



Media Advisory

From Seattle Public Schools

For Immediate Release: November 9, 2007

Contact: David Tucker, Media Relations, 206-252-0203

Seattle area is the first in the nation to launch the award-winning Roots of Empathy program

On Thursday, November 15, Seattle Public Schools will showcase this award-winning classroom-based program designed to reduce bullying and promote positive social behavior. As the first major school district in the United States to implement this internationally-recognized program, Seattle Public Schools will provide an opportunity for media to see this unique program in action 10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m., Thursday, November 15 at the John Stanford International School, located at 4057 5th Avenue NE.

Created in Toronto in 1996 by educator/author Mary Gordon, Roots of Empathy (ROE) uses the power of the relationship between parent and baby to help students understand their own feelings and those of others in order to develop empathy. Media will be able to see a family visit with a Seattle mother and her baby in a 5th grade classroom. By understanding the perspective of the baby and learning to label the baby's feelings, students become literate in describing and understanding their own and others' feelings. Research shows that the benefits of this program endure in the learning environment for at least three years. Over 150,000 children around the world have participated in ROE since its inception.

Roots of Empathy is now in 10 classrooms from grades 1 – 6 in regional schools, including four Seattle Public Schools (Dearborn Park Elementary, Sacajawea Elementary, John Stanford International School, and West Seattle Elementary) as part of a three-year commitment by local philanthropists. The program will expand to 20 classrooms in 2008 and 30 in 2009.

When: Thursday, November 15, 10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Where: John Stanford International School
4057 5th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98105

Who: Seattle Public Schools Superintendent Maria L. Goodloe-Johnson, Ph.D.
Mary Gordon, Founder/President, Roots of Empathy
John Sabol, philanthropist supporting Roots of Empathy in Seattle
Kelly Aramaki, Principal, John Stanford International School

What: See the program in action with a family visit by a Seattle mother and her baby in a 5th grade classroom
Meet internationally-recognized educator/author Mary Gordon

#