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Norwalk Public Schools Expands Participation in Verizon Innovative Learning, Bringing Internet Access, Devices and Technology Coaches to More Local Schools

In partnership with Digital Promise, Verizon Innovative Learning will welcome five Norwalk Public Schools for the 2024-25 school year

Norwalk, Conn. (March 7, 2024) - Norwalk Public Schools is expanding its participation in Verizon Innovative Learning, Verizon's education initiative which addresses barriers to digital inclusion. In partnership with Digital Promise, the Verizon Innovative Learning Schools program works side-by-side with schools and districts to provide free technology devices, access to the internet and innovative STEM learning programs, giving students in under-resourced schools the technology, education and opportunity they deserve. Being part of the program will keep students connected, helping to facilitate learning wherever it's taking place.

In addition to reliable access for every student and teacher, Verizon Innovative Learning Schools also equips each school with a technology coach and provides robust professional development support for teachers to effectively integrate technology into the classroom.

Brien McMahon High School, Center for Global Studies, Norwalk High School, P-Tech Norwalk, and Roton Middle School are among the 34 new schools joining the 11th cohort of Verizon Innovative Learning Schools, bringing the program to 626 middle and high schools nationwide. These schools join three other Norwalk Public Schools - Nathan Hale Middle School, Ponus Ridge STEAM Academy, and West Rocks Middle School - already participating in Verizon Innovative Learning.

In addition to free Chromebooks with accompanying Verizon data plans for every student and teacher beginning in fall 2024, participating schools will be assigned a full-time coach to train teachers in effectively integrating technology into their lessons.

"At Norwalk Public Schools, we are committed to providing excellent and equitable educational opportunities for our scholars. The Verizon Innovative Learning initiative allows us to put the future in the hands of our scholars and our educators, to prepare them for an ever-changing world. We understand how important digital technology is in today's and tomorrow's workforce, and our scholars will have a leg up thanks to this partnership with Verizon," said Dr. Alexandra Estrella, Superintendent of Norwalk Public Schools.

"At Verizon, we all know how critical access to technology and skills development is in today's digital world," said Mario Acosta-Velez, Region Director, Verizon Local Engagement and Corporate Social Responsibility. "That's why we are proud to bring Verizon Innovative Learning Schools to Norwalk Public Schools and enable students to develop the skills, knowledge, and capabilities to be successful

and become the next generation of STEM leaders.”

Verizon Innovative Learning is driving academic improvements.* In fact, 78 percent of teachers reported that Verizon Innovative Learning enhanced their ability to differentiate instruction and 77 percent said the program enhanced student engagement.*

These efforts to support digital inclusion are part of Citizen Verizon, Verizon’s responsible business plan to move the world forward for all. Learn more about the Verizon Innovative Learning Schools program and how to apply at verizon.digitalpromise.org.

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**Source: Westat (2022): Verizon Innovative Learning Teacher Survey June 2022

About Verizon Innovative Learning: Verizon Innovative Learning, Verizon’s award-winning education initiative, is celebrating over a decade of commitment to addressing barriers to digital inclusion for students and teachers. Since 2012, the program has committed \$1 billion in market value to support digital equity, reaching over 7 million students. Verizon Innovative Learning provides free technology, internet access and emerging technology-infused learning programs to students in under-resourced communities—enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence needed to build an innovative workforce of the future. In 2021, Verizon launched Verizon Innovative Learning HQ, a next-gen online education portal that provides free access to immersive extended reality (XR) educational experiences to all educators, including K-12 teachers, nationwide. A key program under Citizen Verizon, the company’s responsible business plan for economic, environmental and social advancement, Verizon Innovative Learning is helping to drive the company’s commitment to provide 10 million youths with digital skills training by 2030. Learn more at citizenverizon.com.

About Norwalk Public Schools: At Norwalk Public Schools, our mission is to provide an excellent and equitable education so that all students graduate future-ready as civically responsible, globally engaged and positive contributors to an ever-changing and diverse world. Reflecting our diverse community, NPS families speak 59 different languages and represent 70 different countries.

Serving nearly 12,000 students, Norwalk Public Schools consists of four high schools, four middle schools, 13 elementary schools and one inclusive pre-school. NPS high school programs offer International Baccalaureate diploma and career programs; a renowned global studies magnet school; pathways in healthcare, marine science and digital media; and the opportunity to earn an industry recognized associate’s degree along with a high school diploma. PreK through middle school students can take advantage of magnet programs focused on language, character, marine science, college and career readiness, and visual and performing arts. NPS also prides itself on its neighborhood schools, which build community and offer their own unique educational opportunities.