

Councilmember Head Tours Local Charter School's "Edible Schoolyard"  
And Discusses New Orleans Schools with Deputy Secretary of Education  
And Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding

News Release

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New Orleans  
City Council

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*Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding Janet Woodka, Dr. Tony Recasner of FirstLine Schools, Deputy Secretary of Education Tony Miller and Councilmember Head tour the "Edible Schoolyard" with a school representative*

New Orleans, LA - August 28, 2009 - Earlier this week, District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head met with U.S. Deputy Secretary of Education Tony Miller, Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast

Rebuilding Janet Woodka, and other local officials to tour Samuel J. Green Charter School and the school's innovative "Edible Schoolyard."



*The "Edible Schoolyard"*

[Samuel J. Green Charter School](#) is an open admissions, public charter school operated by [FirstLine Schools](#), a local

nonprofit that directly operates non-selective public schools and develops training programs for teachers and school leaders across New Orleans.

Dr. Tony Recasner, Co-Founder and President of FirstLine Schools and Jay Altman, Co-Founder and CEO of FirstLine Schools and CEO of Samuel J. Green Charter School, led the tour along with other school representatives.



*Councilmember Head, Deputy Secretary of Education Tony Miller, CEO of Samuel J. Green Charter School Jay Altman, and Dr. Tony Recasner tour the library and reading center*

The tour consisted of visits to classrooms, the library and reading center, and the "Edible Schoolyard", kitchen and outdoor classroom. The group also discussed the school's organizational model, funding, teaching practices, and comprehensive approach to the professional development of its teachers, including collaborative lesson planning.



*Deputy Secretary of Education Tony Miller, Dr. Tony Recasner of FirstLine Schools and Councilmember Stacy Head view before and after photos of Samuel J. Green Charter School*

After Hurricane Katrina, the school raised its expectations of food service with a focus on fresh and healthy foods, while still maintaining the local "food culture" - including the traditional red beans and rice on Mondays.

School representatives explained both the history and functionality of the ["Edible Schoolyard"](#) as a hands-on life sciences teaching and learning tool, and a community garden with everything from fresh

basil to ripe strawberries. The creation of the "Edible Schoolyard" was a post-Katrina project of Alice Waters' [Chez Patisse Foundation](#).

Through the "Edible Schoolyard" gardening and cooking classes, students learn the basics of gardening and the importance of the incorporation of fresh fruits and vegetables into a healthy diet.



*Students participate in gardening class in the "Edible Schoolyard"*



*Councilmember Head discusses New Orleans public schools with Deputy Secretary of Education Tony Miller*

Councilmember Head said, "Currently New Orleans' public schools face many challenges and significant barriers to success. Samuel J. Green Charter School is an excellent example of the lasting effect that charter schools are having on the City's education system. By integrating a concept like the "Edible Schoolyard" into the curriculum, the school offers

students an opportunity to learn about science in a unique and exciting way."

### New Orleans City Council

The New Orleans City Council is the legislative branch of New Orleans city government. The Council considers and enacts all local laws that govern the City of New Orleans. The Council also approves the operating and capital budgets for the City, as recommended by the mayor, and continually monitors revenues and expenditures for local government operations. The City Council is also the regulatory body for public utilities. It also reviews and has final say on many land use and zoning matters, as well as considers major economic development projects for the City. As a Board of Review for Orleans Parish, the Council examines appeals of property tax assessments for real estate taxes, and certifies tax rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission. Other responsibilities of the Council include overseeing the operation of the public access television in Orleans Parish.

The City Council is comprised of five districts and two councilmembers-at-large. Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow; Council Vice President and Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura; District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.