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## **Primrose Schools® Students Send Wishes for America's Children to the White House**

*\$200,000 Early Literacy Program Donation and 200 Voice-Recorded Wishes  
Commemorate Opening of 200<sup>th</sup> Primrose School*

**ATLANTA (Jan. 5, 2009)** – As new leaders head to Washington, Primrose Schools is setting the agenda for early childhood literacy and celebrating its 200<sup>th</sup> school opening with “200 Wishes for America’s Children,” a nationwide initiative to send voice-recorded wishes from Primrose children across the country to our nation’s newly elected officials.

Primrose Schools, the country’s leader in educational child care, will mark its 200<sup>th</sup> school franchise growth milestone with a \$200,000 donation to Reach Out and Read, a nationwide nonprofit that seeks to make literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric primary care. The money was raised by students, staff and families from Primrose Schools nationwide.

“Our 200<sup>th</sup> school opening is a precious opportunity for us to take an active role in addressing America’s crisis in education,” said Jo Kirchner, president and CEO of Primrose Schools.

“Together, we will make our voices known in every Primrose School and local community and in Washington about the importance of early childhood education as parents recognize that investment in education is an investment in their children’s economic future.”

As part of the “200 Wishes for America’s Children” initiative, Primrose Schools is engaging thousands of children who attend its private preschools to record messages about what they wish for all of America’s children in a VoiceQuilt™ keepsake. Wishes from the children will be packaged and sent to President-elect Barack Obama and appointed Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, as well as to the governors of the 16 states that Primrose Schools calls home.

On Jan. 10, 2009, Primrose School at River's Bend, the official 200<sup>th</sup> school located in Maineville, OH, will host a grand opening celebration including family-friendly patriotic activities, the \$200,000 Reach Out and Read donation presentation and a special guest appearance from Dr. Robert Needlman, a nationally acclaimed pediatrician, author of "Dr. Spock's Baby Basics," and co-author of "Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care."

"We are grateful to Primrose for their continued dedication to early childhood literacy in communities across the country," said Dr. Needlman, one of the founders of Reach Out and Read. "We look forward to using this \$200,000 to continue our work encouraging physicians, and nurses, to help parents discover that reading aloud to their children is a great way to enjoy time together and instill a love of books and learning."

The 200<sup>th</sup> school celebration is part of the franchise company's growth strategy. Primrose Schools has opened 40 schools in the past two years alone and plans even more growth over the next five years in markets such as Philadelphia, Phoenix, Chicago, Nashville, Kansas City, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia, Lexington, Louisville, Omaha, St. Louis, Raleigh-Durham and New Jersey. In 2008, Primrose Schools entered into a strategic equity partnership with Roark Capital Group, an Atlanta-based private equity firm. Roark has invested capital in resources to support management's plans for the continued growth of the system.

Visit [www.primroseschools.com/200wishes](http://www.primroseschools.com/200wishes) to watch the wish video, listen to audio of highlights of the voice message wishes from Primrose students across the country and learn more about Primrose School's "200 Wishes For America's Children" initiative.

### **About Primrose Schools**

Founded in 1982, Primrose Schools is the country's leader in early childhood education. Primrose Schools' foundation is based on providing quality, early education and child care services with a balance of learning, character development and play. Developed by and taught exclusively at Primrose Schools, the school's Balanced Learning<sup>®</sup> curriculum dynamically blends child-initiated play and teacher-guided instruction. The company's success, fueled by parents' demand for quality child care, is sustained by individual school owners and teachers. It is the first educational preschool to achieve accreditation by CITA/SACS CASI and CITA/NCA CASI, the prestigious associations recognized as the gold standard in evaluating local public and private schools and universities. Primrose Schools currently operates more than 200 schools in 16 states. The excellent reputation that Primrose Schools has enjoyed for over 25 years has allowed its growth as a franchising company to continue and flourish. For more information: [www.primroseschools.com](http://www.primroseschools.com)

### **About Reach Out and Read**

Reach Out and Read is a national, nonprofit children's literacy program that works with medical providers to reach the children at greatest risk – children aged 6 months to 5 years living at or near poverty. Medical providers participating in Reach Out and Read give books to their youngest low-income patients at checkups and advise their parents about the importance of reading. More than 20 million books have been distributed through Reach Out and Read, which currently serves 25 percent of the most impoverished children in the U.S. The only American literacy program featured at the 2006 White House Conference on Global Literacy, Reach Out and Read is endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Reach Out and Read has one of the strongest records of research support of any primary care intervention. Peer-reviewed studies indicate that parents who get books and literacy counseling from their doctors and nurses are more likely to read to their young children, read to them more often, and provide more books in the home. Low-income children exposed to the program have shown improvements in language development, a critical component of school readiness. Children who participate in Reach Out and Read score 4 to 8 points higher on vocabulary tests, giving 2-year-olds a 6 month head start developmentally.

Reach Out and Read is working to make literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric primary care. More than 50,000 doctors and nurses have been trained by Reach Out and Read since its founding in 1989. This year Reach Out and Read will provide 5.7 million new books to 3.5 million children at 4,121 health care sites in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. International programs modeled on Reach Out and Read have been started in Italy, Israel, the Philippines, England, Bangladesh and Canada. UNESCO awarded Reach Out and Read an international 2007 Confucius Prize for Literacy in recognition of its particularly effective contribution to the fight against illiteracy. For further information, please visit Reach Out and Read's website at [www.reachoutandread.org](http://www.reachoutandread.org).

### **About VoiceQuilt**

VoiceQuilt creates keepsake gifts personalized with a lasting collection of recorded voice messages and memories that make unique gifts for commemorating holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, graduations and other special occasions. Simply by calling a toll-free number from anywhere at any time, family members, co-workers or friends record toasts and tributes, congratulations, encouragement, stories and more. These personal messages – that delight, inspire, encourage and celebrate – are played and preserved by handcrafted keepsake boxes which can be shipped anywhere in the U.S. For more information, visit [www.VoiceQuilt.com](http://www.VoiceQuilt.com) or call 678-424-6597.

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