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**THE LEARNING ACCELERATOR AND THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION ANNOUNCE INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP**

*Partnership will make Rhode Island the First Fully 'Blended-Learning State' in the Nation*

**Cupertino, CA** – August 6, 2014 – [The Learning Accelerator](#) (TLA), a nonprofit organization supporting the implementation of high-quality blended learning in school districts and states across the U.S., and the [Rhode Island Department of Education](#) (RIDE) today announced an ambitious initiative to make Rhode Island the first fully “blended-learning state” in the nation. The announcement coincides with the release of TLA’s [Framework for Cultivating High-Quality Blended Learning at the State Level](#), which outlines steps states can take to catalyze blended learning.

TLA’s unique combination of thought partnership and investments, coupled with RIDE’S pioneering leadership in personalized and proficiency-based learning in a digitally rich environment, will allow the pair to quickly turn the ideas found in the TLA framework into actions that accelerate high-quality blended learning in Rhode Island.

[Blended learning](#) is the combination of traditional, face-to-face teaching with elements of personalized, online, competency-based education that leads to improved student engagement and achievement. At its core, blended learning is the effective use of education technology to transform the learning experience for students.

“Through our laws and regulations on digital learning, our Innovation Powered by Technology Model School grants, and our Wireless Classroom Initiative, Rhode Island demonstrates our state’s unwavering commitment when it comes to using technology to advance teaching and learning,” said Rhode Island Board of Education Chair Eva-Marie Mancuso. “We are very grateful that The Learning Accelerator has recognized our commitment and will work with us to take digital learning to the next level in our state.”

“This partnership with The Learning Accelerator recognizes and furthers our commitment to basing instruction on the needs of every individual student,” added

Deborah A. Gist, Rhode Island Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “Digital learning in all of its forms provides, literally, unlimited educational resources for every classroom, allows our schools to design flexible instruction schedules, and enables students and teachers to work closely together at a pace that is right for each student. With these funds, we will continue our commitment to innovation powered by technology.”

*The partnership will initially engage in two major initiatives:*

- Development of a an integrated Five-Year Strategic Plan for Rhode Island that will *position blended learning as an engine for system change, and*
- Creation of a communications campaign intended to fully accelerate blended learning throughout the state.

“States and state actors create conditions—beyond policy— that are critical to high-quality blended schools and innovation,” said Lisa Duty, Partner at The Learning Accelerator. “Together we are pursuing system-level changes and identifying the resources and critical shifts necessary to lay the foundation for more personalized, blended learning.”

Both TLA and RIDE agree that pursuing a student-centered vision of learning and transformative outcomes, with explicit goals in mind, is key. States will need to wrestle with the problems they’re trying to solve, and get clearer about operationalizing the relationship between blended learning—still in development—and their desired outcomes.

This partnership is the first in what is envisioned to be a select number of state-level innovation partnerships facilitated by The Learning Accelerator to support blended learning. The outcome of TLA’s efforts will be multiple strategies and solutions to support state leaders in the transition to blended learning, with the goal of achieving improved student outcomes within an innovative culture.

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