MALDEN – Tuesday, March 7, 2013 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today announced $140,000 in competitive grants to enhance science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education initiatives for three Regional STEM Networks in Massachusetts. Among the state’s seven Regional STEM Networks, the three awards supported by the state’s STEM Pipeline Fund include $39,780 to the Pioneer Valley STEM Network, $57,037 to the Boston STEM Network, and $43,183 to the Northeast STEM Network. The Boston STEM Network’s proposal was also submitted in partnership with the MetroWest, Northeast and Central STEM Networks.

“As we continue to expand successful STEM models and initiatives across the state, today’s announced funding will further enhance our efforts to encourage students to pursue STEM education and careers,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray, Chair of the Governor’s STEM Advisory Council. “By partnering with our Regional STEM Networks, we will boost community and after school programs that will engage students in STEM and help Massachusetts stay competitive as we prepare and train the next generation of students in 21st century job skills.”

Today’s announcement builds on the Patrick-Murray Administration’s growth strategy
and ongoing commitment to increase STEM education, jobs, and workforce development in Massachusetts. As part of the Administration’s education agenda, the Massachusetts STEM Plan was released in 2010 calling to improve coordination among Regional STEM Networks and outlining key goals to increase student achievement and interest in STEM, further train educators in STEM, and better align STEM education programs with workforce needs.

During today’s STEM Advisory Council meeting, Lieutenant Governor Murray also announced that Massachusetts has been selected as a leading state and partner in working towards increasing STEM student achievement and the number of trained educators in STEM. 100Kin10 works to “prepare all students with the high-quality STEM knowledge and skills needed to tackle the most pressing national and global challenges of tomorrow” (www.100kin10.org). The organization’s mission is to respond to President Barack Obama’s goal of providing 100,000 new, excellent STEM teachers over 10 years as outlined in his 2011 State of the Union. Massachusetts is among the organizations accepted as 100Kin10 partners based on its innovation and boldness of commitment towards expanding, improving and retaining the best of the nation’s STEM teaching force. The Governor’s STEM Advisory Council will work with the state’s Executive Office of Education to update the Massachusetts STEM Plan to strengthen educator development and preparation as part of the 100Kin10 initiative.

The three awarded Regional STEM Networks announced today will further support the Commonwealth’s statewide efforts on STEM education with a focus on “Building Communities of Interest Networks.” For these awarded grants, the three Regional STEM Networks will specifically support Out-of-School and After School projects, a current initiative that will accompany the existing work of all seven Regional STEM Networks, 12 state endorsed @Scale Projects, and ongoing public awareness efforts. Criteria for the selection of each proposal was also based on the high level of network collaboration, project replication and scalable approach, alignment with other statewide initiatives, focus on female or underrepresented minorities, and an effective use of data.

The three awarded grants include:

**Pioneer Valley STEM Network (aka PV STEMNET): $39,780**

The Pioneer Valley STEM Network, in partnership with afterschool and informal STEM providers will develop strategies to support sustainable high quality informal science and engineering education opportunities in Out-of School Time (OST) programs. These strategies will include the creation of a database of expert consultants and volunteers who are available to the OST community; training of OST staff by academic researchers on the implementation of project based experiential learning that complements, not duplicates, the traditional school day; and extensive online resources to enable OST staff to work with students on original research projects. Funding will also be dedicated to the development of online resources for use by OST programs both inside and outside of the Pioneer Valley. This regional network will partner with Region I Educator and the Provider Support Network of the MA Department of Early Education and Care, the Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership (MAP) and other youth groups such as Girl Scouts and 4H’s, among other organizations. The network also plans to leverage this model to develop a larger-scale program. In addition to the state grant announced today, the network has secured an additional $60,000 through in-kind support.
Lt. Gov. Murray Announces Funding to Promote STEM Education

We are delighted to receive this grant which will further the Pipeline goal of increasing student interest in STEM fields," said Mort Sternheim, Project Manager for the Pioneer Valley STEM Network. "It will allow us to help after-school and informal education programs to engage students in original science and engineering research projects in collaboration with University faculty members. These experiences can enhance students' academic studies while increasing their interest in STEM courses and careers."

**Boston STEM Network: $57,037**

With this grant funding, the Boston STEM Network will collaborate with the regional networks in MetroWest, Northeast, and Central regions. Through this initiative, the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC) in partnership with the Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership (MAP) proposes to conduct a pilot study utilizing student interest and program quality evaluation tools developed by Harvard University's Program in Education and Afterschool Resiliency (PEAR) with the primary objective to scale regional STEM networks' capacity to promote and implement data collection strategies while also helping to advance program quality in the out-of-school time (OST) community.

This pilot project builds upon work already started by the Boston STEM Network and leverages recent Noyce Foundation & Charles Stewart Mott Foundation investments in MAP's Afterschool & STEM System Building Grant Proposal. In addition to the state grant announced today, the network has secured an additional $23,000 secured through in-kind support.

"The Boston STEM Network is pleased to receive this award from the Pipeline Fund to support efforts to measure student interest in science, technology, engineering, and math," said Alysia Ordway, Project Manager of the Boston STEM Network. "The primary objective of this pilot is to scale four regional STEM networks' capacity to promote and implement research-based data collection strategies on student interest. The secondary objective is to advance program quality in the out-of-school time provider community, which plays a key role in developing students' career aspirations, interests, and abilities in STEM subjects. We are very excited to partner with Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership and the Program in Education Afterschool and Resilience in this opportunity to research best practices and share our learning with other regions of the Commonwealth."

**Northeast STEM Network: $43,183**

The Northeast STEM Network plans to create a distributed system for their award-winning webzine called, STEM Matters, by partnering and sharing their webzine with Massachusetts' six other regional STEM networks. STEM Matters looks and feels like a website, but functions like a magazine. Each issue focuses on a specific real world theme. Thus far, the Northeast has produced and distributed seven issues on topics like the STEM of Chocolate, Music and Sports.

In working with the Northeast STEM Network, the six other regional networks committed to collaborate in this effort and take responsibility for the content of one issue each. Responsibilities will include deciding on that issues' theme, working with the other networks to secure regional content which aligns with, and supports, the theme, and working with the Northeast STEM Network to produce the webzine for website publication on each network's individual websites.
"This incentive funding will allow the Northeast STEM Network to collaborate with the other 6 regional STEM networks in producing and distributing 4 issues of our award winning STEM Matters webzine," said Judith A. Boccia, Ed.D., Co-Director of the Northeast STEM Network. "This statewide project, designed to increase student interest in STEM fields, will expand the content, and broaden the readership and reach of the webzine, give each network an opportunity to showcase its specific strengths, and enhance the state STEM Public Awareness campaign. We very much appreciate the opportunity this funding provides to extend the STEM Matters webzine to all corners of the Commonwealth."

**Governor's STEM Advisory Council**

On October 14, 2009 Governor Patrick signed an Executive Order creating the Governor's STEM Advisory Council. As Chair of the STEM Advisory Council, Lieutenant Governor Murray released the state’s first STEM plan at the STEM Summit in 2010, tying economic development to educational enhancement in STEM fields. The plan established targeted goals and benchmarks to promote STEM education, jobs, and workforce development as part of the Patrick-Murray Administration’s STEM Initiative.

The Council serves as a vehicle for STEM advocates from the public and private sectors, as well as legislators and educators, to engage in meaningful collaboration with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor’s Office, the Executive Office of Education and their agencies, the Department of Higher Education, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Department of Early Education and Care, the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

To read the STEM Plan or learn more about the Patrick-Murray Administration’s STEM Initiatives and the Governor’s STEM Advisory Council, visit [www.mass.gov/governor/stem](http://www.mass.gov/governor/stem).

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