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DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

April 1, 2010

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Dear Friend:

Great things are happening here at Ellington. One week the Show Choir is singing back-up at Stevie Wonder's benefit concert and the next week the New Washingtonians are performing *again* for a jazz performance at the White House. Many students are participating in poetry and other arts competitions throughout the city and winning top prizes. Alumni are continuing to carry the Ellington legacy -- just this year Muhsinah Abdul-Karim and Christylez Bacon both were nominated for the GRAMMYS!

We continue to make significant strides in keeping Ellington's unique arts programs running. However, in spite of our fundraising efforts, community support and student and alumni achievement, we still face many challenges that prevent us from reaching our financial goals. The anticipated budget cuts from DCPS for the 2010-2011 school year are sure to impact our staffing levels and the resources available to our students. With rising enrollment numbers and the decline in funds, the quality of the academic and arts education will be compromised.

We are on our way to meeting this goal but need your help to raise the remaining \$350,000 by August 1st to continue our arts programs at their current staffing levels.



At Ellington, every one of our teachers is a critical component to both the academic and artistic success of our students. They work above and beyond what is expected of them, because they believe in Ellington's mission and our students' artistic and academic potential. The teachers' commitment to these young people is what makes Ellington stand out as one of the best schools in the region. Our exceptional graduation and college acceptance rates further punctuate our model of excellence, but without your help we won't be able to continue the specialized coaching our kids require to get into college.

Please support Ellington in any way you can to continue our 35 year tradition of excellence in arts education. Our teachers have earned their students' trust and students, in return, have performed at the highest imaginable artistic levels.

Please show your support for our teachers and students by giving generously to the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. We are deeply grateful for every contribution.

Sincerely,

**Ellen K. Copley
Executive Director**

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