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DOE APPROVES NJ'S FIRST MANDARIN-IMMERSION CHARTER SCHOOL FOR PRINCETON, SOUTH BRUNSWICK, & WW-P

Princeton, New Jersey, January 12, 2010 – The New Jersey Department of Education approved the application for a new charter elementary school to open in September, 2010.

Princeton International Academy Charter School (PIACS) will serve the Princeton Regional, South Brunswick, and West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional school districts. PIACS will be the first public school in New Jersey to teach students through Mandarin-English dual language immersion and the first public school in greater Princeton to educate students through the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum framework.

“The Department of Education under Commissioner Lucille Davy’s leadership continues to be steadfast in its efforts to provide New Jersey children with the skills they need to be successful in a changing global environment,” said Dr. Bonnie Liao, the lead founder of PIACS. “The founders of PIACS are grateful for this opportunity and determined to help our children tackle 21st Century challenges with fluency in two world languages through immersion and the International Baccalaureate curriculum framework to meet the highest education standards.”

In the letter of approval, PIACS was approved based on the strengths of its implementation and financial plans. Commissioner Davy stated the “application presents a strong research-based case for a language-immersion charter school in the districts identified.”

New Jersey will join Massachusetts, Colorado, California, Oregon, and Minnesota as states with a public school curriculum taught through Mandarin-English dual language immersion. “We are very pleased that the parents and students in the Princeton, West Windsor-Plainsboro, and South Brunswick school districts will have a choice in elementary education that includes International Baccalaureate and dual language immersion education,” said co-founder and South Brunswick resident Melissa Edwards. “Our school districts are among the best in the country. The addition of PIACS is instrumental for maintaining this leadership in future decades.”

“PIACS enrollment is open to students of all ethnic, racial, cultural, and linguistic identities and we welcome the chance for community members to learn more at one of the upcoming PIACS information sessions or via our website,” said co-founder and Plainsboro resident Dr. Stuart Chen-Hayes. The initial recruitment and application period will end on February 6, 2010, at which point, students who have applied will be admitted through a lottery system.

For the 2010-2011 academic year, PIACS offers Kindergarten through 2nd grade classes with a new grade added annually thereafter. For more information about the benefits of PIACS, dual language immersion, International Baccalaureate, enrollment applications, and upcoming information sessions, visit www.piacs.org.

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