

# NEWS RELEASE



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## **CPS Opens For 2009-10 With New STEM High School**

Cincinnati Public Schools began the 2009-10 school year on Tuesday, August 18, with the opening of the first phase of a new STEM high school as a highlight.

Hughes STEM High School opened for ninth-graders only, launching what will grow year by year into a school for ninth through 12th grades. The STEM program — which stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics — is located at Hughes High School, **2515 Clifton Avenue, University Heights**. (The main Hughes building is undergoing an extensive, yearlong renovation; the STEM program is temporarily housed in the building's Annex.)

As part of the first-day activities, Superintendent Mary Ronan joined Principal Virginia Rhodes, Program Facilitator Kathy Wright and many of the STEM high school's partners in greeting new students.

Several of the 9<sup>th</sup> graders who agreed to serve as ambassadors for the new school cracked open digital backpacks containing digital cameras, digital video cameras, I-Pods and laptops that they will use, working in teams, to produce a documentary in partnership with the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

The STEM high school is leading to CPS' goal of offering STEM programming from preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

"It's very important that our students obtain a high level of proficiency in these highly sought STEM skills, which will prepare them for success after graduation," Ronan said. "We want our students to understand that STEM skills influence every area of life and are a vital component of a well-rounded educational foundation."

Creation of the innovative STEM high school program, which emphasizes STEM skills throughout the curriculum, was made possible by a \$596,770 planning grant from the Ohio Department of Education. This grant builds on an earlier \$500,000 state grant that created a STEM elementary school within CPS; it opened in August 2008 at William H. Taft Elementary School in Mt. Auburn.

***(Continued)***

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The state grants also complement a \$20-million, five-year systemic grant from the GE Foundation aimed at improving mathematics and science instruction throughout CPS.

Features of the new STEM high school include:

- State-of-the-art curriculum and hands-on, inquiry-based instructional practices modeled after successful STEM schools.
- A professional practice and demonstration laboratory providing professional development opportunities for teachers and college students in teaching programs.
- Pathways to higher education and career opportunities including dual high school/college enrollment programs and business internships.

Partners assisting the in the development of the new STEM high School include the American Chemical Society, CincyAfterSchool, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Cincinnati Federation of Teachers, Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, Cincinnati Public Schools, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, Cincinnati Youth Collaborative, Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden, GE Aviation, Great Oaks Institute of Technology, Greater Cincinnati Tech Prep Consortium, Duke Energy, Hamilton County Educational Service Center, Mayerson Academy, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Ohio STEM Learning Network, Procter & Gamble, Strive, SW Ohio Center of Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education, Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing North America, Inc., and the University of Cincinnati.

"This school will build on the long history of innovation in Cincinnati Public Schools and Hughes High School," said Jeff Edmondson, executive director of Strive. "Students will be engaged by teaching teams in a new way to understand and apply learning. And working with partners, teachers from all over the region will be able to come to the school and learn so they have a broader set of skills when they serve students."

"The University of Cincinnati is proud to be part of the newest addition to a K-16 pipeline to educational excellence, which will lead to a strong, successful Ohio workforce," said Lawrence J. Johnson, dean of the UC College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services (CECH).

"As part of our role in the partnership, UC is participating in the establishment of a professional practice and demonstration laboratory at Hughes, which will be operated by faculty from our FUSION (Furthering Urban STEM Innovation, Outreach, and New Research) Center in CECH. The Hughes FUSION Laboratory will provide professional development opportunities for the Hughes students, their teachers, our teaching interns at the school, as well as university faculty. UC will also be evaluating teacher and student performance as we continue to support the success of the STEM partnership," Johnson said.

