



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#GraduateReadyNJ: New Jersey Education Coalition Promotes College and Career Readiness

Social media campaign will highlight best practices, elevate the voices of parents, educators, and students

Contact:

Tish Johnson, weraisenj@gmail.com or 862.579.9288

Trenton, NJ (October 31, 2017) – We Raise New Jersey today announced the launch of #GraduateReadyNJ social media campaign to spread awareness of what it takes for all New Jersey students to graduate ready for a successful future, whether college or career. #GraduateReadyNJ will provide an opportunity for community members to share best practices with all districts, and to elevate the voices of parents, educators, business and higher education leaders, and students as they share what it takes to graduate ready.

The campaign identifies six pillars essential to preparing our children for life after high school: (1) High Expectations, (2) Committed and Supported School Staff, (3) Family Engagement, (4) Quality Instruction, (5) Information on Student Progress, and (6) Career Exploration. The pillars build from one another, outlining what students need as they move along their educational journey. Over the next several weeks, the coalition will provide a variety of resources related to each pillar.

“We know that we need all of the components of the #GraduateReadyNJ campaign to provide our students with the preparation they need for a successful future,” said Rose Acerra, President, New Jersey PTA. “With a shared commitment to these elements from families, teachers, and students we will provide the launching pad for our students to soar.”

Although New Jersey posts the nation’s second-highest high school graduation rate, and many districts in the state have shown strong growth in student performance, many graduating students find themselves underprepared for college and the workforce. Reports show that 30% of students entering the state’s four-year colleges and 70% of students entering two-year community colleges require remedial coursework, extending their time in school and unnecessarily increasing financial burdens.

At the same time, New Jersey has many school districts that have achieved steady growth and academic success. “Schools that are embracing the call to serve all students and using the supports put in place by the state and their districts are seeing impressive progress,” said Tish Johnson, Coalition Manager, We Raise New Jersey. “The latest student performance results show that the aligned approach to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards is working. That’s why we need to get the word out about what it takes to serve all of our students.”

“As we look to the future workforce in New Jersey, it is important that students have both the academic and soft skills required to ensure career readiness. Incorporating career exploration and the business voice into the #GraduateReadyNJ campaign is vital,” added Donna Custard, President, New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

Coalition leaders are asking parents, educators, students, and business and higher education leaders to follow the campaign and share their own perspectives on what it means to graduate ready. For more information, visit <http://www.werajenj.org/graduate-ready-nj/> and follow <https://www.facebook.com/WeRaiseNJ/> and @WeRaiseNJ.

####

We Raise New Jersey is a diverse coalition that organizes and harnesses the power of each member organization into a collective voice to advocate for high quality academic standards and aligned assessments, ensuring that every child is prepared for college, career, and community. Coalition members include New Jersey PTA, New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, New Jersey Charter Schools Association, African American Chamber of Commerce, New Jersey Business & Industry Association, New Jersey Council of County Colleges, and JerseyCAN.