



Bridgeport Public Schools

For Immediate Release

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National Poetry Month to be celebrated at Columbus Elementary School Superintendent's Chief of Staff among "celebrity" readers

Bridgeport, CT – April 3, 2007 – National Poetry Month will be celebrated at Columbus Elementary School with the 2nd Annual Poetry Reading on Thurs., April 5 at 10 am. The "celebrity" readers include: Superintendent's Chief of Staff Robert Henry, Mayor of Bridgeport John Fabrizi, and Executive Director of ABCD, Inc. Charles Tisdale. There will also be several students reading poetry.

In addition to the poetry reading, Bob Greenberg, a fourth grade teacher and National Poetry Month Coordinator, has arranged several other celebration activities, including "Poetry 180," "The Favorite Poem Project," and "Learn to RAP." Greenberg's fourth graders participate in "Poetry 180," which was started by former US Poet Laureate Billy Collins.

"For 'Poetry 180' we read a poem aloud, one a day for 180 days," Greenberg said. "We don't analyze it. We listen and move on. Poetry was meant to be listened to, not just read."

"The Favorite Poem Project" was an initiative started by former US Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky. The initiative involves the school community in reading a favorite poem, which

helps build important ties between a school and the community that supports the school. With “Learn to RAP,” RAP stands for Random Acts of Poetry.

“Learn to RAP is my original idea,” Greenberg, said. “Students will be encouraged to share their favorite poems during the month of April. Poetry will randomly be displayed throughout the school.”

Additionally, Greenberg has created quite the excitement at Columbus School by posting “811” signs throughout the school. Students will soon learn that “811” is the Dewey Decimal number for poetry.

“This is an exciting way to create a buzz about poetry,” Greenberg said. “It’s my hope that through the Annual Poetry Read and the additional initiatives focused around poetry, students will grow to appreciate and embrace poetry.”

National Poetry Month was established by the Academy of American Poets in 1996. National Poetry Month seeks to highlight the extraordinary legacy and ongoing achievement of American poets, introduce Americans to the pleasures and benefits of reading poetry; bring poets and poetry to the public in immediate and innovative ways; and make poetry an important part of children’s education.

The mission of the Bridgeport Public Schools and its surrounding community is to graduate all students college ready and prepared to succeed in life. For more information about Bridgeport Public Schools visit the website at www.bridgeportedu.com.