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Presentation School Foundation joins with Little Sprouts, WGBH and Wheelock College to announce the launch of an innovative urban early education initiative

BOSTON, March 12, 2008—The sounds of children learning and laughing once again will fill the halls of the former Our Lady of the Presentation School in Brighton.

At a Gala celebration to be held on Friday night, Mayor Thomas M. Menino will join with leaders of the Presentation School Foundation, Little Sprouts, WGBH and Wheelock College to announce an innovative urban preschool partnership. Through the initiative, the nationally recognized Little Sprouts early education program will operate a preschool program at the former school building, which the foundation is redeveloping as a multi-purpose community center.

“This urban early education initiative builds upon the wonderful grass-roots efforts of the local community to support diverse families in Allston-Brighton,” said PSF President Tom O’Brien, who noted that the program would serve more than 140 middle- and low-income Boston children. “We are grateful that some of Boston’s leading educational organizations are working with us to provide extraordinary educational opportunities for local children.”

Susan Leger Ferraro, president of Little Sprouts, said, “The opportunity to grow an exceptional early literacy program as an urban lab school model with extraordinary teaching practices is an idea whose time has come! We are honored to be part of the PSF Allston/Brighton family community.”

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A key component of the center's preschool program will be the introduction of multimedia curriculum materials developed by Brighton-based public broadcasting leader WGBH. Designed specifically for use in early childhood settings, the materials include a classroom library of books, teachers guides, DVDs and activities that use WGBH's award-winning television series *Between the Lions* and *Peep and the Big Wide World* as a launching point to teach young children reading skills and basic science concepts.

Brigid Sullivan, vice president for children's programming at WGBH, said research has shown that these curriculum materials are effective. A study of 11 American Indian Head Start programs, for example, found that, after using the *Between the Lions* classroom curriculum, the number of children at risk for reading failure dropped from 39 percent to 12 percent.

"Education is at the very heart of everything we do at WGBH. "We look forward to working with Little Sprouts and the Presentation School Foundation to provide local children with a stimulating, high-quality preschool learning experience," said Sullivan.

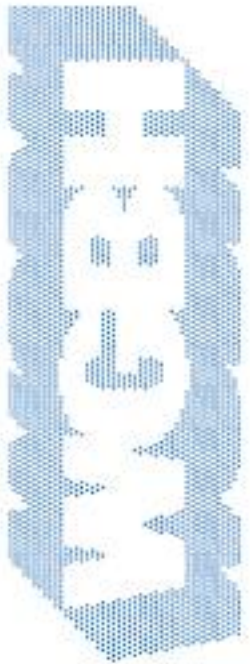
Supporting the preschool program will be an extensive professional development program. Created by WGBH in conjunction with Wheelock College, the program will provide the center's teachers with workshops, online courses, best-practice videos and ongoing mentoring.

"Wheelock College is very excited about this innovative literacy program," President Jackie Jenkins-Scott said. "Our institutional mission is to improve the lives of children and families and we are proud to join WGBH and add to more than a century of leadership in education and advocacy."

About The Presentation School Foundation, Inc.

The Presentation School Foundation, Inc. is a secular, nondenominational 501 (c) (3) corporation formed by local civic and business leaders from different background and faiths who all share the PSF mission: to provide educational and community services that strengthen Boston's diverse Allston-Brighton neighborhood. PSF purchased the former Our Lady of the Presentation (OLP) grammar school from the Boston archdiocese and is converting it into a community-based education center offering youth and family services. Its anchor programming is a preschool operated by Little Sprouts Child Enrichment Centers. www.psf-inc.org.

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About Little Sprouts Child Enrichment Centers

Little Sprouts Child Enrichment Centers has been a leader in providing award-winning early education since 1982. It consists of a group of humanitarians who believe in the power of literacy to change the world. Little Sprouts believes in the commonality in humanity. It embraces that unity is best achieved by celebrating diversity. Little Sprouts has seven schools in Massachusetts, supporting families who reflect 32 cultures speaking 23 languages from all walks of social, economic, religious and ethnic backgrounds. To learn more about how you can join Little Sprouts in making the world a better place, visit www.littlesprouts.com.

About WGBH

WGBH Boston is America's preeminent public broadcaster, producing such celebrated national PBS series as *Masterpiece Theatre*, *Antiques Roadshow*, *Frontline*, *Nova*, *American Experience*, *Arthur* and more than a dozen other award-winning primetime, lifestyle and children's series. Boston's last remaining independent TV station, WGBH produces local TV productions (among them, *Greater Boston*, *Basic Black* and *Maria Hinojosa One-on-One*) that focus on the region's diverse community, while WGBH 89.7 FM is Boston's NPR Arts & Culture station, offering a rich menu of classical, jazz, blues, news programming and more. WGBH is the leading producer of online content for pbs.org—one of the most-visited dot-org sites on the Internet—a major producer for public radio and a pioneer in developing educational multimedia and new technologies that make media accessible for people with disabilities. For its efforts, WGBH has been recognized with hundreds of honors, including Oscars, Emmys, Peabodys and duPont-Columbia Journalism Awards. Visit WGBH on the Web at www.wgbh.org.

About Wheelock College

Founded in 1888 and located in Boston, MA, Wheelock College is a private institution with the public mission of improving lives of children and their families. The College fulfills this mission by providing a strong education in the arts and sciences and in its professional fields—education, child and family studies, and social work—for which its undergraduate and graduate programs are nationally and internationally recognized. Throughout its academic programs and student experience, the College reflects the multicultural dimensions of the communities and countries in which it operates and fosters diverse learning experiences—all of which contributes to the success, leadership, and impact that its graduates enjoy in a wide variety of careers. For more information, visit www.wheelock.edu.

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