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**U. S. Senator Richard Blumenthal and Waterbury Mayor Neil O’Leary Celebrate the Success of Early Childhood and Head Start at TEAM Slocum School**

Waterbury CT. – October 27, 2016 - - U. S. Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) recently (Monday – October 24<sup>th</sup>) thanked the staff of TEAM’s Head Start program at Slocum School in Waterbury, where they serve 326 young children and families. In front of an audience of early childhood providers, public school professionals, human services organizations, community leaders, and countless Head Start families, Senator Blumenthal spoke of his early experiences of parenting and how quickly he learned children are such an important part of our lives.

“We owe the very best we can to provide for our children and grandchildren,” said Blumenthal. “Children are our future and we should invest in their future. The Nation needs to come together, work together, look beyond things that divide us. Our diversity and ability to overcome obstacles begins here, children playing and learning together. Our country’s goals should be one nation undivided in support of our children, starting in programs like Head Start and TEAM.”

“Every child deserves access to high quality early education. The Head Start program is vital for child development, and ensures a bright future for children and families here in Connecticut and across the nation. I am incredibly proud of TEAM, Inc.’s passion and commitment to making this program a reality for Waterbury’s children,” said Senator Blumenthal.

Waterbury Mayor Neil O’Leary welcomed everyone to Waterbury, saying “TEAM’s Head Start Program is an incredible opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of every child ages 6 weeks to 5 years old in the City of Waterbury. I understand the many challenges the staff faces on a daily basis and I thank you for your will and desire to take care of the children and families to make a difference in their lives. We are very proud to work with TEAM to leverage these federal dollars directly into the City of Waterbury that is greatly needed in what we seek to accomplish toward a comprehensive Early Childhood system throughout Waterbury – that meets the complex needs of all of Waterbury’s young children & their families.”

David Morgan, TEAM President/CEO echoed O’Leary’s sentiments. “We are extremely proud to say that Head Start is strong and vibrant in the City of Waterbury,” Morgan said. “TEAM works to ensure that 326 young children and families most in need in the City of Waterbury have a *Head Start* and a strong start in life by ensuring them access to high quality early childhood opportunities. Studies have shown that a young child’s brain is rapidly developing more so in the first 3 years than at any other time throughout the human life span, and early experiences are critical in building the foundation for positive outcomes in school and in life. We witness on a

daily basis how access to quality early childhood programs like Head Start and Early Head Start, can educate children, strengthen families, and changes lives.”

Head Starts provide two-generational comprehensive services. In addition to providing high-quality early education to infants/toddlers and preschoolers, it equally works to support the overall well-being of both the child and the parent/family by means of a full array of case management services and family engagement which includes basic needs, health and nutrition, mental health, safety, parent/family goal-setting, connecting parents with community services and educating/empowering parents/families on a path toward self-sufficiency and overall well-being.

Head Start and Early Head Start is federally funded through the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and is a national commitment to give every vulnerable child an opportunity to succeed – it is the most successful early childhood initiative in meeting the complex needs of our most disadvantaged and vulnerable young learners & their families.

“We are thankful to Senator Blumenthal and Mayor O’Leary for their commitment to support TEAM’s quality early learning programs,” said Morgan. “At TEAM Head Start & Early Head Start, we know our children are the stakeholders of the future so we believe in equipping them with the essentials to grow into the dynamic leaders of tomorrow, we remain steadfast in our belief that every child deserves a Head Start”.

For more information on TEAM Slocum School Early Childhood Programs please contact Rukiya Farris @ [RFerris@teaminc.org](mailto:RFerris@teaminc.org) or call 203.757-8888 ext. 232.