

NEWS RELEASE



Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education



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Rhode Island Public Schools Benefit From \$50,000 in Verizon Grants to Improve Student Achievement by Using Thinkfinity.org

***Rhode Island Network for Educational Technology to Expand Professional-
Development Opportunities for Teachers***

WARWICK, R.I. – The Verizon Foundation awarded \$50,000 in grants Monday (July 13) to help educators across Rhode Island use Thinkfinity.org to improve student achievement.

At an awards ceremony at Pilgrim High School in Warwick, the Rhode Island Network for Educational Technology (RINET) and the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education received \$25,000. The two organizations, which have been designated as the Verizon Foundation's Thinkfinity state education partner, will collaborate to provide

professional-development opportunities to classroom teachers statewide through on-site and online training, and create a statewide network of Thinkfinity trainers.

In addition, the following five public schools and districts were selected to receive a total of \$25,000 in grants (\$5,000 per organization) to use Thinkfinity.org to improve student achievement: Ashton School, Cumberland; Frances Varieur Elementary School, Pawtucket; Narragansett public schools; Ponaganset Middle School, Glocester; and Warwick public schools. Teachers in those schools will use Thinkfinity.org in their classrooms to complement lessons.

Thinkfinity.org is the Verizon Foundation's free, comprehensive Web site containing more than 55,000 educational resources, including standards-based, grade-specific, K-12 lesson plans, online educational games, videos and other materials provided in partnership with many of the nation's leading educational organizations.

Verizon's Thinkfinity.org offers resources for elementary through high school teachers across eight academic disciplines, including science, English and mathematics, to improve student achievement. Thinkfinity.org is designed to help teachers gain access quickly to high-quality online resources.

“Through this partnership and the use of Thinkfinity, some of the best ideas in education have been married in such a way that many of those long sought-after images of a transformed and modernized teaching and learning experience will truly happen in Rhode Island's classrooms,” said Sharon Hussey, executive director of RINET. “This partnership provides extended teacher training while supporting our education agency and university partnerships. Thinkfinity fulfills our teachers' desires to have a wide variety of fully planned, technology-rich instructional lessons that are vetted, easy to find and use, and aligned with state and national standards.”

In addition to providing standards-based resources from the nation's leading educational organizations, Thinkfinity.org also offers a free, robust professional-development program for teachers and trainers.

"Thinkfinity.org is a great educational tool that helps educators prepare students for the 21st century and helps the students reach their full potential," said Donna Cupelo, Verizon region president of New England. "We want to encourage public school educators to use Thinkfinity.org in the classroom so that children gain the skills needed to be successful in a global economy."

Content for Thinkfinity is provided through a partnership between the Verizon Foundation and 11 of the nation's leading organizations in the fields of education and literacy: the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the International Reading Association, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, National Center for Family Literacy, Council for Economic Education, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Council of Teachers of English, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Geographic Society, ProLiteracy and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

The Verizon Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Verizon Communications, supports the advancement of literacy and K-12 education through its free educational Web site, Thinkfinity.org, and fosters awareness and prevention of domestic violence. In 2008, the Verizon Foundation awarded more than \$68 million in grants to nonprofit agencies in the U.S. and abroad. It also matched the charitable donations of Verizon employees and retirees, resulting in an additional \$26 million in combined contributions to nonprofits. Through Verizon Volunteers, one of the nation's largest employee volunteer programs, Verizon employees and

retirees have volunteered more than 3 million hours of community service since 2000. For more information on the foundation, visit www.verizonfoundation.org.

About RINET

The nonprofit Rhode Island Network for Educational Technology Inc. (RINET) fosters educational excellence in Rhode Island through the collaborative development and deployment of economical technology solutions for organizations that serve children. RINET offers a variety of Internet based data storage and management solutions, communication services, and instructional support and training solutions for the Rhode Island K12 community.

About Verizon

Verizon Communications Inc. (NYSE:VZ), headquartered in New York, is a leader in delivering broadband and other wireline and wireless communication innovations to mass market, business, government and wholesale customers. Verizon Wireless operates America's most reliable wireless network, serving more than 80 million customers nationwide. Verizon's Wireline operations include Verizon Business, which delivers innovative and seamless business solutions to customers around the world, and Verizon Telecom, which brings customers the benefits of converged communications, information and entertainment services over the nation's most advanced fiber-optic network. A Dow 30 company, Verizon employs a diverse workforce of nearly 224,000 and last year generated consolidated operating revenues of more than \$97 billion. For more information, visit www.verizon.com.

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