



## News Release

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### **Holyoke Public Schools Joins Verizon Innovative Learning Program to Bring 24/7 Internet Access, Tablets and Technology Coaches to Local Middle Schools**

*In partnership with Digital Promise, Verizon Innovative Learning will welcome two schools in the Holyoke Public Schools for the 2019-20 school year*

**HOLYOKE, Mass.** – Today Holyoke Public Schools joins [Verizon Innovative Learning](#), the education initiative of the Verizon Foundation. In partnership with Digital Promise, Verizon Innovative Learning equips every student and teacher at select middle schools across America with a device and up to a four-year data plan. In addition to free technology and access, schools receive extensive teacher training and support, along with the opportunity to engage in powerful teaching and learning that leverages technology in and out of the classroom.

The program, which launched in partnership with Digital Promise in 2012, has reached more than 86,000 students and nearly 6,000 teachers across 100 middle schools to date. At the start of the 2019 school year, Holyoke STEM Academy and Peck Middle School are among the 50 new schools joining Verizon Innovative Learning, bringing the program to 150 middle schools nationwide.

In addition to free mobile devices and accompanying 4G LTE data plans, participating schools will be assigned a full-time technology coach from Digital Promise to train teachers in effectively integrating technology into their lessons. Over the course of the initiative, Verizon



Innovative Learning will also provide the opportunity for students to leverage emerging technology such as augmented & virtual reality, artificial intelligence, 3D design and internet of things.

“Students, parents and faculty of the Holyoke Public Schools are excited to partner with Verizon to enhance the instructional technology in our middle schools,” said District Superintendent / Receiver Dr. Stephen Zrike. “This is an incredible opportunity for students to further develop their technological proficiency and problem-solving skills through learning opportunities that are meaningful, engaging and exploratory. Once fully integrated, these learning opportunities will help to better prepare our students for our high school academies and pathways.”

Students are seeing marked academic improvement as a result of the initiative.\* To date, Verizon has invested \$400 million in education efforts, has impacted one million students and will reach two million more by 2021.

Verizon will be the first to bring 5G technology to the classroom in the third quarter of 2019. This commitment will help provide underserved middle school students with the skills needed to put them on the path to success in an increasingly technology-dependent economy.

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\* 53% are more engaged in school. Across all VIL programs that reported data in 2017.

After two years, VILS students improved on standardized tests at rates higher than their peers - 3X for math and 2X for reading.

Source: Westat March 15, 2017 Research - Verizon Innovative Learning Schools: Results of the Analysis of Student Administrative Data From Cohort 1 Schools (based on two years of data for 6th grade Cohort 1 schools that provided complete data)

#### **About Verizon Innovative Learning**

Verizon Innovative Learning, the education initiative of the Verizon Foundation, brings technology and hands-on learning opportunities to middle and high school students in underserved schools and communities. We not only fund the programs, but we also create and administer them in partnership with leading nonprofits. We diligently measure the impact of our work and refine our programs to ensure we're making a difference. We've reached more than 1 million students so far – and we're just getting started. For more information about Verizon's philanthropic work, visit [www.verizon.com/about/responsibility](http://www.verizon.com/about/responsibility); or for regular updates, visit Facebook ([www.facebook.com/verizon/](http://www.facebook.com/verizon/)), Instagram ([www.instagram.com/verizonnews/](http://www.instagram.com/verizonnews/)) and Twitter ([twitter.com/verizonnews](http://twitter.com/verizonnews)).