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**NEWS CONTACTS:**

Irene Spero, Director of External Affairs  
301-529-2731/[irene@netday.org](mailto:irene@netday.org)

**America's Top 100 Schools Recognized for Leveraging Student Voices in Educational Decision-Making**

*Project Tomorrow Announces Speak Up 100 Schools*

IRVINE, CA. May 7, 2007 -- Project Tomorrow, formerly NetDay, ([www.tomorrow.org](http://www.tomorrow.org)), the national education nonprofit group, announced this year's Speak Up 100, a collection of top schools working to encourage and involve student, parent and teacher voice in education planning and decision making. These schools are selected for this national distinction from the 10,000 schools nationwide that have participated in the annual Speak Up surveys since 2003.

The schools selected for the 2006 Speak Up 100 recognition this year represent a broad range of educational institutions in rural, suburban and urban communities from 22 states and the Department of Defense ([http://www.tomorrow.org/speakup/speakup\\_100.html](http://www.tomorrow.org/speakup/speakup_100.html)). Based upon total participation and demonstrated commitment to engaging students are five school districts recognized for additional distinction:

- City of Chicago School District 299 - Illinois
  - Surveys submitted in 2006: 21,859 students, parents & teachers
- Baltimore City Public Schools - Maryland
  - Surveys submitted in 2006: 16,296 students, parents & teachers
- Newport-Mesa Unified School District – California
  - Surveys submitted in 2006: 11,963 students, parents & teachers
- Klein Independent School District - Texas
  - Surveys submitted in 2006: 10,325 students, parents & teachers
- Bryan Independent School District – Texas
  - Surveys submitted in 2006: 5,789 students, parents & teachers

“The Speak Up 100 schools offer powerful examples of the ways in which educators are using stakeholder input to drive new ideas and innovation in education and technology within their schools and districts. I am inspired and impressed by the multiple ways in which these educational institutions are leveraging student views in their planning process and improving the learning environment,” noted Julie Evans, CEO of Project Tomorrow in making the announcement.

Speak Up 100 schools are using the data and findings from the online Speak Up survey of students to develop strategic plans, enhance and change curriculum, determine professional development needs and make funding decisions. Examples of the ways in which Speak Up 100 schools are effectively using student ideas to drive innovation include:

- “The Speak Up survey results are helping us to make local decisions regarding technology initiatives taking place at North Schuylkill. The data has been presented to our board of education to demonstrate the level of technical sophistication held by our students. The data makes it clear that today's students learn differently than "we" did and that technology is a major force in their lives. The Project

Tomorrow/NetDay survey has given our technology initiative focus. It has generated much excitement and it has been used as the springboard for the major initiatives taking place in our district.” **Paul Caputo, Supervisor of Curriculum, Technology & Federal Programs, North Schuylkill School District, PA**

- “This data has been used in local decision making to continue our unwavering approach to ensure online safety for all students. The positive student response from the NetDay Speak Up Survey motivated administrators to go one step further by hosting an Internet Safety assembly. A detective from the State of Illinois-Office of the Attorney General High Tech Crimes Bureau re-enforced and expanded what students already know in an interactive presentation, which captured the interest of all students and teachers.” **Julie Kelley, Technology Coordinator, Falconer Elementary School, IL**
- “Each year, Cardinal Pacelli School uses the information from the NetDay Speak Up survey to refine and update its school technology plan. Over the past few years the information has been used to provide additional resources in the school and to incorporate what we have learned from the survey into lesson plans, technology integration and professional develop for the staff. When we identify an area from the survey we move quickly to address that need. An example from this year's data is the replacement of the phone with Instant Messenger. Close to 80% of our students in grades 6-8 use Instant Messenger and know a person's IM address instead of their home phone number.” **Michael P. Mahoney, Technology Coordinator, Cardinal Pacelli School, OH**
- “From our data we discovered our students want to be able to communicate electronically through school projects and the district network, so we have taken steps to provide email and the resources for students to create more digital media. Teachers want to be able to access their district files from home, so steps are being taken to make them available. Parents want to be able to monitor student school emails and have better access to student information and they will have the ability to do so. The information we gather from the Speak Up data is a valuable resource when it come to making decisions on how to allot our technology funds to meet the needs of our clients.” **Linda Martinez, Technology Coordinator, Metzger Middle School, TX**

This year's Speak Up 100 schools are prominently featured on Project Tomorrow's website ([http://www.tomorrow.org/speakup/speakup\\_100.html](http://www.tomorrow.org/speakup/speakup_100.html)) and receive special recognition from Project Tomorrow including a unique Speak Up 100 logo to include on their school and district websites. Project Tomorrow is tapping into the expertise of this year's Speak Up 100 schools to develop new questions for Speak Up 2007 which will open up for student, teacher and parent input on October 1. Additionally, their impact stories are being shared with our national partners and other organizations and agencies interested in the impact of student voices on education and technology policies and programs.

Speak Up 2006 was made possible through the support of AT&T Foundation, Dell, Inc., William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and Advanced Network & Services.

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## **ABOUT SPEAK UP**

*Speak Up is a national initiative of Project Tomorrow ([www.tomorrow.org](http://www.tomorrow.org)), a national education nonprofit group based in Irvine, California. Project Tomorrow was formed from the merger of NetDay, a national education technology nonprofit with a Southern California based science education nonprofit group in September 2005. The vision of Project Tomorrow is to insure that today's students are well prepared to be tomorrow's innovators, leaders and engaged citizens of the world. The organization believes that by supporting the innovative uses of science, math and technology resources in our K-12 schools and communities, students will develop the critical thinking, problem solving and creativity skills needed to compete and thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

*Since 2003, Speak Up has surveyed over 857,000 K-12 students, their teachers and parents representing over 10,000 schools in all 50 states through an annual online survey event held each fall. The Speak Up data represents the largest collection of authentic, unfiltered stakeholder input on education, technology, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and math and science instruction, and the data is used regularly by education, business and policy leaders to inform federal, state and local education programs.*