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Chicago Neighborhood Schools Bolstered by New National Board Certified Teachers

- Certification is the Highest Credential a Teacher Can Earn in Illinois -

Chicago, Ill. January 8 2007 – One-hundred and seventy-one teachers in Chicago's public schools have been awarded National Board Certification (NBC), the highest credential in the teaching profession. With Mayor Daley's recent call for more National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) in Chicago, these individuals rose to the occasion toward improving their teaching, their profession and their students' learning experience.

To date, 645 Chicago teachers have achieved National Board Certification. More than 250 public schools in neighborhoods across the city have at least one NBCT. The latest achievers and their respective schools and communities are included in the attached appendix.

"The single most important action we can take to improve our schools and student learning is to strengthen the quality of teaching and National Board Certification helps make that possible," said Janet Knupp, founding president of The Chicago Public Education Fund. "The number of NBCTs in the community schools continues to grow and The Chicago Public Education Fund commends teachers for accomplishing this very rigorous professional process."

To achieve certification, teachers enrolled in NBC must demonstrate their teaching knowledge and skills through a series of performance-based assessments. These include work samples, classroom videotapes, subject-area competency exams, and a rigorous analysis of how their students learn over time. The certification process can take up to three years to complete.

Much like the certified public accountant (CPA) and other professional credentialing processes, teachers who do not achieve NBC in the first attempt may retake those portions of the assessment they missed. Also, teachers can apply for financial aid from the State of Illinois to cover application fees, and those who

ultimately achieve the certification receive up to \$35,000 in financial incentives from the state, Chicago Public Schools, and The Fund.

“It’s important that all sectors of our community rally behind Chicago teachers,” said Timothy Schwertfeger, chairman of the board, The Chicago Public Education Fund, and chairman and CEO, Nuveen Investments. “ I am particularly proud of the way that the Chicago business community has stepped up to provide critical, ongoing support for Chicago teachers through National Board Certification.”

The Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago Teachers Union, the Chicago Principals and Administrators Association, and The Chicago Public Education Fund are working together on a city-wide strategy for recognizing and compensating the best Chicago teachers using National Board Certification. Along with Mayor Daley, they are helping to meet the challenge to raise the number of NBCTs in Chicago to 1,200 by 2008. The new group of certified teachers brings Chicago closer to that goal.

About The Chicago Public Education Fund

As a venture capital fund for public education, The Chicago Public Education Fund is an unprecedented catalyst for improving school leadership and student achievement system wide. Launched by a group of corporate and civic leaders, The Fund brings private sector dollars and expertise to high-impact programs aligned with Chicago Public School priorities. For more information about The Fund, please visit www.cpef.org.