

Chancellor says \$3M gift may help eliminate school bullying

Schools Chancellor Dennis M. Walcott has announced a \$3 million gift to address bullying in the City's public middle and high schools and to teach students to recognize and correct hurtful and inappropriate behavior.

The goal of this program is to teach students to respect others, set personal goals and develop leadership skills as they prepare for college and careers. The funding, called the New York City Gifting Initiative, is being provided by the Community for Education Foundation, a nonprofit education reform organization founded in 1992, and will offer the organization's Overcoming Obstacles Life Skills Program to schools.

A pilot of over 100 schools participated in the Initiative this spring, and it will be rolled out to additional schools during the 2011-2012 school year. In all, more than 850 middle and high schools will be given the option to participate in the program, which includes a three-hour introductory workshop, ongoing guidance and coaching, and daily classroom lessons and materials for students. Through the Gifting Initiative, New York City schools will receive materials that teachers can use in advisory periods, after-school programs, peer mentoring initiatives, and core curriculum instruction.

"We are grateful for this gift from the Community for Education



Dennis Walcott

Foundation, which addresses bullying and gives our students skills they will need to succeed in college and in their careers," Chancellor Walcott said. "Establishing a supportive learning environment is a prerequisite for student success. In addition, the program's professional development and coaching are key components that will help prepare our teachers so

our students can get the most out of this new curriculum."

"Overcoming Obstacles ensures all young people learn the communication, decision making, and goal setting skills necessary for success. We are proud to support Chancellor Walcott's vision for education reform and student achievement," said Erin Capone, executive director of Community for Education Foundation.

"The Gifting Initiative is a great example of how public-private partnerships can support students' achievement by equipping them with the essential skills and valuable life lessons they need to excel in college and the workforce," said Sunny Larson, managing director of The Fund for Public Schools, a nonprofit organization that facilitates strategic public-private partnerships to support the City's public schools. "We appreciate the generosity of the Community for Education Foundation."

The program supplements ongoing training that the DOE has implemented to address bullying in schools. Since 2007, the DOE has trained more than 4,000 teachers, counselors, parent coordinators and other staff members in a two-day Respect for All program. In September 2008, we introduced Chancellor's Regulation A-832 to establish a clear process for reporting and investigating incidents of bias-based harassment, intimidation, and bullying in our schools.