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## **DC Mayor Vincent Gray Celebrates the Extraordinary Turnaround at IDEA Public Charter School**

### ***Ward 7 High School Experiences Record Growth in Student Achievement***

December 16, 2014, 3pm, Washington, DC—DC Mayor Vincent Gray, alongside IDEA scholars, will celebrate the extraordinary turnaround of IDEA Public Charter School from one of the poorest performing schools in DC, threatened with closure in 2010, to one of the top 10 open enrollment high schools in the city in 2014.

Placed on a three-year probation by the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) requiring drastic improvements under the Mayor's supervision, IDEA began a major restructuring effort. Based on significant gains in student test scores and Performance Management Framework (PMF) scores that *exceeded* PCSB's demands, IDEA will be released from probationary status a year early and allowed to immediately apply for a renewal of its charter.

Highlights of IDEA's exceptional accomplishments include:

- IDEA's PMF scores increased 26 percentage points during the two probationary years, from 28.4 in 2012 to 54.4 in 2014
- IDEA earned the designation of a DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education Reward School, an honor reserved for the top five percent of schools showing the greatest growth in student achievement, for two consecutive years
- IDEA scholars outperformed all other high schools in Ward 7 on the DC-CAS in reading and math combined
- Achievement on the DC-CAS math test increased by 29 percentage points to 67%, the greatest student gain of any DC high school in 2013–2014
- Student progress in reading exceeded the growth target set by the PCSB, earning IDEA 100% of the points possible for this metric on the 2014 PMF

IDEA's remarkable and unprecedented turnaround effort was the result of a coordinated effort by school founders who facilitated the transition; IDEA's committed board of trustees who oversaw the effort; new school leadership who led

the transformation, including the former Executive Director John Goldman and current Head of School Justin Rydstrom; and national education consulting firm TenSquare which provided ongoing strategic intervention. Most importantly, credit goes to the dedicated teachers, students, and parents who never compromised on their vision to create a high performing, open enrollment high school in Ward 7.

“IDEA is an example of what can happen when dedicated school leaders set a culture of high expectations for both students and staff,” said DC Deputy Mayor for Education Abigail Smith. “Two years ago, IDEA was on the brink of closure. Today it is a school where students feel welcome, supported, and inspired to learn. The IDEA community should be proud of this remarkable achievement.”

Differentiated education that meets the needs of every student and a no excuses approach to success are the new hallmarks of IDEA.

“I’m proud of our team of teachers and board leaders and the steadfast support they’ve shown in helping IDEA’s students achieve,” said IDEA Board Chair David Owens. “At IDEA every student now understands that his or her education is important to all of us.”

In addition to outstanding academics, IDEA offers a Microsoft Academy to teach valuable technology skills that lead to in-demand certifications, architectural design classes, and Junior ROTC classes that develop leadership and discipline. IDEA’s campus includes a state-of-the-art gym and wellness center that is the home of IDEA’s 2013 and 2014 WCSAA Championship Women’s Volleyball Teams and 2014 WCSAA Championship Softball Team.

The mission of IDEA Public Charter School is to prepare students with the academic, social, leadership, and occupational skills for post-secondary opportunities and to be responsible citizens who contribute to the community. Learn more about IDEA at [www.ideapcs.org](http://www.ideapcs.org) or follow IDEA on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/IDEAPCSpage](https://www.facebook.com/IDEAPCSpage) or Twitter at [www.twitter.com/IDEA\\_PCS](https://www.twitter.com/IDEA_PCS).

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Contact Head of School Justin Rydstrom at 202-281-0001 or [jrydstrom@ideapcs.org](mailto:jrydstrom@ideapcs.org) to learn more about the December 16 celebration or to schedule a tour, observe a classroom, or arrange an informational meeting.