

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GERALDINE R. DODGE FOUNDATION DONATES \$20,000 TO THE DISTRICT'S CONFIDENCE CLOSETS INITIATIVE

Funds will help district's adolescent students access personal hygiene items they cannot afford

PATERSON – Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer expressed her gratitude today to the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation for their generous donation of \$20,000 to the district's Confidence Closets initiative. The Confidence Closets help provide students in grades 6 through 12 access to the personal hygiene products they need but often cannot afford.

“We are extremely grateful to everyone at the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation for their generous support of our Confidence Closets and the role they play in helping students stay in school,” said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. “Inflation continues to impact Paterson families by forcing them to make choices between buying groceries, clothes, and other necessities that can make toiletries fall by the wayside. The Confidence Closets help us ensure that students will not miss class because they cannot get the hygiene products they need to be at their very best in school.”

“At the Dodge Foundation, we are proud to support the Confidence Closets initiative and their mission to ensure all kids have access to the hygiene products they need to thrive in and out of school,” said Tanuja M. Dehne, President and CEO of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. “Our foundation is committed to building a just and equitable New Jersey, and we are eager to support organizations, including this initiative and the many community partners across Paterson, who are critical to that effort.”

The Dodge Foundation and Paterson Public Schools are participating partners in Montclair State University's One Square Mile initiative, [which was launched in February](#) to aid in the City of Paterson's community development efforts. The Dodge Foundation has awarded a \$1 million grant to the university, which will use it to establish Full Service Community School services at the district's Eastside High School.

Paterson Public Schools launched The Confidence Closets in July in partnership with the *Serve Our Schools* initiative, a joint, unified effort of Paterson churches and other faith-based organizations committed to helping to fulfill the needs of Paterson students and their families. The goal of the Confidence Closet is to provide toiletries to the 11,500 Paterson Public Schools students in grades 6 through 12. The Dodge Foundation's donation will help replenish the district's supply of toiletries being distributed at the schools' Confidence Closets. Pastor Matt Andersen, Executive Director of Star of Hope Ministries, Inc. leads *Serve Our Schools*, which provides warehouse space and helps maintain supplies of personal hygiene products through donation drives and other community outreach efforts.

The Dodge Foundation's \$20,000 donation follows a generous donation of more than 28,500 products from the Colgate Palmolive Company and a contribution from the North Jersey Federal Credit Union.

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Paterson – A Promising Tomorrow
Together We Can*



Those who wish to support The Confidence Closets may do so in the following ways:

1. Items can be donated at the Paterson Public Schools Central Office Building, 90 Delaware Ave., Paterson

2. A monetary donation with a check for the purchase of items can be made to:

The Fund for Paterson Public Schools
90 Delaware Ave., Paterson, N.J. 07503
Payable to The Fund for Paterson Public Schools.
Write “Confidence Closets” in the memo of the check.

OR

Star of Hope Ministries
34 Broadway, Paterson, N.J. 07505
Payable to Star of Hope Ministries.
Write “Confidence Closets” in the memo of the check.

3. A monetary donation can be made online via PayPal to the handle @fundforpps or at www.sohm.org/schools

All monetary donations are tax-deductible.

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