

*COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA Office of the Governor*

**Timothy M. Kaine**  
Governor

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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<b>Contact:</b>	<b>Gordon Hickey</b>	<b>Charles Pyle/DOE</b>
<b>Phone:</b>	<b>(804) 225-4260</b>	<b>(804) 371-2420</b>
<b>Phone: Cell</b>	<b>(804) 291-8977</b>	
<b>Internet:</b>	<a href="http://www.governor.virginia.gov">www.governor.virginia.gov</a>	<a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov">www.doe.virginia.gov</a>

**Governor Kaine Launches "Virginia on iTunes U",  
Issues Math-Applications Challenge**

*~ Dedicated portal on popular iTunes site is latest tool to take education beyond the classroom, new design challenge will produce mobile learning applications to engage middle school students in mathematics ~*

**RICHMOND** –Building on a number of recent initiatives designed to take learning beyond the classroom, Governor Timothy M. Kaine today announced the official launch of “[Virginia on iTunes U](#),” (direct link, requires iTunes) a dedicated area within Apple’s iTunes Store featuring free access to educational content. Through iTunes U for K-12 education, students, teachers, and other interested users can “learn on the go” by downloading audio and video content onto an iPod, iTouch, or iPhone from any computer with Internet access. To extend this initiative, Governor Kaine also issued the “Learning Apps Development Challenge” today to encourage developers to produce innovative mathematics applications that will engage middle school students and encourage advanced learning and achievement.

“The 21st century has presented unprecedented opportunities to expand learning beyond the walls of the traditional schoolhouse,” Governor Kaine said. “We want to embrace those technologies that can help us provide a personal and more meaningful learning experience for students of every kind as we continue to shift our expectations from competence to excellence.”

Led by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), [Virginia on iTunes U](#) is a collaborative effort among state and national organizations including Radford University, Blue Ridge Public Television, and Thinkfinity. The site enables teachers and content partners to share digital content and resources that support the Virginia Standards of Learning. The site also provides education flexibility, allowing individuals to choose what, when, and where they learn. Materials will be submitted for review by VDOE and subjected to a rigorous evaluation to ensure available content maintains the highest standards of quality, accuracy, and relevance.

Complementing the Virginia on iTunes U effort, the “Learning Apps Development Challenge” led by Secretary of Technology Aneesh Chopra in collaboration with the Department of Education, seeks applications focused on middle school mathematics

Standards of Learning (SOL), such as fraction computation, proportions, and the relationship between fractions, decimals and percents. The details of the challenge and a full list of topic priorities can be found at [www.lwbva.org](http://www.lwbva.org). Developers must accept and abide by Apple's App Store Terms and Conditions, and all submissions should be uploaded to Apple's App Store by 5:00 PM EDT on June 19, 2009. A panel of judges will review and evaluate the proposed apps, and the "Learning Apps Development Challenge" winners will be announced in late June during the National Educational Computing Conference (NECC).

The Virginia on iTunes U portal is part of a larger effort by the Commonwealth to harness the power of digital media and mobile devices to expand and supplement classroom -based education. Last month Governor Kaine announced the launch of the Virginia Physics Flexbook, a web-based, open-content compilation that will allow teachers to share the most up-to-date lessons and techniques, bringing the best information and practices to all students in the Commonwealth.

In addition, Virginia's *Learning without Boundaries* initiative is leading the way on integrating technology into the classroom experience. With support from the Productivity Investment Fund and in collaboration with Virginia Tech and Radford University, VDOE is exploring the potential benefits of wireless mobile technologies for day-to-day teaching. Most recently, the Commonwealth has launched a pilot program called "iLearn" in Radford City and Montgomery County schools using the Apple iTouch to let students learn in alternative, comfortable ways.

"Mobile communication devices are an integral part of the lives of thousands of Virginia students," said Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Patricia I. Wright. "We can choose to ignore them or we can leverage them as powerful, personal learning devices."

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