

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, President

BALTIMORE

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City Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake Issues Assignment to Local Students

President's Participation in Teach for America Week 2007 Goes Beyond the Classroom

Baltimore, MD (February 9, 2007) – Baltimore City Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake's classroom experience Friday ended with an assignment for the students: "Spread your message to my colleagues," the President told students in Ms. Clark's seventh grade class at Mt. Royal Intermediate School. "We want to hear from you."

As part of President Rawlings-Blake's lesson on civic engagement, students were asked to work in small groups and list their top three priorities that they would like local leaders to address. Responses ranged from violence in Baltimore to the need for a bigger gymnasium at the school. President Rawlings-Blake then issued a challenge to the students to take the next two weeks and develop a formal list of priorities, including strategies that could address their issues, and present the list at an upcoming City Council meeting. Students will participate in the City Council meeting as part of their lesson on civic engagement.



"This demonstrates the fresh approach I hope to bring to the City Council," said President Rawlings-Blake. "Thinking out-of-the-box is exactly what can help us solve some of the unique challenges facing our city."

City Council President Rawlings-Blake participated in a 30-minute lesson at the school in recognition of Teach for America Week 2007. Teach For America is the national corps of outstanding recent college graduates of all academic majors who commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools and become leaders in the effort to expand educational opportunity. Their mission is to enlist our nation's most promising future leaders in the movement to eliminate educational inequality.

"Council President Rawlings-Blake echoed Teach For America's focus on issuing high standards for each student," noted Omari Todd, Executive Director of Teach For America. "Giving the students the opportunity to share their ideas and present them formally to the City Council is the kind of magical opportunity that happens during Teach For America Week when you have the participation of a dedicated and passionate city leader like Council President Rawlings-Blake."

Upon the completion of the class project, arrangements will be made with school officials in order for students to present their formal list of priorities to the City Council.

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