

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday, August 31, 2006

**Slaughter Announces \$329,571 Federal Grant to Improve Mental Health of Rochester Students and Families**

**Washington, DC** - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-Fairport), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, is pleased to announce that the Rochester City School District (RCSD) has been awarded a grant of \$329,571 to link local students and their families to mental health resources in Monroe County.

Rep. Slaughter had called on the Department of Education to approve this funding through its Grants to Improve the Mental Health of Children Program.

**“This funding will be used to ensure that our children have access to quality mental health care by providing a direct link between the Rochester City School District and the Monroe County mental health system,”** Rep. Slaughter said. **“Getting our children the emotional and psychological help they need is critical if we hope to keep them engaged in school and happy at home. A fulfilling childhood is every kid’s right, and this grant will help us to make it a reality here in Rochester.”**

The grant will fund the Rochester City School District Mental Health System Integration Demonstration Project, which will last for 18 months. The Project is designed to address gaps in local infrastructure and increase student and family access to quality mental health care by developing innovative links between the RCSD and the Monroe County mental health system.

28 strategies and 81 specific activities designed to achieve this goal will be examined, including procedures and guidelines recommended by the Coalition for Community Schools, the National Association of Student Assistance Professionals, the Center for Program and Policy Analysis, and the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA.

At the top of the list of challenges facing Rochester's youth are a high rate of violent behavior attributed to mental health issues, and the low rate of youth and families seeking mental health care.

The Children's Institute, a local non-profit organization that develops and promotes prevention and early intervention programs and evaluates children's conditions and programs, will be tasked with evaluating the success of the RCSD-Mental Health System Integration Demonstration Project.

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