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**PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION AWARDS \$350,000 IN
PLANNING GRANTS TO 26 POTENTIAL INNOVATION
SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH**

*Funds will support the development of instructional and
operational plans*

WORCESTER - Thursday, March 17, 2011 - Building on the Patrick-Murray Administration's continued efforts to close achievement gaps, promote innovative and bold strategies in education, and give students and their families greater access to high-quality public schools, Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray today announced that \$350,000 is being awarded to accelerate the planning process for 26 potential new Innovation Schools across the Commonwealth. Initial prospectuses for these schools have already been approved by local stakeholders including superintendents, school committee members and union leaders, and the grants will be used to develop robust innovation plans that will be presented to local school committees for final approval. Most of these schools could open as early as September 2011.

“Innovation Schools represent a major step forward in our education reform agenda,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray. “This funding will support the development of detailed local plans that would establish several brand new, high-quality Innovation Schools and provide exciting options for students heading into the new school year.”

A signature component of Governor Deval Patrick's Achievement Gap Act of 2010, Innovation Schools are in-district, charter-like public schools that employ inventive

strategies and creative approaches to education while keeping school funding within districts. Innovation Schools can utilize greater autonomy and flexibility with regard to curriculum, staffing, budget, schedule/calendar, professional development and district policies.

“For the first time in the Commonwealth’s history, Innovation Schools provide educators and local partners with the opportunity to innovate from the inside out and design a school around the core needs of students,” said Education Secretary Paul Reville. “The development of excellent new Innovation Schools statewide will ensure that students have access to the instruction and support we know they need to be successful students and lifelong learners.”

“Innovation Schools provide educators with a new option to build supportive schools that ensure students reach high standards and expectations,” said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Mitchell Chester. “These planning funds will help educators and partners have the resources necessary to design more effective approaches to increase student learning.”

Lieutenant Governor Murray announced these planning grants at the Chandler Magnet School in Worcester, a recipient of a planning grant and one of five Innovation School proposals from the Worcester Public Schools. The funding was made available as part of a total of \$2 million in support from the state’s successful Race to the Top proposal and additional support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The remainder of the available funding will be utilized for implementation grants and additional opportunities for planning grants in the future.

Innovation Schools were designed to complement the state’s work with charter schools. The Achievement Gap Act of 2010 that authorized Innovation Schools also included a doubling of the cap on charter schools in the state’s lowest performing districts in partnership with proven providers. The announcement of planning grants follows the recent historic vote of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to approve 16 new charter schools, the highest number of new schools every granted in a single year. This dual and groundbreaking approach - authorizing Innovation Schools while lifting the cap on charter schools - was designed to simultaneously promote exciting and creative work within our public school districts while also supporting the efforts of proven charter school providers.

Groups of teachers, principals, superintendents, community partners, and representatives from higher education will continue to work together in school districts across Massachusetts to establish the potential Innovation Schools. The proposed schools cover the span of grades from kindergarten through high school, and many are organized around specific themes such as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) instruction, dual language instruction, providing alternative educational opportunities, and arts instruction, among other themes and areas of focus. The teams

that are creating these schools are taking full advantage of the autonomy and flexibility that are at the core of the Innovation School model. For example, the proposed schools will operate with different schedules that will significantly increase instructional time for students and professional learning time for educators, provide more targeted learning opportunities for students based on their individual needs and allocate resources differently to maximize effectiveness and efficiency.

The Commonwealth is the home to three operational Innovation Schools including the Paul Revere Innovation School in Revere, the Pathways Early College Innovation School in at Mount Wachusett Community College and the Massachusetts Virtual Academy in Greenfield. Additionally, the Hadley School Committee recently approved the establishment of the Hadley Virtual Academy of Massachusetts which will begin operation in September.

For more information about Innovation Schools, please visit www.mass.gov/edu/innovationschools.

The list of grant recipients, districts in which the schools will be located, and amounts granted is as follows.

INNOVATION SCHOOLS PLANNING GRANTS – awarded from state Race to the Top funding

Proposed Innovation School	Partner District	Amount
Margarita Muniz Academy	Boston	\$13,500
Haynes & Higginson-Lewis Arts Pathway Schools	Boston	\$30,000 (to establish two Innovation Schools)
Boston Arts Academy	Boston	\$12,500
Roger Clap Community Academy	Boston	\$15,000
Marguerite E. Small School	Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District	\$15,000
Lawrence Academy	Falmouth	\$10,800
Wilson International School	Framingham	\$15,000
Monson New Century High School	Monson	\$10,000
Baccalaureate School of North Middlesex	North Middlesex Regional School District	\$15,000
Quaboag Innovation STEM Early College High School	Quaboag Regional School District	\$15,000
Springfield Renaissance	Springfield	\$10,000

School		
21st Century Skills Academy	West Springfield	\$15,000
Chandler Magnet School	Worcester	\$14,850
Woodland Academy	Worcester	\$14,850
Goddard School of Science & Technology	Worcester	\$12,250
Goddard Scholars Academy	Worcester	\$12,250
University Park Campus School	Worcester	\$12,900
University High Innovation School	Boston	\$13,550
Dudley Street Neighborhood School	Boston	\$15,000
Valley Virtual Global Academy and Valley East Academy	Belchertown, Ware, Granby, and Easthampton	\$15,000
Carlton Continuous Progress Innovation School	Salem	\$15,000
		TOTAL = \$302,450

INNOVATION SCHOOL PLANNING GRANTS – awarded through Next Generation Learning Models grants provided to the Executive Office of Education by the Gates Foundation

Proposed Innovation School	Partner District	Amount
Charlestown High/Bird Street/Diploma Plus Collaborative	Boston	\$15,000
Quaboag Innovation Middle School	Quaboag Regional School District	\$15,000
Accelerated Learning Academy	Boston	\$13,500
		TOTAL = \$43,500