West Oakland Middle School to Celebrate Grand Opening of School-Based Health Center and Family Resource Center

Oakland Mayor Jean Quan, Oakland City Council Member Nancy Nadel, Oakland Unified School District President Jody London (District 1) and Director Jumoke Hinton-Hodge (District 3) and Alameda County Health Care Services Agency Director Alex Briscoe join the West Oakland Middle School community for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 4:00pm, Thursday, November 1

What: West Oakland Middle School (WOMS) School-Based Health Center and Family Resource Center Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony

When: Thursday, November 1, 2012, 4:00pm-6:00pm

Where: West Oakland Middle School, 991 14th Street, Oakland, CA 94607

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Oakland – October 30, 2012 – On Thursday, November 1, the West Oakland Middle School community will celebrate the opening of a new school-based health and family resource center made possible by Lifelong Medical Care, Alameda County, the City of Oakland, and Safe Passages. School site leaders, parents, students and community-based providers will join these key partners in unveiling a health center that offers comprehensive medical, dental health, health education and youth development services under one roof, as well as a resource center which provides an array of family support and educational services.

The expansion of health and family supports at West Oakland Middle School embodies OUSD's transformation into a Full-Service Community District, where schools leverage community partnerships to improve academic, physical, social and emotional outcomes for students.

“Healthy communities are a prerequisite for healthy kids and strong schools, so it’s essential that we address the conditions in our city which interfere with the development of children,” explained OUSD Superintendent Tony Smith. “It’s unconscionable that a black boy born in West Oakland has a life expectancy 15 years less than that of his white counterpart born in the Oakland Hills. In order to dramatically improve outcomes for students, we must create environments where high-levels of learning and social growth can flourish. Comprehensive, school-based health centers represent a significant step

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in OUSD's transformation into a Full-Service Community School District, where schools that care for the whole child act as an anchor for the neighborhoods which they serve."

The planning for the West Oakland Middle School Health Center and Family Resource Center began five years ago when the City of Oakland, the County of Alameda, the Oakland Unified School District, Youth Ventures, Safe Passages (lead entity) and The Atlantic Philanthropies partnered in the development of five Full-Service Community Schools, located at West Oakland, Madison, Roosevelt, United for Success and Coliseum College Preparatory/ROOTS.

Josefina Alvarado Mena, CEO of Safe Passages, the lead entity for the Elev8 Oakland Initiative explains, "The idea is to keep the children and their families at the center of the work. We began by asking ourselves, 'What makes a young person succeed in school and life?' We know that there is no magic bullet and that the answer lies in the integration of a multitude of services and professionals working together towards one end goal—to improve the lives and outcomes of our most important asset—our youth. This is why we brought education, health, social services, and advocacy together. The school based health center at West Oakland Middle School is an example of what we can achieve together for our communities."

Mayor Quan, a strong supporter of the initiative, states, "The Elev8 Full Service Community School Initiative represents an impressive private-public collaboration of over 40 entities, including business and philanthropy. We have proven that it can be done. Today, over 10,000 families in five school communities have benefited from free specialized academic supports, health care, and social service supports thanks to the leadership of the collaborative."

The West Oakland Middle School Health Center is operated by LifeLong Medical Care, a community-based health center that has been providing health services to West Oakland residents since 2007 through its Downtown Oakland Clinic located at 16th and Jefferson. LifeLong is one of Alameda County's primary safety net providers with nine locations delivering quality medical, dental, and social services for all ages. In 2010, LifeLong provided approximately 170,000 health care visits to over 22,000 underserved individuals, many with complex health conditions.

"There are so many challenges for our youth today, ranging from asthma to lack of accessibility to healthy foods. We know that the physical and social environments for children need to be intact in order for them to thrive and be successful. It is our wish and hope that we will be able to provide some of the strategies and tools necessary to achieve this," said Brenda Shipp, COO, LifeLong Medical Care.

"School-based health centers are a proven model of public sector collaboration. They have helped us define the nexus of public health and public education," stated Alex Briscoe, Director of Alameda County Health Care Services Agency. "School-based health centers are also an entrepreneurial and innovative approach to social justice and health equity, with a large percentage of the operating budgets of SBHCs generated by billing third party-payers. This aggressive pursuit of outside revenues for school based services is critical as schools struggle with ongoing challenges to their fiscal viability."

The entire West Oakland Middle School Campus, including the building where the health and family resource centers are located, was renovated with voter-approved Measure B Facilities Bond Dollars administered by OUSD. The health center includes a triage room, two medical exam rooms, a dental exam room, separate medical and dental laboratories, an area for medical providers to chart, a conference room and three confidential consult rooms. The Family Resource Center, spread between

two floors, includes offices for mental health services, a space with equipment for families to exercise, on-site laundry, multiple training and workshop rooms, and a kitchenette.

Councilmember Nancy Nadel states, “As a long-time resident of West Oakland and the representative for the neighborhood at the City Council for the past 16 years, I have seen the importance of providing supportive services to our youth and their families. I want our youth to come to school in good health, ready to learn, and be successful. I am excited to see the work of so many entities coming to fruition today and encourage the West Oakland community to make full use of the services. The success of the project will be measured by its use and community involvement.”

The Family Resource Center, also located on the campus, is already providing critical support services to the families including legal services, public benefit enrollment with assistance from Alameda County Social Services Eligibility Workers, financial education, free tax clinics, food and nutrition services, work development, monthly parent education workshops.

Vashti Means, a West Oakland Middle School parent said, "The Family Resource Center is a great thing to have for our community. It is a place where people can access needed services, such as food, legal advice, support, clothes, and even different types of training. It is a place to learn something new, teach something to others and to stop between visiting your child's teachers. It's a great place that not only benefits the parents, but the community as well. Where in West Oakland can a person get all of these things under one roof? We have support groups, cooking classes, a fitness center, a community garden and more. Plus, everything here is for us and it's free."

The Elev8 Oakland Full Service Community School Initiative integrates academic, health and family support services at the school sites. In 2008, Atlantic Philanthropies provided a four-year grant of \$15 million for the development of the five full service community schools and the public systems (City of Oakland, County of Alameda and OUSD) leveraged another \$25 million. While the Phase I grant is completed, the public system partners and an additional \$3.5 million Phase II grant from Atlantic Philanthropies have successfully sustained the core infrastructure and programming. In addition, Kaiser Permanente, S.D. Bechtel Jr. Foundation and Tides Foundation have contributed substantially to the community school efforts at West Oakland Middle School and throughout the city.

About OUSD

The Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) is the State of California's most improved urban school district over the past seven years, as measured by Academic Performance Index (API), California's primary metric for measuring student achievement. During this time, the District's 46,000 students have benefitted from 126 points of API growth and a focus on the whole child embodied by OUSD's "Community Schools, Thriving Students" vision of a full-service community school district. In this model, every school site offers high levels of learning along with physical health, mental health, dental and eye care; nutrition, physical education, recreation, before-school and afterschool programs; housing, employment, parenting and language acquisition courses and a range of other programs. Social and human services are not seen as extra or add-ons in these schools. Instead, collaboration in service of the well-being of children and families is how they consistently behave. To learn more about "Community Schools, Thriving Students", please visit: www.thrivingstudents.org.



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