



NEWS RELEASE

Greater
Cincinnati
Arts and
Education
Center

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SIGN UNVEILED AT SITE OF NEW SCPA
Project is Moving Forward

Erich Kunzel, Conductor of the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra and Honorary Chair of Greater Cincinnati Arts & Education Center (GCAEC), led students of Schiel Primary School for Arts Enrichment and the School for Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA) in unveiling a permanent sign on the site of the future K-12 SCPA, symbolizing the project's movement into the site preparation phase. The school, supported by a one-of-a-kind partnership, will combine the current Schiel and SCPA schools in one state-of-the-art facility located on the block between Central Parkway and 12th Street in Over-the-Rhine.

"A decade ago we had a vision for education, this wonderful city, Over-the-Rhine, and for the future of the arts in all of our lives," said Kunzel, to an audience that included members of the Cincinnati Board of Education, members of GCAEC, students and their families from the two schools and private sector donors in the project. Despite the freezing temperatures, the sign unveiling was a celebratory milestone for this project that has been over ten years in the works.

In 1996 Kunzel formed GCAEC, a nonprofit organization charged with the task of raising the private sector funds for building the new SCPA, a project that will cost \$72 million for design, construction and land acquisition. As part of a unique solution to this funding challenge, CPS and the State of Ohio teamed up with GCAEC, so that this public school will be created with 31 million private sector dollars.

Tom Klinedinst, Jr., Chairman of GCAEC, said to the crowd gathered, "We are proud of the partnership with CPS and the State of Ohio that has made this all possible and that gives our city a new model for public/private partnership and success in the community... This is an inclusive group effort and an accomplishment for which all of Greater Cincinnati should be proud."

To date GCAEC has raised \$25.7 million in capital and programming support, through the interests and generosity of over 700 individuals, corporations, and foundations. Approximately 90% of the total needed funds have been secured, and it was announced that demolition of the Race and 12th Street property is set for Spring 2007, with a ceremonial groundbreaking taking place Fall 2007. Finalization of architectural drawings and contractor bidding are happening in the interim, while GCAEC continues its efforts to secure the final private sector funding.

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Between performances by students of the two schools – young children from Schiel played violins, and students from SCPA sang – Rosa Blackwell, Superintendent of CPS, and Eileen Reed, President of CPS Board of Education, also spoke to the audience. Blackwell stated the progress that has been made and the plans that are imminent, and Reed reaffirmed the need for a new SCPA, citing the deteriorating buildings Schiel and the current SCPA now occupy.

The permanent sign erected near the corner of Elm Street and Central Parkway showcased a picture of the new school's planned facade – a sweeping “urban curve” dotted by student sculptures on the front walkway, complete with a scrolling marquee and spotlight. The sign is visible to downtown traffic from both Elm Street and Central Parkway. It is intended to affirm for the community that the new SCPA is on its way.

GCAEC was founded in 1996 by Cincinnati Pops Orchestra conductor Erich Kunzel with the goal of creating a world-class arts school in the Washington Park/Music Hall neighborhood of Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine. The school, combining the School for Creative and Performing Arts and Schiel Primary School for Arts Enrichment, will be the first public kindergarten through grade twelve arts school in the United States. The project is made possible by a unique public/private partnership of GCAEC, Cincinnati Public Schools and the State of Ohio. For more information visit www.thenewscpa.org. Donations and pledges can be made through the web site to support building this one-of-a-kind creative and performing arts school.

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