

THOMAS C. LEPPERT

MAYOR



NEWS RELEASE

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Mayor Launches “Operation Front Door” Initiative to Transform Schools



Today, Mayor Tom Leppert launched *Operation Front Door* - the fourth of his four promised initiatives to help improve education in Dallas. The event occurred this morning at James Madison High School which was the pilot for the program.

Operation Front Door is a project to transform the “Front Doors” of Dallas ISD schools in all parts of the city. It will create a welcoming environment for learning, and a campus that students, parents, faculty and staff – as well as the surrounding community – are all proud to be a part of.

Operation Front Door will match businesses with specific Dallas ISD schools. Many schools in Dallas are in desperate need of a face-lift, of new plants and trees. They need paved walkways to replace muddy paths and lights to brighten the façade. Children learn better in a school they’re proud of, and it becomes a campus where incidents of vandalism and graffiti are dramatically reduced. The Mayor believes this can transform schools, improve education and change children’s lives.

“Our hope,” says Mayor Leppert, “is that the program is so successful - such a good experience - that companies will first transform the ‘Front Door’ then step through the ‘Front Door’ and become long time partners with the school.”

The business partners are asked to contribute anywhere from \$3,000 to \$50,000 to help redesign the areas at the entrance to the schools, the “front door.” This could range from simple landscaping to adding irrigation and sidewalks, and the students play an

important role in the design process. The Mayor asks the companies to stay engaged with the schools for three years.

Leading the way is **Atmos Energy**. The Dallas-based natural gas utility stepped up to the plate to be the pilot partner on the project. Atmos Energy partnered with “The Great” James Madison High School to help enhance the lawns and frontage leading up to its classic 1916 facade. Madison was chosen, not only because it would boost the “curb appeal” of this historic school, but also with its prominent location on Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, it puts new polish on a South Dallas gem, and uplifts the entire neighborhood.

“First impressions are lasting impressions,” said Dallas ISD Superintendent Michael Hinojosa. “And the new ‘front yard’ to Madison makes the kind of impression that we want, both to the students and staff at the school but also to the community. “

Atmos Energy employees rolled up their sleeves and dug the new irrigation system themselves. The company funded new landscaping, sidewalks, brick paving and a new statue of the school’s mascot.

“If there are those who do not believe that the aesthetics of a campus do not make a positive difference, they obviously have not been at the “Great” James Madison High School,” said Dr. Hinojosa.

Atmos Energy invested \$50,000 cash, more than 900 man hours in the project and made plenty of new friends at Madison along the way. Employees at the Atmos Energy facility a few blocks away will continue to be a part of the school.

“Education is the gift that lasts a lifetime,” said Sandra Doyle, Atmos Energy director of public affairs. “Atmos Energy is committed to giving back to the communities we serve and our emphasis is on young people, the elderly and those who are financially challenged. We’re proud to partner with Mayor Leppert, DISD and the North Dallas Chamber of Commerce on this important project with “The Great” James Madison High School.”

Another key partner, the North Dallas Chamber of Commerce has stepped up to be the facilitator and recruiter for the project. The NDCC will work to find matches for the initial list of schools. We started with 24 schools, several including Madison have already found partners. The schools are located across the city with needs ranging from small to very large. New schools will be added to the list as partners are found. Businesses can find the list of schools online at www.ndcc.org.

Attached is first list of schools in the Dallas ISD that need their Front Doors transformed. Once a business sees a school they’d be interested in partnering with, contact the North Dallas Chamber, or at Dallas ISD, contact Deylan Walker, Specialist, Facilities Services with Dallas ISD at dwalker@dallasisd.org or 972-925-5066.

Once businesses find a match, work with the Dallas ISD on the cost and decide to proceed, they will deposit the funds with the Dallas Education Foundation. The district will draw on the funds as the work is done.

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School Name	Address
Lincoln High School	2826 Hatcher Street, Dallas, TX 75215
Robert T. Hill Middle School	505 Easton Road, Dallas, TX 75218
James Madison (Pilot) **	3000 Martin L. King Jr. Boulevard, Dallas, TX 75215
Atwell Middle School	1303 Reynoldston Lane, Dallas, TX 75232
Rusk Middle School	2929 Inwood Road, Dallas, TX 75235
South Oak Cliff High School **	3601 S. Marsalis Avenue, Dallas, TX 75216
Holmes Middle School	2001 E. Kiest Boulevard, Dallas, TX 75216
North Dallas High School	3120 N. Haskell Avenue, Dallas, TX 75204
Seagoville High School	15920 Seagoville Road, Dallas, TX 75253
Dan D. Rogers Elementary	5314 Abrams Road, Dallas, TX 75214
S. S. Conner Elementary	3037 Greenmeadow Drive, Dallas, TX 75228
Julius Frazier Elementary *	4600 Spring Ave., Dallas, TX 75210
Arlington Park Elementary	5606 Wayside Drive, Dallas, TX 75235
Louise Kahn Elementary	610 N. Franklin Street, Dallas, TX 75211
Nathan Adams Elementary	12600 Welch Road, Dallas, TX 75244
John Neely Bryan Elementary	2001 Deer Path Drive, Dallas, TX 75216
Nancy Moseley Elementary	10400 Rylie Road, Dallas, TX 75217
H. S. Thompson Elementary	5700 Bexar Street, Dallas, TX 75215
James Hogg Elementary	1144 N. Madison Avenue, Dallas, TX 75208
Roger Q. Mills Elementary	1515 Lynn Haven Avenue, Dallas, TX 75216
Robert L. Thornton Elementary	6011 Old Ox Road, Dallas, TX 75241
Thomas Jefferson High School **	4001 Walnut Hill Lane, Dallas, TX 75229
William B. Travis Academy/Vanguard **	3001 McKinney Ave., Dallas, TX 75204

**Already Partnered:

- James Madison HS - Atmos Energy
- South Oak Cliff HS – ValleyCrest Landscaping Development
- Thomas Jefferson HS – Deloitte & Touche
- William B Travis Academy/Vanguard – The Gables