



NEWS RELEASE

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Partners in Innovation to Define Future of Online Learning

Goal: Develop new and innovative online learning solutions

Lansing, Mich. — *Michigan Virtual University*® and 28 public and private school organizations have formed a Partnership in Innovation group to help explore the academic needs of Michigan schools and to foster the development of new and innovative online learning solutions.

“We appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with *MVU* and with other educational leaders from around the state to define the future of online learning in Michigan.” said Partners member Mark Bielang, Superintendent of Paw Paw Schools.

The Partners group met at *MVU* in Lansing Friday, Oct. 7, to prioritize educational challenges and to examine core areas to develop and pilot new online programs and services. One of the high priority areas identified relates to blended learning, a mix of face-to-face and online learning. *MVU* plans to use the powerful new ideas generated by the Partners to seek philanthropic investments from corporate and foundation groups that have an interest in helping to fundamentally redesign how educational services are delivered in the K-12 community.

“We believe historians will look back at this new decade and document the educational revolution we are beginning to experience as a turning point in public education. Smart mobile technologies are fundamentally changing the way we live, entertain, communicate and access information. Ultimately this new technology will have a profound impact on teaching and learning within the K-12 community,” said Jamey Fitzpatrick, President & CEO of *Michigan Virtual University*.

The Partners plan to develop and pilot new instructional models for students and educators, benefit from joint research, and enable collaborative interactions to share innovative ideas and best practices. The 28 partners range from Ferris State University in Big Rapids to the Michigan Technical Academy in Detroit to DeTour Area Schools in the Upper Peninsula.

“This is a perfect time for a group of pioneering leaders in public education to invest time in brainstorming how we can do more with less in public education using innovative technology tools that make learning engaging, relevant and fun for students.” said Judy Bonne, Executive Director of Instructional Services at Wayne Regional Educational Service Agency in Wayne County.

Following this initial start-up meeting, the Partners will meet again at *the 8th Annual MVU Symposium* in Traverse City on Nov.7, and follow that up with web- and phone-based meetings, information gathering from their local constituents, and other activities designed to develop new instructional models for students and educators. Some of these models will be piloted in *Michigan Virtual School*[®] online courses.

“This statewide Partners in Innovation group has the potential to cultivate new thinking and new delivery models that will ultimately change the look and feel of public education so that every student benefits from a cost-effective customized learning approach,” said Stephen Cousins, Superintendent of Traverse City Area Public Schools.

About Partners in Innovation

Partners in Innovation consists of 28 public and private schools, districts, regional services agencies and one public university. The current Partners are: Ann Arbor Public Schools, Berkley Schools , Coopersville Public Schools, DeTour Area Schools, East Lansing Public Schools, Eaton ISD, Ferris State University, Forest Hills Public Schools, Genesee ISD, Golightly Education Center, Grand Rapids Christian Middle School, Holland Christian, Houghton Lake High School, Ingham ISD, Kent ISD, Lakeview Public Schools, Macomb ISD, Michigan Technical Academy, Monroe Public Schools, Paw Paw Public Schools, Saginaw ISD, St. Clair RESA, Stockbridge High School, Suttons Bay Public Schools, Three Rivers High School, Traverse City Public Schools, Wayne RESA, and West Ottawa High School.

About MVU

MVU[®] is a private, nonprofit Michigan corporation established by the State of Michigan in 1998 to serve as a champion for online learning. It is the parent organization of the *Michigan Virtual School*[®] and *Michigan LearnPort*[®], an online learning portal that delivers professional development opportunities and more to the Michigan education community. To learn more, visit <http://www.mivu.org>.