IBM Unveils New Playbook to Expand Innovative P-TECH Schools Nationwide

IBM, CUNY to help school districts, higher education institutions, and companies replicate P-TECH school model in any state

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ALBANY, N.Y., Nov. 14, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- An innovative education model known as Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) that began in Brooklyn in 2011 is now spreading to nearly 40 schools around the nation and could grow to an estimated 100 schools by 2016.

With the IBM (NYSE: IBM) P-TECH model gaining ground, IBM, together with many P-TECH schools and the City University of New York (CUNY), today introduced a new digital playbook, making publicly available a formula that is reinventing high school in the United States and preparing students to enter the workforce with marketable skills that many employers now require.

The new website, which includes more than 30 tools and 15 case studies, is designed to help school districts, higher education institutions, and businesses establish new P-TECH schools across the nation by replicating IBM's groundbreaking public-private partnership education model.

The online playbook comes after New York Governor Andrew Cuomo announced this week that 10 new P-TECH schools are slated to open next fall, with IBM providing the tools, training and support to each participating school. The site will be shown to an audience of 100 school and business leaders from New York's P-TECH schools, including representatives from the 10 new schools just selected by the State Education Department and Governor Cuomo, at a training session today at SUNY Plaza in Albany, hosted by the New York State P-TECH Leadership Council and the Public Policy Institute. New York State Education Commissioner John King, President and CEO of the Business Council of New York State Heather Briccetti, and President of the IBM International Foundation Stanley S. Litow will speak at the event.

"The extraordinary replication of the IBM P-TECH model in New York and around the country proves that school and business leaders can create powerful public-private collaborations that will help meet the country's need for skills," said Stanley S. Litow, IBM Vice President of Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs and President of the IBM International Foundation. "This new playbook will give principals, schools, and companies a detailed framework to provide our children with the 21(st) century education they need and deserve."

"When it comes to strengthening our schools, we know we need to engage students' diverse interests," said New York State Education Commissioner John B. King, Jr. "That's why Chancellor Tisch and the Board of Regents approved new multiple, rigorous pathways to graduation for our students. It's also why the Board of Regents has been so supportive of P-TECH. It's no secret that the U.S. lags behind some of our international competitors when it comes to preparing our students for the jobs of tomorrow. But with great partners like IBM, SUNY and all the other corporate and higher ed partners, New York can and will educate our way to the top. P-TECH will help make that possible - by providing challenging new opportunities that will give our students the skills and the
knowledge they need to excel in college and in the workplace."

"The Business Council of New York State applauds IBM's expanded commitment to the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) model. The business community recognizes that New York's growing STEM economy will be stifled if we do not find innovative new ways to help schools better prepare graduates to fill good paying middle-skill jobs and IBM is showing great leadership on this critical issue. Creating more P-TECH high schools will produce thousands of new graduates to fill these jobs," said Heather C. Briccetti, President and CEO of The Business Council of New York State.

The growing number of P-TECH schools follows the opening in 2011 of the nation's first 9-14 school that blends high school, college and career into one. IBM, which designed the school, partnered with the New York City Department of Education, CUNY, and the New York College of Technology to create P-TECH in Brooklyn. Since its launch, Brooklyn's P-TECH has above-average attendance, with more than 170 students, or 65 percent of the school, enrolled in at least one of 12 college courses last year. To date, 60 percent of fourth-year students have earned more than a semester's worth of college credits. Six students are on track to graduate next spring - two years ahead of schedule.

The six-year program combines academic rigor with career focus, where graduates will earn a high school diploma and a no-cost, industry-recognized associate's degree, and will be first in line for jobs with the employer partner. Students are paired with mentors from the business community and gain practical workplace experience with paid internships. The innovative education model is designed to build 21(st) century skills, fill in-demand jobs in the U.S., and ensure young people are college and career-ready in the skills of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) -- disciplines that underpin some of the fastest growing industries in the U.S.

As P-TECH schools continue to expand and multiply, the website's 31 tools serve as a guide for public-private partners at every stage of the program - from launching to sustaining a school. Highlights include:

- Helping schools develop a skills-based curriculum. Playbook details steps to develop a curriculum that is directly informed by in-demand skills and careers. A company who serves as the industry partner will identify what skills a student would need. From there, schools and college partners will use the data to create an integrated high school and college course curriculum.
- Helping companies prepare students for future careers. Playbook walks a company through its critical role in preparing students to be career-ready through workplace learning opportunities such as mentoring, paid internships, and worksite visits.

The site also includes 15 case studies from the perspectives of P-TECH principals, school staff, and business leaders on a range of topics including how to lead a school, supporting students in their college classes, mentoring students, and examples of skills-based internships.

There are currently 27 P-TECH model schools in New York, Illinois, and Connecticut. New York State plans to launch 10 more New York schools next fall and proposed tripling the number of P-TECH schools by 2016.

More than three years after opening the first P-TECH school, IBM, partnering with CUNY, developed a P-TECH virtual playbook in an effort to share their knowledge, best practices and lessons learned to help public-private partnerships that are currently developing a P-TECH school or are interested in adopting one. The program,
which has been launched in urban and rural districts across a diverse range of STEM sectors, is designed to be both widely replicable and sustainable.

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