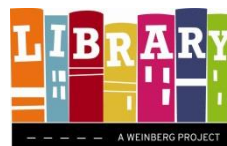




The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Weinberg Foundation Dedicates 12th and 13th Libraries in Baltimore City Public Schools

Latest evaluation includes findings that Library Project schools outperform others

BALTIMORE (January 23, 2017) – The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the largest private foundations in the United States, today will host a celebration marking the grand opening of the 12th and 13th libraries renovated as part of the Baltimore Elementary and Middle School Library Project. The newly renovated spaces are located at **Hampden Elementary/Middle** and **George Washington Elementary**, where today's official celebration will take place:

- **800 Scott Street**
Baltimore, MD 21230
- **10:00-11:00 a.m.***

Featured speakers scheduled to include—

- **Tisha Edwards, Chief of Staff, Mayor of Baltimore**
- **Maryland Senator Bill Ferguson**
- **Dr. Sonja Santelises, CEO, Baltimore City Public Schools**

The Baltimore Library Project is a multi-year, collaborative effort to design, build, equip, and staff new or renovated elementary/middle school libraries in selected schools where existing funds can be leveraged. The Weinberg Foundation has committed \$10 million to build or transform up to 24 Baltimore City Public School libraries in an effort to strengthen academic achievement among students. **By the fall of 2017, the Library Project will be serving approximately 6,000 students or 10 percent of the total number of students, pre-kindergarten through grade eight, in all of Baltimore City Public Schools.**

Each new library is a well-equipped, well-staffed, and well-resourced space that includes beautiful design, new furniture and graphics, the latest technologies, an “Enoch Pratt Parent Place” for parents/guardians, and informal reading areas, as well as separate areas for study and research, instruction, and group discussion.

“The Weinberg Foundation is committed to continually improving academic achievement in Baltimore City Public Schools. To demonstrate that, we have engaged research partners who monitor and evaluate the Library Project,” said Rachel Garbow Monroe, Weinberg Foundation President and Chief Executive Officer. **“Among the latest findings, the first three Library Project schools outperformed more than 120 Baltimore City Public Schools on PARCC tests measuring reading fluency.”** Monroe added, “This confirms that the libraries are continuing to have a profound, positive impact on students.”

A draft of the full report will be made available at the grand opening event.

This year, the Library Project's base of support has grown even broader because of Casino Local Impact Grant funds made available to the City due to the development of the Horseshoe Casino Baltimore.

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These funds accrue annually to the City from the State of Maryland. The State requires that a percentage of gaming revenue be invested to support community development in surrounding neighborhoods.

The school hosting today's grand opening celebration, George Washington Elementary, is located within one of the neighborhoods of this catchment area, known as the "South Baltimore Gateway." The Library Project is among several initiatives designated by the City to receive impact grant funds in Fiscal Year 2017 with the support of the Baltimore Casino Local Development Council or LDC. The LDC advises the Mayor on annual priorities and on long-term strategies for making the best use of impact grant funds.

In addition to showcasing the transformed libraries, today's celebration will also include family tours of the renovated space at George Washington as well as a client choice food pantry, operated by The Heart of America Foundation and Maryland Food Bank, where each family will be able to select 25 pounds of food, including fresh produce. Students and families at Hampden Elementary/Middle will showcase their space later in the week and will also have the opportunity to participate in family tours and a food pantry.

As of this event, 13 new spaces will have been built or completely renovated, including the 11 libraries from years 1-4: Arlington Elementary/Middle, Commodore John Rodgers Elementary/Middle, Elmer A. Henderson: A Johns Hopkins Partnership School, Harford Heights Elementary, The Historic Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Elementary, Moravia Park Elementary, Morrell Park Elementary/Middle, Southwest Baltimore Charter, Thomas Johnson Elementary/Middle, Westport Academy, and Windsor Hills Elementary/Middle schools. The next library renovation will happen at Francis Scott-Key Elementary/Middle and is scheduled for summer 2017.

Please follow all Library Project developments at www.baltimorelibraryproject.org and on Facebook and Twitter at #libraryproject.

Baltimore Elementary and Middle School Library Project Partners:

The Abell Foundation	JMT Construction
The Annie E. Casey Foundation	JRS Architects
Art with a Heart	Kirk Designs
The Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers	Maryland Book Bank
Baltimore City Public Schools	Maryland Food Bank
Baltimore Campaign for Grade-Level Reading	Maryland SPCA
Baltimore Community Foundation	Maryland State Department of Education
Baltimore Education Research Consortium (BERC)	Office of Mayor Catherine Pugh
The Baltimore Sun Media Group	Operation Warm
Barnes and Noble	Parks and People Foundation
Bogdan Computer Services	Raising a Reader
Digital Harbor Foundation	Reading Partners
Dyslexia Tutoring Program	Smithsonian Center for Learning and Digital Access
Enoch Pratt Free Library	United Way of Central Maryland
Fund for Educational Excellence	VPC Incorporated
The Heart of America Foundation	Wells Fargo Banking Corporation
Ironmark (formerly CPS Gumpert)	

***If Baltimore City Public Schools are closed, the event will be cancelled. If schools are delayed, the event will take place as scheduled.**

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About The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation

The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the largest private charitable foundations in the United States, provides approximately \$100 million in annual grants to nonprofits that provide direct services to low-income and vulnerable individuals and families, primarily in the US and Israel. Grants are focused on meeting basic needs and enhancing an individual's ability to meet those needs with emphasis on older adults, the Jewish community, and our priority communities of Maryland, Northeastern Pennsylvania, Chicago, and Hawaii. The trustees, some of whom also serve as executive officers of the Foundation, are Alvin Awaya, Donn Weinberg, Robert T. Kelly, Jr., Fay Hartog-Levin, and Chair Barry I. Schloss. Rachel Garbow Monroe serves as the Weinberg Foundation's President and Chief Executive Officer. For more information please visit www.hjweinbergfoundation.org.