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Over Half of Parents Say Local Schools Not Meeting Student Needs for 21st Century

Irvine, CA (November 12, 2007) – More than half (52 percent) of parents do not believe their local schools are doing a good job preparing students to compete for jobs and careers in the 21st century according to Speak Up, a national survey conducted annually by Project Tomorrow (www.tomorrow.org). Parents also have a long list of ideas about how to fix schools, but despite these stated concerns education does not make the top 5 issues in the 2008 Presidential election.

To position education as a top issue for discussion in the 2008 elections, Project Tomorrow is gathering input from parents through a set of unique questions on the 2007 Speak Up survey. The online survey – open now through December 15th for all parents, students, teachers and administrators at www.netdayspeakup.org – represents the largest collection of authentic, unfiltered stakeholder input on education.

“Each year we gather input from thousands of parents, students, teachers and school administrators about the state of education in their community. This year, our goal is to highlight what parents are saying and make education a central issue in every local, state, and national race in the 2008 election. In addition we will also share the findings with schools and districts so they can work with their own parent community to ensure that every student is well prepared to succeed in the 21st century global marketplace,” said Julie Evans, CEO of Project Tomorrow, a national education advocacy nonprofit committed to preparing students to be tomorrow’s innovators and leaders.

In 2006, the first year parents were invited to participate, 80 percent listed effective communications skills as most important for graduates. More than half (55 percent) said successful students needed a good understanding of math and science and 37 percent listed global competition as a concern for their children.

Individual participation and responses provided in the Speak Up survey are completely confidential and completing the survey takes only 15 minutes.

Since 2003, more than 857,000 K-12 students, teachers, and parents from over 10,000 schools in all 50 states have participated in Speak Up. The online survey is facilitated by Project Tomorrow (formerly known as NetDay) and supported by many of our nation’s most innovative companies and foundations.

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