

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 17, 2012**

**THE LEARN CHARTER SCHOOL NETWORK SUPPORTS BUS TRIP FOR DISTRICT 187  
STUDENT FAMILIES TO OBSERVE CHARTER SCHOOL LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

**North Chicago, IL** – Beginning with the fall 2012-2013 school year, elementary school students in North Chicago may have the option of receiving an alternate educational experience. District 187 families were recently notified that a Charter School proposal could represent the first step in providing a new and exciting learning opportunity for students entering grades K - 8<sup>th</sup>.

Recent town hall meetings coordinated for student families shared the benefits of welcoming a Charter School operator to increase educational support for North Chicago students. At the community forum, families were provided with a detailed outline of the tuition-free public school system and given an opportunity to participate in a question and answer panel session with representatives of the Lake County Regional Office of Education, District 187, the Illinois State Board of Education, the Navy and the Illinois Network of Charter Schools. While Charter Schools are free from many of the regulations and policies that apply to regular public schools, they offer greater flexibility in many areas including the length of the school day, smaller class sizes, hands-on learning experiences and block scheduling that support a higher emphasis on specific subjects.

In school districts throughout Illinois, and the nation, Charter School programs have been recognized as key educational options for public school districts seeking to increase testing scores and help students meet and exceed state standards. Although there is curriculum flexibility within the Charter School system, all school operators are directly held accountable and must maintain high academic standards with measurable results in order to remain in operation.

LEARN, a network of college prep elementary schools that currently serves nearly 2,000 students across five campuses in Chicago, has been recognized as the potential Charter School operator for the North Chicago school district. LEARN was among three local and national charter school organizations vying for the educational service contract. In 2010, Oprah's Angel Network donated \$1 million to the Network and recognized LEARN as one of six charter schools in the nation that is "Getting It Right."

"Our mission is to provide children with the academic foundation and ambition to earn a college degree," stated Gregory White, President and CEO of the LEARN Charter School Network. "Communicating with students about the importance of higher education only at the middle and high school level can sometimes be too late. It is vitally important that we strengthen the life-long passion for learning within the primary levels of education," White added.

Earlier this month, administrators representing all divisions of the LEARN Charter School Network were present at a charter school hearing held in the North Chicago High School auditorium to dialogue with about 200 students, parents, educators and district representatives who were encouraged to come, learn and contribute to the Charter School conversation.

“A successful Charter School program is dependent on nurturing a greater relationship within the dynamic of the existing school communities that we serve,” stressed Anik Zampini, a principal at the LEARN Charter School Network. “We look forward to working closely with all organizations within the City of North Chicago to make this a win-win partnership that benefits the entire student body.”

On Thursday, March 1, LEARN is supporting a bus trip for North Chicago student families and administrators that would like to tour a LEARN Charter School Network campus. Participants will be visiting the LEARN Hunter Perkins Campus located in Chicago. “Our daily curriculum offers an intensified reading, math and technology training lab for students,” shared Zampini. “In addition to touring our facility, participants will have the opportunity to observe classrooms in progress and speak with a selection of school teachers and administrators.”

Seating is limited and reservations must be received by Monday, February 27 at 5:00 pm by calling the North Chicago Chamber of Commerce at 847.785.1912 or email [NorthChicagoChamber@yahoo.com](mailto:NorthChicagoChamber@yahoo.com).

For more information about LEARN Charter School Network, visit [www.learncharter.org](http://www.learncharter.org).

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