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NEWS RELEASE

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Governor, Commissioner award technology grant to Providence school Pleasant View Elementary School to receive funds to transform education

At a surprise news conference this morning (May 7, 2012) at the Pleasant View Elementary School, in Providence, Governor Lincoln D. Chafee and Education Commissioner Deborah A. Gist announced that the school is the recipient of the first Rhode Island Innovation Powered by Technology Model School Grant.

The \$470,000 grant will finance a plan that educators at the Pleasant View Elementary School developed to redesign the school and transform its instructional practices through the use of technology.

“To prepare our students for success in the global economy, we must encourage innovations and we must invest in technology that can advance learning and achievement,” said Governor Chafee. “We are pleased to provide this support for the students and educators at the Pleasant View Elementary School, and we hope to move forward with the technology bond I have proposed that will bring broadband wireless access to every classroom in Rhode Island.”

“I am committed to improving public education across Providence and equipping our students with the necessary skills to compete. I applaud Pleasant View Elementary for their forward-looking leadership to bolster their students’ technology skills, and I thank Governor Chafee for the partnership we have forged to strengthen our schools,” said Mayor Angel Taveras. “Through this grant, I am confident that Pleasant View will set a model for other schools across the city to improve technology access and resources for all students.”

“Bringing digital technology and virtual learning into our schools and classrooms will empower teachers and students alike,” said George D. Caruolo, Chairman of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. “I congratulate the educators and students from Providence and the Pleasant View Elementary School for developing an excellent proposal on innovation through technology. We look forward to helping them put their plan into action.”

“Today, we are taking a significant step that will bring the Pleasant View Elementary School and other schools across our state to the forefront of virtual learning,” said Commissioner Gist. “Our students, teachers, and families already use digital technology in every facet of their lives – and it is time we bring digital learning into our schools in a bold and dramatic way. Through our Innovation Powered by Technology Model School Grant, we can transform the way we think about the school room, the school day – and even about school itself. We are counting on the students, teachers, and leaders at Pleasant View to be our digital pioneers – guiding us toward new frontiers for education.”

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“We are so thrilled for Pleasant View Elementary,” said Dr. Susan Lusi, Superintendent of Providence Schools. “Dr. Field and her team have put enormous efforts into creating a vision for the future of the school, and this funding gives them the traction and the resources to begin immediately executing that vision to improve student achievement and make Pleasant View a top-notch place for teaching and learning.”

With this grant, Pleasant View Elementary School will:

- implement an extended daily schedule for targeted, small-group learning;
- increase student-centered instruction and instructional time;
- allow students to spend at least half their school day with online learning;
- make content come alive with integrated multimedia experiences through technology;
- allow students to proceed with learning at their own pace;
- adopt flexible schedules for instructional time; and
- redefine “classrooms” as “flexible learning environments.”

Pleasant View will use these funds for extensive professional development for teachers as well as to purchase equipment – creating three computer labs and purchasing 110 laptops for student use.

Through its partnerships with the Capital Good Fund, Broadband Rhode Island, and the Economic Development Corporation, Pleasant View will use technology to connect with parents in the community through free digital literacy classes and other online programs. Pleasant View will also work in partnership with the neighboring Highlander Charter School to share promising practices.

In January, 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 will become a pilot program to help launch a statewide initiative in innovations powered by technology. Pleasant View will launch implementation during the coming school year (2012-13) and refine the process during the 2013-14 school year.

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.

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