



Atlanta Public Schools Joins Verizon Innovative Learning

All 11 eligible middle schools, plus three high schools, to receive devices with internet access for up to four years

OCTOBER 4, 2021 | Atlanta, Ga. – Fourteen middle and high schools in Atlanta Public Schools join Verizon Innovative Learning this fall, as the program welcomes its largest cohort ever with nearly 250 new Title 1 schools nationwide. In partnership with Digital Promise, the Verizon Innovative Learning Schools program equips students and teachers at select schools with devices and internet access, as well as professional learning for teachers and opportunities to collaborate with a national network of innovative, technology-driven school leaders and educators.

All 11 eligible middle schools in APS join the initiative for the 2021-22 school year. Schools with a 65 percent or higher free and reduced-price lunch population are eligible for the program; however, Verizon Innovative Learning Schools are at an average of 82 percent nationally.

The 14 participating APS schools will receive a Chromebook with up to a four-year 30GB 4G LTE data plan for every student and teacher, as well as extensive professional development that supports powerful teaching and learning with technology in and out of the classroom. In addition, these schools will receive a subsidy toward a full-time technology coach to support teachers with effectively integrating technology into learning. Over the course of the initiative, students also will have the opportunity to learn about emerging technology such as augmented and virtual reality and 3D design.

The 14 new Verizon Innovative Learning Schools from Atlanta Public Schools are:

- Benjamin E. Mays High School
- B.E.S.T. Academy
- Booker T. Washington High School
- Coretta Scott King YWLA
- Crawford W. Long Middle School
- Frederick Douglass High School
- Herman J. Russell West End Academy
- Hollis Innovation Academy
- Jean Childs Young Middle School
- J.L. Invictus Academy
- Luther J. Price Middle School

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School
- Ralph J. Bunche Middle School
- Sylvan Hills Middle School

To celebrate Atlanta Public Schools' participation in Verizon Innovative Learning, the district will hold a kickoff event at Herman J. Russell West End Academy on October 6 featuring students receiving their Chromebooks; firsthand remarks from administrators and program leaders on why hands-on learning experiences using technology is so important to academic achievement and lifelong success; and demonstrations by teachers and students on how the technology will be used in classrooms.

"The Atlanta Public Schools partnership with Verizon Innovative Learning and Digital Promise is helping us ensure that all APS students have access to technology and connectivity, which is the next great equalizer for this generation," said APS superintendent Dr. Lisa Herring. "APS is grateful for the support of partners like Verizon as we give our all to closing the achievement gap by bolstering resources through the lens of equity."

"We are excited to welcome Atlanta Public Schools to the Verizon Innovative Learning Schools network," said Jean-Claude Brizard, president and CEO of Digital Promise. "Last year showed us it is imperative that our students have access to technology and the internet, and we are proud to partner with Verizon and APS to ensure so many of the city's students have the access they need for continuous learning."

As part of Verizon's commitment to digital inclusion under Citizen Verizon, the company's responsible business plan for economic, environmental, and social advancement, the Verizon Innovative Learning Schools initiative has benefitted more than 212,000 students and nearly 14,000 teachers across 265 middle and high schools in 26 states and Washington, D.C. The 246 new schools joining the program in 2021 will bring the total to 511 middle and high schools nationwide.

Verizon Innovative Learning is driving academic improvements and supporting the shift to distance learning. In fact, Verizon Innovative Learning teachers felt more prepared for distance learning thanks to the initiative, with 92 percent reporting that Verizon Innovative Learning helped prepare them to teach remotely.¹ Moreover, 59 percent of Verizon Innovative Learning students believe assignments are easier when using a device, and 54 percent believe having the device improves their confidence in the things they can do.²

¹ Source: Westat (2020): Verizon Innovative Learning Teacher Survey June 2020

² Source: Westat (2019). Verizon Innovative Learning Schools Survey Result Dashboard Dec 2019

“Verizon Innovative Learning Schools were better prepared for distance learning during the pandemic because of the devices, internet access, and professional learning opportunities provided by the program,” said Alex Servello, director of corporate social responsibility at Verizon. “However, we saw students in schools across the country who didn’t have reliable home internet struggle to connect to class. The ability to also support those students with internet access allowed us to ensure they are connected outside of the school building and have uninterrupted access to instruction.”

For more information, visit [verizon.digitalpromise.org](https://www.verizon.digitalpromise.org).

Press Contact:

Jessica Schuler

Digital Promise

410-598-9848

jschuler@digitalpromise.org

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About Digital Promise

Digital Promise is a nonprofit organization that builds powerful networks and takes on grand challenges by working at the intersection of researchers, entrepreneurs, and educators. Our vision is that all people, at every stage of their lives, have access to learning experiences that help them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to thrive and continuously learn in an ever-changing world. For more information, visit the [Digital Promise website](https://www.digitalpromise.org) and follow [@digitalpromise](https://twitter.com/digitalpromise) for updates.

About Verizon Innovative Learning

Verizon Innovative Learning, Verizon's award-winning education initiative, addresses barriers to digital inclusion and is a key program under Citizen Verizon, the company’s responsible business plan for economic, environmental and social advancement. Since 2012, the program has provided free technology, access and innovative learning programs to under-resourced schools, enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence needed to build an innovative workforce of the future. In 2021 Verizon plans to launch Verizon Innovative Learning HQ, a next-gen online education portal that will provide free access to immersive XR educational experiences. The company is committed to providing 10 million youths with digital skills training by 2030. Learn more at [CitizenVerizon.com](https://www.citizenverizon.com).