The Learning Partnership Launches New Education Report – Calls for National Dialogue on Public Education

May 9, 2003 – The Learning Partnership (TLP) released its first-ever Progress Report on the quality of publicly funded education in Canada entitled, ***Measuring Success***.

In it, the organization that is best known for organizing the annual **Take Our Kids To Work**™ day, pulls together the results of major standardized tests administered to Canadian students over the past 10 years – and their conclusions are encouraging.

"Overall, the findings of the report indicate there is much to celebrate", said TLP President and Chief Executive Officer Veronica Lacey. "But, there is still a lot we do not know about how success is achieved in our public education system. It is now time to look beyond the numbers and the test results and find out more about all of the factors that work together to help Canadian students reach their full potential."

TLP produced the ***Progress Report on the Quality of Public Education in Canada – Measuring Success*** in collaboration with Ottawa-based Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN). The report provides a concise overview of how Canadian students measure up – both within their own province or territory and in comparison to the rest of the world.

"The suggestion that Canada's academic achievement has been declining doesn't match the facts," says CPRN President, Judith Maxwell. "Results are improving over time and compared to most countries, including our major competitors in the U.S. and the U.K., Canada is doing very well."

The Progress Report also highlights two other dimensions of success: the extent to which academic progress is shared among *all* students, regardless of socio-economic background, and the trend in high school dropout rates.

Canada, along with Finland and Japan, shows less variation than other countries between test scores of students from high socioeconomic status families and those of students from less well-off families.

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As for high school dropout rates, considerable progress has been made in reducing them over the decade of the nineties. Still, rates for boys remain high, at a national average of 15%, compared to girls at 9%.

"The success of public education can be measured on many dimensions," says Lacey. "What shows up in the picture depends on which lens you choose and where you point the camera."

The Report notes that many factors contribute to the success of children in school. Some relate to the classroom, others to the family, and still others to the community.

"Schools, educators and governments aren't the only ingredients of success," says Maxwell. "Parents and communities also play vital roles and must be part of the discussion."

> "We hope these reports draw parents and a wider public into this important national conversation," said Ms. Lacey. "The Learning Partnership, which brings together business, government, educators, and the community is ideally suited to this role. We want to identify the ingredients of success and the part each of us can play in providing the best public education possible for our children."

To get a copy of the report, parents and other interested Canadians are encouraged to visit the TLP Web site at www.tlp.on.ca or the CPRN Web site at www.cprn.org. Additionally, TLP and CPRN hope to encourage stakeholder feedback through an online questionnaire.

Measuring Success is the first in a series of Progress Reports. It was officially launched at TLP's Annual Tribute Dinner on May 8, 2003.

You can access or download a copy of this document by clicking here.

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