



## ***Sisulu Children's Academy To Become The Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem; Name Changed to Honor Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker***

Leaders of the Sisulu Children's Academy announced that the school has unanimously voted to rename itself "The Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem" in honor of civil rights and community leader, Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, and his wife, Mrs. Theresa Ann Walker.

Founded in 1999, The Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem is New York State's oldest public charter school and is, by many measures, one of the highest scoring public charter schools in New York City. 90.4% of Sisulu-Walker fifth graders scored in levels 3 and 4 on the New York City ELA (reading) test this year (2004-2005). This compares to a 63.7% score for the City overall, and is the highest score for any public charter school in New York City. 76.7% of Sisulu-Walker's fifth graders scored in levels 3 and 4 in math, vs. 46.1% for the City overall. Sisulu-Walker's 90.4% ELA score is more than 1.7x higher than the 51.9% score for traditional public schools in District 5 where most Sisulu-Walker students live. Sisulu-Walker's math score of 76.7% is almost 2.3x higher than the 33.5% score for District 5.

Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker is a renowned pastor, author, lecturer and advocate for human rights. He served as Chief of Staff to Dr. Martin Luther King during critically important years of the American civil rights movement. From September 1967 through September 2004, he served as Senior Pastor and CEO of the Canaan Baptist Church of Christ in Harlem. He is a widely traveled lecturer and the author of twenty-seven books, including Common Thieves, the Harvard Paper and Soweto Diary. In a 1993 *Ebony* magazine poll, Dr. Walker was named as one of the



fifteen greatest African-American preachers in the nation. Dr. Walker worked closely with Victory Schools and the school's trustees to establish the school and later became a Senior Advisor and National Chairman for Victory Schools.

"I am truly overwhelmed that the Sisulu Board would choose to honor Theresa Ann and me in this manner," said Dr. Walker. "We are humbled and honored to have the Walker name alongside that of Walter and Albertina Sisulu." The Sisulu school was originally named for Walter and Albertina Sisulu, leaders in the civil rights movement in South Africa. As Secretary-General of the African National Congress and as a close friend, advisor and ally of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu was at the forefront of the struggle against South African apartheid for over five decades. He spent 26 years in prison with Nelson Mandela as a result of these efforts.

"Both Walter Sisulu and Dr. Walker have endured tremendous persecution and hardship in their struggles for human and civil rights," said William Allen, Chairman of the school's Board of Trustees. "We are thrilled to honor their accomplishments and selflessness by having both of their names grace our school."

"Dr. Walker played a central role in the creation of the Sisulu school," said Steven Klinsky, the founder of Victory Schools and a founding trustee of Sisulu-Walker. "He is a great role model and a great friend, and all of us involved with the school are so proud to see him and Mrs. Walker honored now."

Sisulu-Walker is a public charter school enrolling approximately 225 students in grades kindergarten through fifth. The school's principal is Dr. Norma Figueroa-Hurwitz, a distinguished New York City principal widely known for her outstanding instructional leadership

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 31, 2005



CONTACT  
Dr. Norma Hurwitz, (212) 663-8216  
The Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem

---

and the superior academic achievement of her students. You can learn more about Sisulu-Walker  
by visiting [www.sisuluwalker.org](http://www.sisuluwalker.org).