

For immediate release:

Providence Schools

Contact: Christina O'Reilly

Facilitator of Communications and Media Relations

401-278-0592



CONTRERAS NAMED TO TEAM DEFENDING STATE RACE TO THE TOP APPLICATION

Providence Public Schools Chief Academic Officer Sharon Contreras to travel with RI team to Washington, D.C.

PROVIDENCE (August 2, 2010) – Sharon L. Contreras, Chief Academic Officer for the Providence Public School District, will be part of the select team travelling to Washington, D. C, during the week of August 9 to make Rhode Island’s best case for \$75 million in federal Race to the Top funding. Contreras directly oversees Providence’s teaching and learning division, which includes teachers, building administrators, and district personnel who manage not only academics, but student affairs, Federal programming and research and assessment.

On Tuesday, July 27, it was announced that Rhode Island is among 19 finalists contending for the federal funding, and that the 18 states and the District of Columbia would be asked to make a comprehensive presentation of their proposals in order to advance in the competition for the funds. Contreras will accompany Governor Donald L. Carcieri, Commissioner Deborah A. Gist, Deputy Commissioner David V. Abbott and RIDE chief of Educator Excellence and Instructional Effectiveness Mary Ann Snider on a visit to the U.S. Department of Education.

“I am excited to be part of the team traveling to Washington, D.C.,” said Contreras. “Providence, as Rhode Island’s largest district, has been moving ahead with urgency to implement significant, meaningful reform to improve teaching and learning in our schools. The infusion of Race to the Top funds at the state level would allow Rhode Island and Providence to accelerate that work, and to provide our children with the top-notch education they deserve.”

Providence has been supportive of RIDE’s Race to the Top efforts from their inception, with the Providence School Board endorsing the first application, and the Providence Teachers Union becoming the second collective bargaining unit, and the first from an urban district, to sign on in January.

Rhode Island was named a Top 16 finalist in the first round of applications; Superintendent Thomas M. Brady represented Providence as part of the Washington team fielded for that round.