

For more information contact:
Sandy V. Rodriguez
CPS Office of Communications
Phone: 773.553-1620

Heidi Wilson
Philips Medical Systems
Tel: 978 659 7302,
email: heidi.wilson@philips.com

Jane Sinclair
**Schwartz Communications for
Philips Medical Systems**
Tel: 781 684 0770,
email: janes@schwartz-pr.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
February 26, 2003

Chicago Public School Students Learn to Save Lives

CPS Distributes Philips Medical Systems Defibrillators to Schools

Chicago—Students at more than 50 Chicago public elementary and high schools will learn to save lives by using automated external defibrillators---a device designed to resuscitate victims of sudden cardiac arrest.

“Our students spend six to eight hours a day in our schools,” said Arne Duncan, Chicago Public Schools chief executive officer. “When emergencies happen, we not only want adults to be prepared, but our students as well.”

At Curie High School, 4959 S. Archer Ave., students will be trained to use the defibrillator on **Friday, Feb. 28**. Students will be shown a video on cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in the morning and afterwards participate in a "hands on" demonstration. Students will also be given an introduction to the defibrillator, its purpose and a brief demonstration. The media is invited to the **hands-on demonstration at 1 p.m.**

CPS will install Philips HeartStart defibrillators into 51 high schools and eight (8) elementary schools. Additionally, 13 CPS stadiums will also receive defibrillators. The defibrillator program will initially be implemented as a pilot program. The program is focusing on schools that are already participating in the American Heart Association’s CPR in the Schools program, a training program that educates school students in adult and pediatric CPR, choking and injury prevention. Since the CPR program launched in 2001, more than 50 CPS schools have participated and more than 120 faculty and staff have been certified in CPR and qualify as trainers.

.-more-

Two faculty members, such as the nurse or gym teacher, at each school have been trained in CPR and the use of a defibrillator. CPS is working with the American Heart Association to train school faculty who will in turn be authorized to train appropriate students in accordance with AHA guidelines. Training will take place at schools throughout the year.

The defibrillator program is designed to protect students, faculty, parents and other visitors from sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), which claims more than 250,000 lives annually in the U.S. SCA can strike anyone, anywhere and at any time, often without warning. Early defibrillation is recognized as the definitive treatment for ventricular fibrillation, the abnormal heart rhythm most often associated with sudden cardiac arrest. Yet, less than five percent of SCA victims survive largely because defibrillators do not reach them in time. For every minute that goes by without defibrillation, a cardiac arrest victim's chances of survival decrease by about 10 percent. After 10 minutes without defibrillation, few attempts at resuscitation are successful. The American Heart Association estimates that 40,000 more lives could be saved annually in the U.S. alone if defibrillators were more widely available and could reach victims more quickly.

“Chicago Public Schools should be held up as a national model for their commitment to implementing a school-based public access defibrillation program,” said Deborah DiSanzo, vice president and general manager for cardiac resuscitation at Philips Medical Systems. “Philips is proud to work with Chicago Public Schools and a growing number of other school systems across the country to develop and sustain comprehensive school-based early defibrillation programs designed to safeguard faculty and students from sudden cardiac arrest.”

The Chicago Public Schools is the nation's third-largest school district and the second-largest employer in Illinois, with more than 43,000 employees. The school system operates 600 schools and serves 437,000 students.