FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Friday, December 21, 2012
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*** PRESS RELEASE ***

MAYOR LEE ANNOUNCES SAN FRANCISCO AWARDED U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 2012 PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS GRANT

Five-Year, Up To $30 Million Grant to Mission Economic Development Agency, San Francisco Unified School District & City to Improve Education in Mission Neighborhood

San Francisco, CA -- Mayor Edwin M. Lee and Superintendent Richard Carranza today announced that the U.S. Department of Education has selected San Francisco’s Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA) to receive a five-year, up to $30 million Promise Neighborhoods implementation grant, among the highest amount granted of only six other selected areas in the nation.

“The Promise Neighborhoods grants will not only help our children succeed in school, but these grants will lift up families and whole communities,” said Mayor Lee. “I thank President Obama and Education Secretary Arne Duncan for choosing the Mission community as one of seven recipients of the Promise Neighborhoods implementation grants so that we can continue to prepare our youth for the 21st Century workforce.”

“By delivering support holistically in a linguistically- and culturally-competent manner, this grant will bridge together successful local nonprofits and public and private partners to work with kids and families: empowering the community, breaking cycles of poverty, and ensuring every child can reach their full potential, from cradle to college to career,” said Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi.

“This is a great opportunity to further coordinate neighborhood resources and services to strategically support accelerated learning for children and families in the Mission District,” said Superintendent Richard A. Carranza of the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD). “We look forward to collaborating to make sure students within the Mission District have access to all of the opportunities that should be afforded to children. This is an important complement to the work we have begun through our school improvement initiatives.”

“This investment in our community will allow us to create true innovation and ensure children, youth and families in the Mission have strong schools, opportunities to become economically successful, and robust systems of family and community support that will allow them to thrive,” said MEDA’s Executive Director Luis Granados.

In December of 2011, MEDA received a $500,000 Promise Neighborhoods planning grant to carry out a community-wide planning process to create a continuum of services that would meet the Mission District’s needs, with a focus on low-income Latino students and families and students at Cesar Chavez Elementary,
Bryant Elementary, Everett Middle School, and John O’Connell High School. Throughout 2012, MEDA worked the Mayor’s office, community based organizations, city agencies, SFUSD, and the United Way of the Bay Area to write an implementation proposal that was submitted to the Department of Education in July 2012.

The Promise Neighborhood implementation grant will help leverage SFUSD’s three-year $45 million Federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) that expires in June 2013 to support the transformation of student outcomes at state-identified “persistently low-performing schools.” Mission area schools are demonstrating improvement by incorporating a deep focus on literacy instruction, professional development for teachers, additional support staff, and a community schools approach.

“This is a great day not only for MEDA and our partners, but for the Mission as a whole,” said Supervisor David Campos. “With these funds, we will be able to deliver services in a coordinated way, ensure that families and children can access what they need, and help all families and students realize their full potential. We are excited and look forward to starting the work to build a better Mission District.”

Implementation grantees received awards between $1.4 million to $6 million to fund the first year of a five-year grant to execute community-led plans that improve and provide better social services and educational programs.

In addition to San Francisco, six other areas received implementation grants: Los Angeles, Boston and Roxbury Massachusetts; Washington D.C.; Chula Vista, California; Lubbock, Texas; and Indianola, Mississippi. San Francisco and Los Angeles received the highest awards of $6 million annually for five years. Award amounts reflect first-year funding with additional years subject to congressional appropriations.

Promise Neighborhoods is one of the signature programs of the White House Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, which supports innovative and inclusive strategies that bring public and private partners together to help break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. It encourages collaboration between the U.S. Departments of Education, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Treasury and Health and Human Services to support local solutions for sustainable, mixed-income neighborhoods with affordable housing, safe streets and good schools.

About Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA)

MEDA is a 39 year old nonprofit organization based in San Francisco’s Mission District and provides free services to low-income families to help them become financially prosperous. Already a leading provider of services to alleviate poverty in San Francisco, MEDA is the lead agency for the Mission Promise Neighborhood, a collaborative community effort to support school improvement and revitalize the Mission neighborhood by creating a cradle-to-career pipeline for students and families.

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