

MARION P. THOMAS CHARTER SCHOOL BEGINS NEW ERA WITH GROUNDBREAKING OF PERMANENT FACILITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWARK (June 23, 2008) — It was only a shovelful of dirt, but to supporters of Marion P. Thomas Charter School, it might have been a mountain that they had moved.

Officials from Real Estate Advisory and Development Services Inc., the nonprofit agency that helped the charter school reach this point, joined their colleagues from the charter school at a groundbreaking ceremony for their new, permanent facility on Sussex Avenue. The 3½-acre site is slated to house a 60,000-square foot facility for a projected 600 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Construction is due to begin Winter 2009. A second phase, which will provide a school building for students in sixth through eighth grades, tentatively is planned for 2013.

“It’s been an honor for READS to help Marion P. Thomas Charter School get to this point, and we look forward to working with them further as the project continues,” said Brian Keenan, founder and president of READS. “The school is providing an excellent education to its students, and is another success story of New Jersey’s charter school program.”

Founded in 1999, Marion P. Thomas Charter School enrolls 360 students in kindergarten through eighth grade. Class size is set at about 20 students, with a teacher and a teaching assistant in each class. In 2005, Marion P. Thomas was designated the most improved charter school in the state’s school report card.

Located at 280 Amboy Ave., Metuchen, READS is a full service nonprofit real estate development and consulting firm with a focus on community and economic development. READS provides guidance and direct real estate development services to organizations seeking to develop real estate to meet their organizational and client needs. Since its inception in 2003, READS has assisted more than two dozen organizations, from charter schools seeking their own facilities, to special-needs housing developers.

For more information, call Brian Keenan at (732) 635-1000.

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