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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE

Continuing the Conversation on Improving Calgary's High School Completion Rate Kafé12 Follow-up Event Report Released

CALGARY, AB – The report from the Kafé12 follow-up session held on June 5, 2008 is now posted on www.kafe12.org. The report identifies a community framework that was adopted by the sixty Kafé12 participants who signed on to be involved in the follow-up session. The follow-up session was held to review the report from the original April 10 conversation cafe, and move forward on a community led plan to improve Calgary's high school completion rate.

“Today we have taken the next step in building a community framework and developing a strategic direction that will enable more high school students to graduate with the skills to be life long learners,” said Barbara Burggraf, Executive Director of EducationMatters.

The framework consists of three broad components -- Policy, Partnerships and Public Awareness. Each component is broken down into Collective and Personal Action. Some of the top priorities cited include expanding and adding wellness centres in schools, supporting more mentorship programs and increasing literacy programs. The Report is summarized with a list of next steps which includes recruiting community members into three working groups, one for each broad component, and then to reconvene in the fall to begin developing a strategic action plan.

Participants at both events represented the government, education, business and social service sectors. The current high school completion rate for Calgary is 70 percent (within 5 years of entering high school). The participants at the June 5th session identified a goal of increasing the current rate by 20 per cent by the year 2020.

Kafé12, created by the Funders for Youth* and managed by EducationMatters, is a virtual conversation cafe where the Calgary community can address issues that ensure all children and youth succeed in school. The first issue the Funders chose to tackle was to improve Calgary's high school completion rate. To learn more, contribute to the discussions online, or sign up to become involved, visit www.kafe12.org.

**Funders for Youth are Anonymous Donors, Burns Memorial Fund, Calgary Stampede Foundation, Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority, City of Calgary FCSS, EducationMatters, Norlien Foundation, The Calgary Foundation and the United Way of Calgary and Area.*

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