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PRESS RELEASE
Parents Advocating School Accountability
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To: News editors, education reporters and editors,
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Updated Academic Scores Confirm Edison School's Bottom Ranking

With 2001 California Academic Performance Index (API) scores newly awarded to schools that were previously missing data, San Francisco's controversial, for-profit Edison Charter Academy (ECA) continues to rank at the very bottom among San Francisco elementary schools - 75th of 75 schools in the district.

The API, awarded by the California Department of Education, gives schools a score based on standardized test results. Scores based on spring 2001 testing were released in October, but many state schools didn't receive scores then because of incomplete data. Five San Francisco schools didn't receive API scores until December.

Bottom-ranked ECA, operated by New York-based Edison Schools Inc., received an API score of 487. San Francisco's highest-scoring school was Clarendon Alternative Elementary School, with a rating of 890 on a scale ranging from 200 to 1,000.

Edison Schools Inc. is currently at the center of controversy over reforming Philadelphia schools. Gov. Mark Schweiker intends to have the state take over the Philadelphia school system this month and give Edison Schools a major role in the district. An original proposal would have disbanded the school board and turned the entire district over to Edison to manage, but that plan was scaled down after opposition by the community and Philadelphia's mayor.

In San Francisco, Edison Schools received international attention last spring when San Francisco's school board moved to revoke ECA's charter. A compromise severed Edison's ties with the San Francisco school district and

allowed Edison to secure a charter from the California state Board of Education.

Edison publicity during that spring 2001 controversy touted ECA as a successful school in a failing district and boasted that its test scores were “soaring” and “sky high.” The school’s ranking at the bottom of the district dramatically discredits Edison’s public relations claims.

Two of Edison’s seven other California schools earned even lower API scores than the San Francisco school’s 487. Edison-McNair Academy in the Ravenswood District, East Palo Alto, scored a 436. Edison-Bethune Charter Academy in Fresno, chartered by the Fresno County Office of Education, scored a 433.

Edison Schools Inc. has raised questions with a claim that 84 percent of schools it manages showed positive gains in 2001. Yet the company claimed that 62 schools showed gains at a time when it says it ran 113 schools - a percentage of 54.8, not 84. And many of the 62 schools for which Edison claimed “positive gains” are severely troubled. Edison Charter Academy, Edison-McNair and Edison-Bethune all showed up on the “gains” list. At least 10 schools on the “positive” list have landed on their states’ lists of troubled schools, and contracts have been severed with Edison for at least seven schools on the “positive” list.

Edison Schools is a nationwide school management firm with stock publicly traded on the NASDAQ, though the 9-year-old company has never made a profit. Edison has attracted ideological support from backers of privatization and school vouchers, and from such powerful conservative bastions as the Wall Street Journal editorial board and the Hoover Institution.

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Rankings of San Francisco Unified School District elementary schools by API
Based on spring 2001 STAR test scores

1. Clarendon Alternative 890
2. Alamo 880
3. Lawton 875
4. Robert Louis Stevenson 843
5. Jefferson 838
6. Alice Fong Yu 837
7. Claire Lilienthal 836
8. West Portal 833

9. Argonne 831
10. Ulloa 819
11. Commodore Sloat 816
11. Longfellow 816
13. Rooftop 812
14. Yick Wo 806
15. Francis Scott Key 805
16. George Peabody 795
17. Sutro 794
18. Lakeshore 789
18. Sherman 789
20. Cabrillo 786
21. George Moscone 776
22. Frank McCoppin 775
23. Lafayette 765
23. Sunset 765
25. John Yehall Chin 749
26. Garfield 742
27. E.R. Taylor 729
28. Spring Valley 724
29. Gordon Lau 713
29. Redding 713
31. William de Avila 711
32. New Traditions 709
33. Rosa Parks 690
34. Jean Parker 687
35. S.F. Community 685
36. Sunnyside 677
37. Grattan 676
37. Guadalupe 676
39. Alvarado 675
39. Jose Ortega 675
41. Visitacion Valley 674
42. Bessie Carmichael 668
43. Cobb 662
44. Creative Arts Charter 647
45. Miraloma 646
46. Cleveland 639
47. Buena Vista 638
48. Sheridan 637
49. McKinley 617
50. Treasure Island 617
51. John Swett 599
52. Monroe 598
53. El Dorado 596
54. 21st Century 595
54. Glen Park 595
56. Cesar Chavez 594
57. Bryant 591
57. George W. Carver 591

59. Daniel Webster 591
60. Junipero Serra 589
61. Tenderloin Community 583
62. Hillcrest 569
63. Malcolm X 564
64. Golden Gate 549
65. Harvey Milk 545
66. Bret Harte 535
67. Starr King 526
68. Fairmount 525
69. Charles R. Drew 519
69. Marshall 519
71. John Muir 504
72. Sanchez 501
73. Paul Revere 499
74. Leonard R. Flynn 498
75. Edison Charter Academy* 487

*Edison Charter Academy is no longer a San Francisco Unified School District school and is now chartered by the state of California.

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