
NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Elliot Krieger, Communications - (401) 222-8471

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Governor Chafee, Commissioner Gist celebrate Digital Learning Day Officials visit Providence school to see progress made under technology grant

In celebration of the 2nd national Digital Learning Day, Governor Lincoln D. Chafee, Providence Mayor Angel Taveras, Education Commissioner Deborah A. Gist, and other elected officials visited the Pleasant View School, in Providence, today (February 6) to check on the progress the school has made through its technology grant.

Last year, the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE) awarded the school the first Rhode Island Innovation Powered by Technology Model School grant. The school is using the two-year, \$470,000 grant to transform its instructional practices through the use of technology.

“Technology has the potential to improve our lives at home and in the workplace, and it is time that we use technology to benefit our schools, teachers, and students as well,” Governor Chafee said. “Principal Field and the teachers and students of Pleasant View are our pioneers in exploring the potential of digital tools to advance learning and achievement. Their progress demonstrates the importance of investing in technology and infrastructure in our schools.”

“Providence is pleased to participate in Digital Learning Day and to celebrate the strides teachers and students are making through innovative technologies,” said Providence Mayor Angel Taveras. “Keeping pace with the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century requires innovation throughout our education system. Advances in digital learning can play an important role in our efforts to support teaching and learning and transform Providence into the best urban school district in America.”

“We are pleased to see the progress being made by the Rhode Island pioneers of digital learning at the Pleasant View School,” said State Senator Edward J. O’Neill, co-chair of the Joint Legislative Commission on E-Books. “The collaboration between the Department of Education, the Joint Legislative Commission, and the Providence school system is evidence that a learning revolution is possible and is underway in Rhode Island.”

“In visiting Pleasant View, we can envision how we will use technology in our schools to personalize learning, to provide an infinite number of advanced courses, and to create flexible schedules to meet students’ varied needs,” said Commissioner Gist. “What we see today at Pleasant View may be what we see someday across all schools in Rhode Island – the future of education in our state.”

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Telephone 401-222-4600 **Fax** 401-222-6178 **TTY** 800-745-5555 **Voice** 800-745-6575

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“We are so proud of the tremendous use of education technology at Pleasant View Elementary School,” said the Providence Schools Superintendent, Dr. Susan Lusi. “Digital Learning Day is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate this work and to highlight the amazing emerging technologies available to support our schools and student learning.”

With its Model School grant, the Pleasant View School is in the process of:

- implementing an extended daily schedule for targeted, small-group learning;
- increasing student-centered instruction and instructional time;
- allowing students to spend at least half their school day with online learning;
- making content come alive with integrated multimedia experiences through technology;
- enabling students to proceed with learning at their own pace;
- adopting flexible schedules for instructional time; and
- redefining “classrooms” as “flexible learning environments.”

Pleasant View is also using these funds for extensive professional development for teachers as well as to purchase equipment.

A year ago, RIDE announced a grant of up to \$470,000 over two years to support the redesign of a school that will use technology to transform education and encouraged all school districts, state-operated schools, and charter public schools to apply for this Innovation Powered by Technology Model School grant.

RIDE asked applicants to propose a school site at which they would create a technology-rich learning environment that would fundamentally rethink and restructure teaching and learning through such initiatives as digital curriculum, gaming, one-to-one computing, virtual-learning environments, expanded learning opportunities, and flexible scheduling.

As the recipient of the grant, Pleasant View has become a pilot program to help launch a statewide initiative in innovations powered by technology.

RIDE awarded the grant through a competitive-bid process, based in part on student need. A team from RIDE and a team of outside experts reviewed 12 grant applications as part of the award process.

Note: [Digital Learning Day](#) is a national campaign that celebrates educators and the potential of technology in education, organized by the Alliance for Excellent Education.

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