

Stay **in** School

Show up. Every day. It matters.

Media Advisory

Contact: Sarah Tanner
United Way of Pioneer Valley
(413) 693-0227; stanner@uwpv.org
Azell Cavaan; Springfield Public Schools
(413) 787-7575; cavaana@sps.springfield.ma.us

Community Launches *Stay In School* Initiative Monday

Springfield—Educators, students and parents of students will join business leaders, United Way of Pioneer Valley President and CEO Dora Robinson, Mayor Domenic Sarno and School Superintendent Daniel Warwick to launch *Stay In School*, a major community initiative, **on Monday, March 25 at 9 a.m. at Putnam Vocational Technical Academy** *[Note: this event is rescheduled from March 19 which was postponed due to inclement weather.]*

The campaign will engage the entire community—schools, students, parents, media, business leaders and others—in reaching out to families and adults responsible for children in Springfield Public Schools to play a role in encouraging daily attendance. The launch will unveil the “Show up. Every Day. It Matters. Stay In School” campaign that has been developed by the United Way, lead agency in the initiative, and Springfield Public Schools.

Adelaida Ortiz, a mother of three children, and Ariana Williams who will be among the first graduating class at the newly-built Putnam this spring, will speak and be available to media at the event.

Stay In School is a community initiative designed to increase student attendance in Springfield schools, as research shows that daily attendance leads to high school graduation and offers a pathway to life success. High school graduates are more likely to avoid negative behaviors, have higher incomes and live longer, healthier lives.

Recently, Springfield Public Schools announced the four-year high school graduation rate had increased from 52.1% in 2011 to 56.6% in 2012. The goal of the *Stay In School* initiative is to increase the graduation rate to 77.4% by the year 2015. Materials rendered in both English and Spanish will be unveiled at the launch.

---30---



www.StayInSchoolSpringfield.org

