

The School District of Philadelphia  
Office of Communications  
440 N. Broad Street, Suite 102  
Philadelphia, PA 19130-4015  
(215) 400-4040



# NEWS RELEASE

For Release:

Contact:

October 21, 2009

Fernando A. Gallard

## SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA RENAISSANCE SCHOOLS ADVISORY BOARD RELEASES SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

*The Advisory Board Recommendations will Guide the District's Renaissance Schools Initiative  
with the Goal to Transform Chronically Underperforming Schools*

PHILADELPHIA – On Wednesday, October 21, 2009, The School District of Philadelphia's Renaissance Schools Advisory Board released a summary of its recommendations at the public meeting of the School Reform Commission. Superintendent Arlene Ackerman convened the Renaissance Schools Advisory Board on August 20, 2009, and charged it with developing a set of recommendations that would address the process, timeline, and specific strategies for implementing the Renaissance Schools initiative.

The Renaissance Schools initiative will develop and implement a process to transform the District's lowest performing schools by working with school communities to recruit and select individuals and organizations that have a proven track record of operating and supporting high achieving schools. The school and provider selection process is scheduled to be completed by the spring of 2010 and the first stage of the initiative will be launched in the 2010-2011 school year.

A key element in developing the final guidelines that will govern the Renaissance Schools initiative is collecting broad public input on the Renaissance Schools Advisory Board recommendations. The District has scheduled four community feedback sessions in locations throughout the city to gather input on the recommendations. The comments compiled at the community meetings will be used to help guide the final plan.

The schedule and location for the community feedback meetings are the following:

Monday, November 2	Philippian Baptist Church, 5801 N. Broad Street
Wednesday, November 4	Norris Square Civic Association, St. Bonafice Site 2010 N. Mascher St.
Thursday, November 5	High School of the Future, 4021 Parkside Avenue
Monday, November 9	Audenreid High School, 3301 Tasker Street

All meetings are scheduled to start at 6:00 P.M. and concluded by 8:00 P.M. Childcare will be provided at each site.

The Renaissance Schools Advisory Board is co-chaired by Patricia A. Coulter, President and CEO of the Urban League of Philadelphia, Dr. Robert S. Peterkin, Director of the Urban Superintendents Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Dr. Lori Shorr, Chief Education Officer for the City of Philadelphia. Members of the advisory board also include parents, faith-based representatives, educators, and civic, community and business leaders.

Throughout the months of August and October, the advisory board held three plenary sessions and ten subcommittee meetings. During these meetings the advisory board developed the recommendations for the implementation of the Renaissance Schools initiative.

The Renaissance Schools initiative is a major component of the District's five-year strategic plan, Imagine 2014. Imagine 2014 is a roadmap designed to accelerate student achievement for all children over the next five years. The first phase of Imagine 2014 is being implemented during the 2009/2010 school year. Major elements of Phase I of the plan include hiring of new teachers to reduce class-size, hiring of new counselors to decrease counselor-to-student ratios, more opportunities for dual enrollment and early college, greater elementary reading supports, increases in the number of student advisors and parent ombudsmen, and more than fifty other initiatives that are either in the implementation or planning stage.

An electronic copy of the summary of recommendations will be available in the District's website, [www.philasd.org/renschools](http://www.philasd.org/renschools).