



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Kelley Foundation Donates \$50,000 Benefiting Gateway College Prep Campus**

Georgetown, Tx – The W.D. Kelley Foundation of Georgetown has donated \$50,000 to Orenda Education to assist with the physical expansion and operations of Gateway College Preparatory School, a public school of choice now serving more than 600 Williamson County students in grades K-12.

“We keep hearing great comments about this school and the W.D. Kelley Foundation is happy to support it,” said local attorney Dale Illig, president of the foundation.

The monies are dedicated to the current building campaign at Gateway that is appropriately named, “Building a Dream.” Building new facilities has been in the school’s plans since its inception in 2009. Over that timeframe, the enrollment has steadily increased at a rate of more than 50 percent per year.

“The demand for Gateway is increasing in our service area, and we want to expand the facilities to meet that demand,” said Richard N. Rickey, Orenda Education Chief Executive Officer. “Building now will allow us to accept even more students who will benefit by developing strong leadership skills that will last a lifetime and building a strong academic foundation upon which they can continue their future educational endeavors,” Rickey said.

As a public charter school, Gateway receives about 70 percent of the funding that other public schools receive. That is due to charter schools not being authorized by the Texas Legislature to receive tax-related revenues that surrounding school districts receive to pay for building construction, maintenance and/or facility lease costs. That funding inequity amounts to \$2,009 less per student per year, Rickey said. “As a result of that discrepancy, most charter schools are located in underutilized retail space, abandoned grocery stores, church basements or temporary modular buildings. We believe our students deserve better,” he said.

Rickey said the Kelley Foundation donation will benefit Gateway College Prep School in a number of ways, including “providing a revenue source that is necessary to assure the school operates efficiently and economically while maintaining our small school atmosphere.”

Phase I of the current building campaign is due to start after the first of the year with construction of the school’s first permanent building, a multi-purpose building that will house a gymnasium floor and space for student assemblies. Additional new modular buildings will be erected on the 40-acre site adjacent to Country Road 111 (Westinghouse Road) to help accommodate Gateway’s increasing classroom needs. Construction of a student union building, performance center and permanent classrooms are planned in future phases, which will coincide with additional successful fundraising efforts.

Gateway’s open enrollment period for next school year (2012-13) will start on February 1. Prior to completing an enrollment form, interested student families are required to meet with the Head of School or guidance counselor, and attend an information session entitled “Gator Bites,” which will meet every Thursday evening during January at the school site. For more information, persons can call 512-868-4947 or go to the school website at [www.gatewaycps.org](http://www.gatewaycps.org).

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