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COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS FUND DROPOUT STUDY

Spokane Public Schools receives \$45,000

Spokane – The Empire Health Foundation, Inland Northwest Community Foundation and Spokane County United Way, collectively have provided \$45,000 to Spokane Public Schools to fund a longitudinal study to identify characteristics of students at greatest risk of dropping out and not graduating on time.

This study is part of the community collaborative efforts of Priority Spokane that identified educational attainment- specifically, increasing high school graduation rates in Spokane Public Schools – as an immediate priority.

“We need to know when and why children in school are getting off track,” said Tim Henkel, Spokane County United Way President and CEO and a member of Priority Spokane.

The Spokane Public Schools study will analyze existing demographic and academic data on every student who is part of the 2008 and 2010 classes within Spokane Public Schools. It will look at student characteristics including poor attendance, failing grades and discipline issues – indicators that predict students at greatest risk for dropping out of school.

Spokane Public Schools Superintendent Nancy Stowell said: “The drop-out risk factors identified in this study will help the schools and community partners match resources to student needs.”

The development of a dropout early warning system is one of three recommendations made in a recent Gonzaga University report on middle school experiences. The Gonzaga report which was commissioned by Priority Spokane also identified high academic expectations and achievement and social support as critical elements for middle school success.

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