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SER-Niños Celebrates Grand Opening of New Gulfton Campus

Houston, TX – On Tuesday, November 15, 2011, State Representative Scott Hochberg and Houston City Council Member C.O. “Brad” Bradford, along with numerous city officials and police officers, joined the SER-Niños Charter School community of students, teachers, business partners, and area residents to celebrate the ribbon cutting of the new SER-Niños campus at 5919 Dashwood Drive in Houston’s densely populated Gulfton community. The new campus represents an expansion of SER-Niños’ award-winning, dual-language program that has served Southwest Houston for the past 15 years.

The new school site was formerly a dilapidated apartment complex that had been red-tagged by the city after Hurricane Ike and had become a major community problem serving as a haven for street gangs and drug activity. Prior to the school construction project, the Houston Police Department reported that they had received over 300 service calls in 2009 regarding illegal activity on the property. Speaking to the enthusiastic audience in attendance for the ribbon cutting, Police Department Captain Steven Spears stated that a huge problem had been removed from the community.

The SER-Niños Charter School Board of Directors, led by Houston attorney Dominique Varner and former City Council member Ray F. Driscoll, purchased the property in the fall of 2009 and contracted with the architectural firm, Merriman-Holt to design and build a beautiful new elementary school for over 300 neighborhood children. This urban renewal effort has earned accolades from elected officials, business owners in the community, and area residents.

Established in 1996, SER-Niños provides an academically rigorous, dual-language (English-Spanish) program to its Pre-K through 8th grade students. Ninety-four percent of the student population is designated “at-risk” by the state. In spite of this seeming obstacle, SER-Niños holds the coveted *Texas Education Agency Recognized District* rating for the 2010-2011 school year. SER-Niños is also a three-time winner of the *Governor’s Educator Excellence Award*.