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NEWS RELEASE

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ST. LOUIS MOSAIC PROJECT



Supporting English Language Learners, The St. Louis Public Schools ESOL Program Signs On to Become Mosaic Ambassador Schools

As the beginning of a new school year is just around the corner, the St. Louis Mosaic Project is proud to announce that the ESOL Bilingual Migrant Program of St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) has joined the Mosaic Ambassador Schools Program. The Mosaic Project continues to connect with institutions that strive to foster a globally minded, internationally inclusive community and its partnership with the ESOL Bilingual Migrant Program will support the mission of making St. Louis the fastest growing region in the US for foreign-born growth by 2020.

SLPS ESOL Program places importance on maintaining an inclusive and welcoming environment for its students, faculty, and parents. The goal of the program is “to insure English Language Learners develop their language skills and achieve academically. In addition, the program involves ELL parents educating them in their rights and responsibilities in the American educational system and supporting their roles as parents in a new culture.” The program provides effective language instruction to English Language learners (ELL) in KG through 12th grade.

"It is a great honor for our ESOL Bilingual Migrant Program to partner with the St. Louis Mosaic Project and be recognized as a network of Mosaic Ambassador Schools." said Alla Gonzalez Del Castillo, who is the director of ESOL Bilingual Migrant Program at SLPS. "This partnership supports our efforts to create a welcoming academic environment for our English Language Learners in Saint Louis Public Schools as a whole and in our 17 ESOL centers as well as in our newcomer program in particular. This partnership also recognizes the work and dedication of our ESOL teachers, staff, and the ESOL Program team who contribute greatly to the success of our English Language Learners".

SLPS ESOL Program already provides services to over 2,400 English Language Learners (ELLs). There are 18 schools with high concentration of ELLs. These schools are referred to as ESOL centers. Elementary ESOL centers include Buder, Mullanphy, Oak Hill, Woerner, Sigel, Mason, Mann, Dewey and Woodward. Middle school ESOL centers include Gateway Middle, Compton Drew, Fanning, Long, and Busch. High school ESOL centers include Gateway STEM, Soldan, and Roosevelt. In addition, the program has a newcomer school, Nahed Chapman New American Academy, which joined the Mosaic Project earlier this year. Moving forward, SLPS ESOL Program will continue to provide language development support to ELLs by strengthening professional development for district teachers working with ELLs. The program will also continue to develop orientations provided to newcomer families and will educate ELL families through a series of parent meetings to help them integrate into U.S. culture and be able to support their child's education.

The St. Louis Public School's mission states that the district "will provide a quality education for all students and enable them to realize their full intellectual potential." Deputy Superintendent of Academics for the SLPS, David Hardy Jr. reiterated this commitment to achieving this mission stating that he is "a proud supporter of our ESOL center schools becoming Mosaic ambassadors. This is an important part of our school district mission; we see it as our duty to do everything we can to be even more welcoming to refugee and immigrant students and families. All of SLPS students have a special place in our hearts and we are willing to do whatever we can to make them successful in safe learning environments and communities and we see this as another great avenue to help us stay true to our mission!"

Vin Ko, St. Louis Mosaic Project Program Manager, stated, "I am excited to see the ESOL programs sign on to become Mosaic Ambassador Schools. The St. Louis Public Schools district understands the importance of making education accessible for English Language Learners, but by becoming Mosaic Ambassador Schools they are truly having an impact on ESOL families, ensuring that they feel welcomed." Ahead of the first day of school on August 17, 2015, the ESOL Program will host a Back to School Festival to make sure that ELLs and their families have all the information they need for the start of school. This event will take place on August 8, 2015, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the ESOL office. They are still looking for donations of water and snacks for their families, if you or someone you may know are interested in giving towards this event please reach out to Mosaic Program Manager Vin Ko, at vko@worldtradecenter-stl.com.

SLPS ESOL Program is a valuable addition to the St. Louis Mosaic Ambassador School Program and will play an important role in achieving Mosaic's many goals. If your school is interested in joining the Ambassador School Program, visit our website at www.stlmosaicproject.org and click on the Education tab or email Betsy Cohen at ecohen@worldtradecenter-stl.com

About the St. Louis Mosaic Project

The St. Louis Mosaic Project was launched in 2012 in response to an economic impact report, outlining St. Louis to be lagging in immigrant growth as well as highlighting the economic benefits of increasing its foreign-born population. The Mosaic Project's goal is to transform St. Louis into the fastest growing metropolitan area for immigration by 2020 and promote regional prosperity through immigration and innovation. This regional initiative is professionally managed by the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, World Trade Center St. Louis, and a 22-Member Committee.

For more information about The St. Louis Mosaic Project, please visit www.StlMosaicProject.org

About the ESOL Program

The ESOL/Bilingual/Migrant Program provides effective and age-appropriate English language instruction (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing), and supports English Language Learners' achievement in all content areas, grades K-12. The program also strives to involve newcomer parents, educating them in their rights and responsibilities in the American educational system and supporting their roles as parents in a new culture. A highly-skilled team of administrators, teachers, and bilingual support staff enhance our ability to meet the academic mission and link our diverse communities to schools.

For more information about the ESOL Program, please visit <http://www.slps.org/Page/26512>