

## **BOLD PLANS. BIG DREAMS.**

The Burnham Centennial is an Opportunity to  
Make Chicago Progress a Core Continuing Part of Your Curriculum  
Polk Bros. Center for Urban Education at DePaul University

Embed Chicago meaningfully in the core curriculum of your school.

*Examples of ways to enrich the curriculum and provide service learning that benefits other students or the community.*

- Students learn about Chicago progress through classroom-based, Internet-based, and field trip learning experiences. Students create booklets or exhibits about their ideas about Chicago progress and present their learning to other students.
- Students choose one kind of improvement in Chicago to research and report on in essays they write and illustrate. They create a book about Chicago with those essays and illustrations and donate it to the school library. They might research how the environment has improved, how people have improved transportation, or another kind of progress.
- Students at each grade make maps of different areas of the community and city and then write a guide to their community and city, including examples of how people have made improvements.
- Students research agencies of the city and make a Chicago Resource Guide, listing agencies and how they can help families. They make the guide available through a parent center. They include examples of ways people in a community can work together to improve the community.
- Students choose one priority to improve, such as transportation, parks, environment, and make a plan to make progress at the community level—and carry out the plan.
- Students research and create a school museum about Chicago's progress.
- Students volunteer at a community agency.

Organize ways to recognize and support students' community commitment and Social Emotional Learning

*Examples of ways to strengthen social-emotional development:*

- Organize semester recognition of student projects that result from the curriculum enrichment.
- Organize a School Service Corps of students who are recognized in newsletters and bulletin boards.
- Set up a classroom recognition—each participating class has a laminated certificate of participation posted at the door.
- Prepare certificates that honor the participating students.
- Hold a special recognition event to “launch” a service program—such as the opening of a garden.
- Post and update the number of service learning hours that students complete.
- Invite the alderman and representatives of agencies to come to visit with students to discuss the city's progress—and the students' achievements.

### Plan effective use of Chicago Learning Resource collection.

#### *Examples of ways to put Chicago resources to effective use:*

- Work with the school librarian to organize units that feature Chicago resources.
- Involve a team of teachers in designing activities to use Chicago resources in classroom learning units.
- Arrange for students to write recommended reading reports on books about Chicago.
- Set up a schedule for circulating the materials among classrooms.
- Make books available for parents to check out and learn more about the city.
- Work with teachers to involve students in creating their own books and even websites about the city's progress.

### Dedicate teacher planning time to organize and assess Chicago Learning Progress

#### *Examples of ways to involve teachers in expanding students' understanding of Chicago progress:*

- Set up an inter-grade Chicago Connections team of teachers to plan ways to focus on Chicago progress at different grade levels. Organize teacher planning of projects to relate reading and writing about Chicago progress in the literacy and social studies curriculum.
- Involve teachers in identifying and carrying out service learning that reinforces social emotional learning and literacy as students keep journals and write reports.
- Ask teachers to set professional development goals for their own learning about Chicago progress and to collaborate to make this part of the core curriculum.

### Involve parents actively.

#### *Examples of ways to connect parents:*

- Have students present the initiative to the LSC.
- Organize parent nights to learn about the Chicago progress projects.
- Feature Chicago progress projects in Open Houses and Literacy Nights
- Arrange for parents to have access to the Chicago Learning Resource Collection.
- Include parents in meaningful roles in projects, including community service activities and field trips.

### Connect with Agencies

#### *Examples of ways to link with agencies:*

- Identify local community organization(s) to partner with on service learning projects.
- Involve community and city agencies in presentations to students and parents.
- Collaborate with a community agency on increasing resources available to the school community for after-school and inter-session programs that involve students in learning more about the city and how they can contribute to community progress.
- Set up volunteer projects for students at community agencies during non-school time to contribute to the ways that agency supports progress and to develop skills and citizenship.
- Organize a fund-raising project in which students identify one agency that responds to an important need and raise funds to support that agency's work.
- Have students write a feature about one agency in each school newsletter.
- Involve agency representatives as career day speakers to students—make career day City Service Day so students learn about careers in community service.