

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Barbara Pierce, Tipping Point Public Relations
(585) 727-1026
barbara@tippingpointmedia.com



**Seven RCSD Elementary Schools Selected for
Childhood Healthy Weight Initiative**

Health Foundation grants \$1,574,360 targeting solutions to fight childhood obesity epidemic

ROCHESTER, N.Y., Sept. 2013 – Childhood obesity remains a public health epidemic that most affects families within urban neighborhoods. In fact, in the City of Rochester, almost 40% of children are overweight or obese.

To help address this challenge, Greater Rochester Health Foundation announces grants to support healthy weight in children. The Health Foundation has focused its efforts on Rochester City Schools to impact children and families within the city.

Seven elementary schools within the Rochester City School District each have been awarded approximately \$300,000 in grants to increase physical activity and healthy eating among children ages 4-10. The funding takes effect immediately and will support programming over the next three years.

Childhood Healthy Weight grant recipients include: Clara Barton School No. 2, Dr. Walter Cooper School No. 10, James P.B. Duffy School No. 12, Dr. Charles T. Lunsford School No. 19, John James Audubon School No. 33, Theodore Roosevelt School No. 43, and Charles Carroll School No. 46.

The awarded schools have each devised goals and activities that increase the amount, frequency and quality of physical activity while including the components of the RCSD wellness policy, a seven-page section of the district's Policy Manual that highlights its commitment to playing "a critical role in helping students to learn healthy eating habits and to engage in physical exercise on a daily basis." In addition, each participating school has assigned a project coordinator to lead the implementation of activities, and all projects will include activities that engage parents in promoting healthy lifestyles.

Schools are using grant funding to include healthy eating components within each program, including tactics like providing healthy snacks during the school day and improving access for families to locally grown foods.

“The best way to make progress against a challenge like childhood obesity is to establish strong and effective partnerships,” said Bonnie DeVinney, vice president and chief program officer, Greater Rochester Health Foundation. “The importance of the Rochester City School District in our ability to impact children’s lives in Rochester cannot be understated. We are thrilled to be working with these schools and to support their commitment to providing healthy environments for learning.”

Throughout the course of the three-year grants, funded schools will participate in a learning collaborative intended to share ideas, successes and challenges. Participating schools will provide ongoing reports throughout the course of the initiative.

“Success comes with our ability to achieve permanent, sustained changes within each school environment,” explained DeVinney. “The opportunity to identify best practices will allow us to improve the prospects of a healthy lifestyle for children throughout our region.”

###