



## Atlanta Public Schools Receives National Recognition

By Hosanna Johnson

I hope you are enjoying this wonderful summer. Recently, The United States House of Representatives held a No Child Left Behind reauthorization hearing entitled, *Bold Reforms: Boosting Student Achievement in Major U.S. Cities Can Serve as a Model for Schools Across the Country*.

Mayors from New York and Washington D.C. were asked to testify along with Superintendents from D.C., Chicago, and Atlanta's very own, Dr. Beverly Hall. The House Committee on Education and Labor invited the four cities due to impressive gains in reading and mathematics and narrowing the achievement gap between groups of students.

Overall, the education leaders recommended that Congress continue to hold schools accountable, institute national standards, and support bold experiments around teacher pay.

During her testimony, our Superintendent, Dr. Beverly Hall, explained the plan which lead to consistent year-to-year growth for the past 9 years. As she stated, "It's not rocket science." APS' transformation strategy for increased student achievement includes:

- Community support
- Improvement in staff quality
- Accountability targets for each school tied to performance incentives
- Implementation of comprehensive school reform models
- Refinement of reforms based on staff and student input

Dr. Hall emphasized that Atlanta Public School's success in implementing these strategies was a direct result of strong leadership at all levels, unwavering support from the business and philanthropic community, and a relentless focus on student achievement: In the 2006-2007 school year, "all 62 elementary schools, including our charter schools, met AYP for the first time in history. We are still climbing the tough path to total transformation, but with achievement gaps melting away and the strong support of our community, our goal is in sight." In the 2006-2007 school year, there were only two school districts in metro Atlanta where 100% of the elementary schools made AYP: Atlanta Public Schools (76% low income) and Gwinnett county (40% low income).

The Atlanta Education Fund commends Dr. Hall, the administration, teachers, students, families, and the community for this national recognition.

Let's keep the momentum going! Strong schools lead to a strong Atlanta.

For access to the press release from the Committee on Education and Labor, or to read Dr.

Hall's remarks, please visit:

[http://www.house.gov/apps/list/speech/edlabor\\_dem/071708.html](http://www.house.gov/apps/list/speech/edlabor_dem/071708.html)

[http://www.atlantapublicschools.us/content/news/Headlines/2008/071708DrHall\\_Testimony.pdf](http://www.atlantapublicschools.us/content/news/Headlines/2008/071708DrHall_Testimony.pdf)

*"Never underestimate the power of a few committed people to change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." (Margaret Mead)*

The Atlanta Education Fund's mission is to sustain and accelerate student achievement in Atlanta's public schools. We have two key strategies: 1) Keeping the public informed and involved, and 2) Supporting key reform initiatives. It is our vision to ensure that every child in every school has the skills, information, and support to pursue their dreams.

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Atlanta Education Fund | 250 Williams Street | Suite 2115 | Atlanta | GA | 30303