

Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem Welcomes Cindy McCain



NEW YORK, June 12, 2008 – Cindy McCain, wife of presumptive Republican Presidential nominee, John McCain, visited the Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem (Sisulu-Walker) this Tuesday. Mrs. McCain is currently traveling the country in support of her husband’s presidential bid. Mrs. McCain met with students and staff as she toured the school and participated in classroom lessons.

“I chose to visit this school [Sisulu-Walker] because of its outstanding academic record,” Mrs. McCain, who received her B.A. in education and M.A. in Special Education from the University of Southern California, told the local media. Mrs. McCain’s home state of Arizona was among the first in the country to establish charter schools, passing its Charter School Law in 1994. “This school has an administration that cares and is able to make it work.”

Sisulu-Walker, now in its ninth year of operation has received numerous accolades. In 2007, Sisulu-Walker was designated a “High Performing/ Gap Closing” school by the New York State Department of Education. That distinction was earned by meeting all of the applicable New York State Standards and making adequate yearly progress in English and math for two consecutive years as determined by the No Child Left Behind guidelines.

“It’s truly an honor to host Mrs. McCain,” said Karen Jones, principal of the Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem. “Our school is not only a source of great pride for the staff and students, but also a beacon of hope for the surrounding community. Being able to showcase our school to a national audience is a tribute to everyone’s hard work and dedication.”



Sisulu-Walker has consistently out-performed traditional public schools in Community School District 5, the neighborhood where most of its students reside. 98% of Sisulu-Walker’s third grade students scored in the highest two levels on the New York State math exam in 2006-2007, nearly 20% higher than the average for the district. On the state ELA exam, Sisulu-Walker had nearly 25% more students testing in the top two levels as compared to the district. In 2007, Sisulu-Walker was chosen to represent New York State at the National Reading First Conference in St. Louis, Missouri.

“Sisulu-Walker is a sterling testament to the effectiveness of offering high quality schools of choice,” said Dr. Margaret Harington, Chief Operating Officer of Victory Schools. “Education is a non-partisan issue that effects everyone. As a nation we need to understand the urgency of improving our education system. In order to make the dreams of our children come true, we need to ensure that every child receives the best education possible.”

About Sisulu-Walker

Founded in 1999 as the first public charter school in New York State, Sisulu-Walker currently serves 270 students in grades kindergarten through four. The school is named for two great civil rights leaders, Walter Sisulu and Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, and their wives. Walter Sisulu, former

Secretary General of the African National Congress, worked closely with Nelson Mandela and was at the forefront of the struggle against South African apartheid for over five decades. Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, a renowned pastor, author, lecturer and advocate for civil and human rights, served as the Chief of Staff to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during critically important years of the American civil rights movement.

About Victory Schools

Victory Schools is a national leader in public charter and district school management partnerships. Victory's mission is to create the finest public schools in America through partnerships with state departments of education, local boards of education, teachers, teachers unions, outstanding community groups and parents. The company is unique in its consultative approach to assisting public school districts; its strong emphasis on partnerships with all public education stakeholders; and its desire to provide the highest quality, most personalized service to the schools and districts we serve. Victory was founded in 1999 and is headquartered in New York City. This fall the company will provide services to 19 public and charter schools serving approximately 7,000 children in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago. For further information, Victory can be contacted at (212) 786-7900.