PRESS RELEASE
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MAYOR LEE AND SUPERINTENDENT CARRANZA LAUNCH
CIRCLE THE SCHOOLS INITIATIVE; CONNECTING PUBLIC
SCHOOLS WITH SAN FRANCISCO TECH COMPANIES

Tech Leaders and San Francisco Unified School District Leadership Join Mayor Lee to Kick Off
New Program Connecting Tech Companies With San Francisco Public Schools to Improve
Education and Give Students the Tools They Need to Succeed in the 21st Century, Announce
Initial Pilot Program Has Grown From 5 Schools to 20, Goal to Have Every School “Circled” by
End of School Year

Tuesday, September 18 (San Francisco) - Today, leaders from San Francisco’s tech
community joined with San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee, and San Francisco Unified School District
(SFUSD) Superintendent Richard Carranza to launch Circle the Schools. The first-of-its-kind
program developed by sf.citi, SFUSD and the San Francisco Education Fund uses an adopt-a
school model to connect San Francisco-based tech companies with local public schools across
the city. Since last spring, Circle the Schools has grown from a pilot of five schools to covering
20 schools and more companies are signing up each day. Today, at Junipero Serra Elementary
School tech leaders announced plans to have every school "circled" by the end of the school
year.

“San Francisco’s vibrant tech industry has brought the best and brightest entrepreneurs,
innovators and tech experts from all over the world to our City,” said San Francisco Mayor
Edwin M. Lee. “Circle the Schools is helping to improve education and inspire our City’s next
generation of leaders, San Francisco students. I call on other companies to join this important
initiative so every student has an opportunity to work with the companies that make San
Francisco the Innovation Capital of the World.”

Over the course of the school year each partner company will work with principals and teachers
to organize volunteer activities tailored to meet each school’s individual needs. Companies have
been working to strengthen public schools by donating books, hosting career tours, setting up
classrooms and much more depending on the school’s specific needs. The kick-off event
featured a read-aloud literacy event where tech employees, city officials and community leaders
came together to demonstrate a focus on literacy in San Francisco’s public schools. The books
from the event came directly from a book drive organized by one of Circle the Schools’ partner
companies, Xoom. Over the summer, Xoom employees delivered hundreds of books to the
school so the library and classroom bookshelves would be full by the time students came back
from summer vacation.

“Circle the Schools is about human connectivity and building lasting relationships between tech
employees and students through a year-long partnership,” said SFUSD Superintendent Richard
Carranza. “The benefit from people volunteering their time and resources is invaluable. We need partners who are actively engaged with our schools, who are willing to roll up their sleeves and get to work in order to help improve the lives of our public school students.”

Earlier this year, San Francisco-based Xoom partnered with Junipero Serra Elementary. After discussing the emphasis on literacy with school officials, Xoom employees made it their mission to ensure that every student at the school had the resources they needed to excel in English Language Arts. Along with contributing over 500 balanced literacy books, Xoom employees organized the school’s library and set up classrooms, which had a big impact in helping Junipero Serra set up successful classroom and school wide literacy environments.

“The San Francisco technology community is fully committed to helping our city's public school students succeed. Our students have the potential to be the next wave of this city's workforce; some will also become entrepreneurs and technology innovators too,” said Xoom CEO and President John Kunze. “There are about 1,000 technology companies in San Francisco and about 100 schools. One by one, we plan to match a company with a school, not just with financial resources, but equally important with committed and caring people who just want to help. The students and the teachers deserve this, we can help, so we are here.”

With Xoom’s support, Junipero Serra was able to start the school year with the resources needed to meet critical literacy milestones that will help ensure every student will be put on a path of success, and ultimately high school graduation.

“Circle the Schools has given both our students and our teachers a sense that others outside of our school’s community really care about our students and are always thinking of ways to support us,” said Junipero Serra Principal Eve Cheung. “The help and support that our school has received, from book donations, literacy volunteers and classroom set-up, has shown how invested these companies are in our schools and in our children's future. It is something that they truly care about.”

Companies participating in Circle the Schools work with the San Francisco Education Fund, a nonprofit that engages community resources to lend extra support to teachers and administrators at critical points in a student's education. In elementary schools, the focus is on literacy, as studies show that students who read at grade level by 3rd grade have much higher success rates in the future. In middle schools, the focus is on math. Finally, in high schools Circle the School activities help prepare students for college and careers.

Circle the Schools takes a “One City” approach to improving the public school system, which aims to bridge those in San Francisco's tech industry with the diverse neighborhoods of San Francisco.

Tech companies participating in Circle the Schools include:

- Xoom
- Tagged
- Eventbrite
- Stumbleupon
- Square Trade
- Achievers
- Clever
- Dropbox
- Inkling
- Radioshack
- Zynga
About Circle The Schools
Circle the Schools is a joint project of sf.citi, SFUSD, and the San Francisco Education Fund. Using an adopt-a-school model, Circle the Schools partners participating San Francisco-based technology companies with a local public school. Over the course of a school year each company will organize three to five activities at their partner school. These volunteer activities are tailored to meet each school's individual needs. From bringing snacks to kids on standardized test days to participating in Read-Aloud literacy events or hosting field trips to company offices, these activities foster relationships between students and company employees. Our goal is to bring together tech and community and move forward as #OneCity.

About the San Francisco Education Fund
The San Francisco Education Fund is dedicated to increasing the number of San Francisco public school students – in particular those from underserved communities – who graduate ready for college, careers and civic responsibility. The Education Fund works to both engage more San Franciscans to invest their talents and resources to make our schools among the best in the nation and develop collaborative solutions, so those with a commons cause align their efforts and go farther, together. www.sfedund.org

About sf.citi
The San Francisco Citizens Initiative for Technology and Innovation (sf.citi) is an organization committed to leveraging the power of the tech community around civic action in San Francisco. Launched in 2012, they have supported innovative policies, advocated for tech sector growth and worked collaboratively with government and communities to find new solutions to historic problems facing San Francisco. Over 950 San Francisco based technology companies and partner organizations are members of sf.citi.

About the San Francisco Unified School District
The San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) is one of California’s largest and highest performing urban school districts. More than 56,000 preschool through twelfth grade students, speaking more than 44 languages, attend 131 public schools within the City and County of San Francisco. SFUSD aims to provide each student with an equal opportunity to succeed by promoting intellectual growth, creativity, self-discipline, cultural and linguistic sensitivity, democratic responsibility, economic competence, and physical and mental health so that each student can achieve his or her maximum potential.

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