

PRESS RELEASE

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CATANIA, FENTY KICK-OFF SCHOOL HEALTH INITIATIVE

ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP WITH WASHINGTON MYSTICS TO TACKLE PROBLEM OF OBESITY AMONG DISTRICT SCHOOL CHILDREN

Washington, D.C. – Today, Councilmember David Catania (At-Large) joined Mayor Adrian Fenty and others at Coolidge Senior High School in Ward 4 to unveil the school’s newly modernized health suite. Coolidge’s health suite was one of three that were renovated as part of the kick-off to a new campaign to modernize health suites in every District public school. River Terrace and Beers Elementary Schools, both in Ward 7, were the two others.

The modernization campaign will be managed by the Office of Facilities Management within the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). Under their supervision, each school will be equipped with a health suite designed to meet the age-specific needs of its students. Schools will also benefit from equipment upgrades, new computers, state-of-the-art software, and internet access. In the coming months, DCPS will complete the first full round of renovations, which includes eight additional schools.

The District’s school health initiative also calls for an increase in the number of school nurses and an expanded health curriculum for all public schools. By 2009, every district public school will be staffed by a full-time nurse. At the end of last school-year, barely 37 percent of schools had a full-time nurse.

“Healthy students grow up to be healthy adults,” said Catania. “The efforts we are taking to bring healthcare into our schools will pay dividends for years to come. It is an indispensable component the District’s public health strategy.”

In conjunction with the school health initiative, Catania also announced a new partnership with the Washington Mystics Foundation designed to raise awareness of obesity within our student population. Beginning in January, the Mystics Foundation will be working with students at a local elementary school to increase healthy eating habits and physical activity. WNBA All-Star Alana Beard was on hand for the announcement.

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