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May 21, 2009

Dear Cleveland Metropolitan School District Stakeholder:

I am writing to share some important information about the Cleveland Metropolitan School District's 2007-08 Graduation Rate, which will be reported on the 2008-09 State Report Card. The 2007-08 graduation rate was calculated as the percentage of students who enter high school in the 2004-05 school year who earned a diploma by August 2008, excluding those students who transferred to other schools or districts in that time period.

The graduation rate for school year 2007-08 is projected to be 53.7%, an 8.2% decrease from the 2006-07 school year. This represents the first decrease since the 1998-99 school year. The table below provides data since 1998-99, with the numbers during my tenure highlighted in blue.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Percent of Change</u>
1998-99	33.30	-4.5%
1999-00	33.7	+0.4%
2000-01	36.10%	+2.4%
2001-02	38.1%	+2.0%
2002-03	40.80%	+2.7%
2003-04	50.20%	+9.4%
2004-05	51.8%	+1.6%
2005-06	55.2%	+3.2%
2006-07	62.3%	+6.9%
2007-08	53.7%	-8.2%

Key Points Regarding the Projected Rate

1. There is a clear reduction in 9th grade drop out rates that are related to the phase out of the 9th grade Ohio proficiency rates, which were eliminated at the conclusion of the 2005-06 graduating class.
2. There is an equally clear increase in both 11th and 12th grade drop-out rates that are related to the phase-in of the Ohio Graduation Tests, which were fully implemented for the 2006-07 graduating class.

CMSD Strategies to Increase Graduation Rates

We recognize that the five components of the Ohio Graduation Tests remain a significant barrier for our high school students. We have implemented several OGT readiness strategies. They include:

- The implementation of the Scope and Sequence Curriculum in 2008-09 to ensure that Ohio Content Standards are taught in a uniform manner to all 9th and 10th grade students.
- The implementation of OGT Intervention Services in all CMSD high schools before, during and after school and on weekends.
- Annual door-to-door visits to provide students and families with OGT readiness information and resources. Created a family-friendly guide to the OGT which was adopted by several inner-ring districts, picked up and widely distributed by Cleveland media.
- Replaced the night school credit model with a school-based after-school credit recovery model.
- Adopted Governor Ted Strickland's Closing the Achievement Gap Initiative in all CMSD high schools, with great success.
- Implemented mandatory senior parent meetings to review graduation and college-entry requirements.

We will continue to provide important information about the graduation rate and the 2008-09 State Report Card as it becomes available. Thank you for your continued support of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

Sincerely,



Eugene T.W. Sanders, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer