



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MCPS and KID Museum Partner to Increase STEM Opportunities for Students

At the annual KIDfest community event, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and KID Museum announced plans to bring more project-based Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) learning opportunities to students.

During the event, the school district and KID Museum, a leader in maker-based education, announced the Invent the Future Challenge, a new STEM competition for middle school students. The challenge calls on students to develop, design and build a prototype of an innovative solution to a community problem. Students will work collaboratively in teams and use technical skills, creative problem solving and STEM concepts to come up with solutions to a challenge question. This first challenge, which will span the 2017-2018 academic year, will ask students to find a way to improve the environmental impact of their school or home. Details about the challenge will be shared with schools and students in the coming weeks. MCPS selected KID Museum to develop and lead the challenge through a competitive grant process.

Additionally, MCPS and KID Museum are exploring the concept of 21st century STEM learning centers at elementary schools around the county over the next few years. The goal of the centers would be to boost in-school offerings and extended-day or weekend opportunities in STEM. Each center would serve multiple schools.

MCPS and the KID Museum already work together in a number of ways. At the middle school level, students from several schools participated in the museum's Invention Studio Program that exposes kids to STEM fields. The students chose from aerodynamics, robotics, digital music or circuits/3D design and created a design of their own. At the elementary school level, the organizations are working on a project that would connect KID Museum to specified curriculum activities, enhancing the impact of KID Museum programming and student participation. These joint efforts, combined with additional one-day co-sponsored or supported events, have forged

a strong partnership between KID Museum and MCPS. The intentional nurturing of student interest, skills and knowledge at the elementary and middle school level helps prepare them to take advantage of opportunities at the high school level and in the world of work.

The in-school programs will be funded through the elementary school curriculum budget. KID Museum, MCPS and the MCPS Educational Foundation are pursuing grant opportunities to support build-out of STEM centers and to enhance programmatic offerings, specifically targeting students underrepresented in STEM fields. Programs offered outside the school day will be funded through participant fees and grants.

About KID Museum

KID Museum is an independent, mission-driven nonprofit serving 50,000 people annually in its creative learning space, on site at schools, and at community events. A national leader in maker-based education, the museum seeks to spark the creative potential in all children and inspire the next generation of innovators and problem solvers. KID programs emphasize social and emotional learning skills and combine science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) through hands-on, project-based learning experiences. For more information, please visit: www.kid-museum.org.

About Montgomery County Public Schools

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is the largest school district in Maryland serving more than 161,000 students. The mission of MCPS is to ensure every student will have the academic, creative problem solving, and social emotional skills to be successful in college and career.