



## Newark Public Schools Announces Partnership with i2 Learning to Offer Newark STEM Week

*Newark teachers receive professional development this month in preparation for delivery of STEM curriculum developed by MIT and other leading STEM organizations in June*

**[Newark, NJ – March 15, 2017]** – Newark Public Schools (NPS) announced that the district will be partnering with i2 Learning to offer a unique, hands-on learning experience for middle school students called Newark STEM Week from June 12 – 16. In preparation for Newark STEM Week, 80 teachers across 25 participating schools are attending a professional development program on March 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> this week that covers STEM course curriculum and hands-on learning.

“Newark Public Schools is excited to announce this partnership with i2 Learning that will bring STEM Week to Newark’s students later this year,” said Christopher D. Cerf, Superintendent for Newark Public Schools. “We are making major investments in STEM education because we believe it is more important than ever. We look forward to working with i2 Learning in the coming weeks and months to ensure our teachers are prepared to provide students with high quality learning experiences that expose them to exciting new opportunities in STEM.”

During Newark STEM Week, classes will be replaced by a STEM curriculum developed by MIT, i2 Learning and other leading STEM organizations. This month, NPS and i2 Learning will provide a two-day training workshop about three project-based STEM courses, *Kinetic Sculpture*, *Building a Lunar Colony* and *Digital Game Design*. Each professional development course covers material not typically seen in middle school classrooms and is designed to get teachers and students working together to solve real-world problems through hands-on experimentation, critical thinking and engineering design.

Training teachers in hands-on, inquiry-based STEM learning is essential in helping children develop critical 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as collaboration, communication, and critical and creative thinking. The i2 Learning professional development workshops challenge the traditional middle school mindset and encourage educators to get students to make connections and succeed in an environment similar to that of college or the workforce. This carefully crafted professional development experience followed by the application of this learning in class with students aims to cultivate a significant learning opportunity for teachers with long-term effects on their teaching strategies.

“We are very grateful for the opportunity to partner with i2 Learning to bring this high quality professional development to our science educators,” said Ivory Williams, Director of Science Education at Newark Public Schools. “This partnership and training is an integral part of our larger strategy to bring more opportunities for hands on STEM education to Newark students. We hope that Newark STEM week in June will help further jump start these efforts by showing more of our students how engaging STEM education can be and by building more of our teachers' capacity to provide students with rich, relevant, and rigorous three-dimensional learning experiences, creating added momentum around science heading into the new school year.”

Upon completing the two-day training, teachers will share their new STEM learning strategies with their students and convert their classrooms into STEM learning labs later this year during Newark STEM Week.

“We are excited to be working with teachers from 25 different Newark schools to bring our program to over 2000 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students this school year.” said Ethan Berman, founder of i2 Learning. “We applaud the forward thinking of the Superintendent's office to provide this innovative learning to the district.”

The i2 Learning professional development workshops are being funded through the generous support of the Victoria Foundation, as well as other local foundations and corporations. To learn more about the program and see a full list of participating schools, courses and more, please visit <http://i2learning.org/newark/> and follow along on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

This initiative is one of a host of new partnerships Newark Public Schools is announcing this spring in the area of STEM education. To learn more about the recently announced Student2Science partnership, [see here](#).

## **ABOUT i2 LEARNING**

i2 Learning partners with schools and school districts to bring immersive, hands-on STEM learning to middle school students. Working with school leaders, STEM corporations and philanthropic foundations, i2 Learning provides curriculum, teacher professional development and all materials and supplies for schools to run STEM weeks in over 30 cities across the United States and throughout the world. For more information, please visit [i2learning.org](http://i2learning.org).