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**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

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EDWARD G. RENDELL, Governor

**For Immediate
Release:**
July 10, 2008

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**GOVERNOR RENDELL ANNOUNCES \$10 MILLION GRANT
TO EXPAND SCIENCE EDUCATION**

PENNSYLVANIA CONSORTIUM WILL CREATE NATIONAL CENTER FOR
COGNITION AND SCIENCE INSTRUCTION

HARRISBURG – Governor Edward G. Rendell said today that Pennsylvania's innovative work in science education has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, which has awarded a \$9.95 million grant to a Pennsylvania consortium to establish the only national center of its kind that will draw on the advancements of cognitive science.

The 21st Century Center for Cognition and Science Instruction will be able to draw upon the advancements in the field of cognitive science – how the mind receives, processes, stores and retrieves information and knowledge – to develop and evaluate theoretically driven modifications to existing middle school science curricula to improve student learning.

The consortium receiving the grant is made up of three Pennsylvania universities, two nonprofit organizations, scores of middle schools, Pennsylvania and Delaware Departments of Education and the Pennsylvania Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Initiative.

"In this rapidly changing, competitive economy it is essential that we continue to grow our workforce to provide services in the STEM fields and we prepare our students in these high skilled areas," Governor Rendell said. "This center will make Pennsylvania a continued leader in the area of science education and enable us to ensure that students have better quality science

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curriculum.”

The center will work collaboratively with the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences to conduct research to inform educators and policy-makers and to provide national leadership to improve current curricula and identify general principles for the design of future science curricula. The center will conduct a systematic series of studies involving up to 180 middle schools to test and refine such strategies by working with the PA STEM Initiative, a public-private collaboration around STEM education redesign.

“Pennsylvania is making great strides in the area of science education through departmental initiatives, such as ‘Science: It’s Elementary’ and the PA STEM Initiative,” said Education Secretary Gerald L. Zahorchak. “This center will allow us to expand our science resources and provide more instruction as we move closer to the implementation of science assessments.”

The center will draw upon the strengths of the University of Pennsylvania’s Graduate School of Education and Institute for Research in Cognitive Science; Temple University’s Spatial Intelligence and Learning Center; and the University of Pittsburgh’s Learning Research and Development Center. Outreach and dissemination of research findings will be conducted by Research for Better Schools. The center will be managed by “The 21st Century Partnership for STEM Education.”

For more information on the center, visit www.pastemcenter.org.

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The Rendell administration is committed to creating a first-rate public education system, protecting our most vulnerable citizens and continuing economic investment to support our communities and businesses. To find out more about Governor Rendell’s initiatives and to sign up for his weekly newsletter, visit www.governor.state.pa.us.

Content Last Modified on 7/10/2008 12:05:55 PM

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