



Contact:

Donna Haghighat, Chief Development Officer  
Hartford Public Library  
Tel: 860-695-6296  
dhaghighat@hplct.org

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## **Hartford Public Library Branches and Hartford Public Schools Extend Partnership to Boost Services**

(May 21, 2015) Hartford Public Schools and Hartford Public Library launched the second phase of a major partnership, under which the two institutions share resources to maximize access to their services by city students and their parents.

The agreement, developed by a team of administrators from the library and the district, calls for dividing the city into ten zones, each anchored by a library branch that will, in turn, collaborate with every school in its zone to create programs targeted to the families in each school.

The partnership was inaugurated last year with the creation of the first zone at the Goodwin Public Library Branch, 460 New Britain Avenue. The zone includes five schools -- the Breakthrough Magnet School, the Environmental Sciences Magnet School at Mary Hooker, the Expeditionary Learning at Moylan School, the Montessori Magnet at Moylan, Kennelly School and Batchelder Elementary School.

The Ropkins Branch of the Hartford Public Library at 1750 Main Street will be anchoring the second zone collaboration according to Hartford Schools Superintendent Beth Schiavino-Narvaez and the Hartford Public Library's Chief Executive Officer Matthew K. Poland. The second zone includes SAND Elementary School, Capital Preparatory Magnet School and the Global Communications Academy.

The agreement encompasses, among other features, a whole new range of after-school and summer enrichment programs that focus on love of reading and learning; tutoring services; and the use of library facilities to display student art exhibits. It also anticipates the development of a special website that grants students and teachers access to the library's vast collection of online books.

"I'm thrilled about this partnership because it demonstrates what can happen when Hartford's educational and governmental structures join forces to further improve student achievement," Superintendent Narvaez said. "In particular, I anticipate that this alliance will have a positive impact on our efforts to have every child reading at grade level by third grade."

Each school in the zone has been asked to designate a lead teacher or library media specialist to act as liaison between the school and the Ropkins branch manager, Celestia Simmons. The partnership agreement calls for all library branches to eventually have working relationships with their zone schools.

"This innovative partnership between the City's public education institutions is having a tremendous collective impact on student success," said Mr. Poland. "Sharing collections, technology and staff expertise in both organizations facilitates the development of literacy skills that are key to successful and productive careers."

The district and the library also will be forming a citywide leadership team, consisting of a branch manager, a library media specialist and a technology expert to oversee and facilitate expansion of the plan.##



**Matthew K. Poland, chief executive officer, Hartford Public Library; Celestia Simmons, branch manager, Hartford Public Library, Ropkins Branch; Beth Schiavino-Narvaez, Superintendent of Schools, Hartford Public Schools; and Gerardo Heredia, Principal, S.A.N.D. School (Photo: Michelle Helmin, Hartford Public Library)**