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Governor Christie Announces Innovative Partnership Between Harlem Children's Zone and City of Paterson

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Trenton, NJ – "Furthering his commitment to fostering innovative and creative solutions to provide high-quality education to every New Jersey child, Governor Chris Christie today announced that Harlem Children's Zone and the City of Paterson will partner to launch a pilot program aimed at providing students a unique and comprehensive educational experience. The announcement, made by Governor Christie at the Trenton premiere of the film "Waiting For Superman," establishes a program modeled after what is considered "one of the most ambitious social-service experiments of our time" aimed at rebuilding entire communities. The program will be facilitated by the New Jersey Department of Education and will hopefully serve as the foundation for future partnerships with Harlem Children's Zone.

"Under Geoffrey Canada's leadership, the Harlem Children's Zone has become a national model of what can be accomplished when we move beyond the status quo and institutional impediments that protect failure at the expense of children," said Governor Christie. "Over the coming weeks and months, we will work with Geoffrey and the Harlem Children's Zone to put in place a program in Paterson that will emulate the success of Harlem Children's Zone and give the children of Paterson a renewed sense of hope and opportunity."

The initiative in Paterson will use the Harlem Children Zone's successful model to form a strategic plan that will form extensive partnerships with community organizations. By working together with existing groups, the initiative seeks to rebuild the community and its schools, learning from and building upon the Harlem Children Zone's model.

"Our efforts in Harlem have proved that a community that comes together and puts its young people first can create a radically different environment – one of progress and success – for children to be a part of," said Geoffrey Canada. "Governor Christie is taking great strides to reform educational models to make sure children are our very first priority. I'm proud to stand with the Governor and community leaders to take another step in that direction and give the community of Paterson the educational foundation to succeed."

Harlem Children's Zone's core mission is positive education outcomes for every child through effective schools and community programs, with the final result of graduation from college. The United States Department of Education's highly-touted "Promise Neighborhoods" initiative is premised upon the HCZ model and designed to ensure that school reform and neighborhood revitalization are interconnected. HCZ utilizes an integrated approach to community renewal that focuses on comprehensive support for children from birth all the way through college.

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