REACH OUT TO DROPOUTS WILL RECLAIM “LOST” STUDENTS

Political, community and business leaders will join staff, administrators, parents, and alumni of the Normandy School District in an effort to reclaim students who have dropped out of school during the district’s fourth annual “Reach Out to Dropouts” event. The event will start at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 25 with volunteers meeting in the cafeteria at Normandy High School, 6701 St. Charles Rock Rd.

Modeled after a successful program in the Houston, TX area, Reach Out to Dropouts will bring together volunteers in a face-to-face, door-to-door campaign to encourage dropouts to complete their education. Teams of volunteers will canvass the community visiting the homes of students who did not complete the previous school year. More than half of the students visited over the past three years returned to Normandy High School or enrolled in an alternative program to acquire their high school diploma. Several of those students are now high school graduates.

“It is important to us that every child in the Normandy School District is successful,” said Dr. Stanton E. Lawrence, superintendent of schools. “Our goal is to send a loud and clear message to our students that we care, we can help and we are here to open that door leading to their success. Education is the key to a successful future.”

Over 80 students will be targeted in this year’s event. These students have been identified as being withdrawn from school during the 2011-2012 school year due to excessive absences. “We need these students to know that we care what they do with their lives,” said Lawrence. “It all starts with a knock on the door.”

Among the volunteers for Reach Out to Dropouts will be State Representative Clem Smith, Vinita Park Mayor James McGee, members of the Normandy School District Board of Education and Beyond Housing President and CEO Kris Krehmeyer. “We are thankful to the many community volunteers for taking ownership of this program and showing that they care about our students,” said Lawrence.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Media that would like to be assigned volunteer teams to shadow as they make home visits should call 314-393-8682.