

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 19, 2014

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Education Alliance Receives Toyota Award for bornlearning Academies®

Charleston, W.Va. – This afternoon, Governor Earl Ray Tomblin announced that three West Virginia schools will pilot Toyota bornlearning Academies® this fall. The Governor clearly believes children who enter school prepared are more likely to read at grade level, graduate from high school, and to be college and career ready.

“Improving educational programs and increasing educational opportunities for our children and their families are essential to ensuring our state’s continued growth and success,” Gov. Tomblin said. “This collaborative approach to early childhood development will meet a critical need in our communities. The Toyota bornlearning Academy® program engages parents and gives them the resources they need to turn everyday moments they share with their children into learning opportunities to prepare them for future academic successes.”

The Education Alliance is pleased to announce the award of a grant from Toyota Motor Manufacturing, West Virginia, Inc. (TMMWV) to bring Toyota bornlearning Academies® to Cabell, Putnam and Wayne Counties. Focusing on early childhood parental education and engagement, the Toyota bornlearning Academy® is an innovative program that will help address a critical need in West Virginia. These school-based academies provide parents with the tools to help their children succeed in kindergarten and beyond. The Education Alliance will use the grant to provide funding for training and resources for the schools to assist them as they host the academies in the upcoming school year.

“Since learning starts long before school does, achievement gaps can develop before children begin kindergarten,” said Dr. Courts, President and CEO of The Education Alliance. “We believe families with young children need support to help set children on the right track for learning. The Toyota bornlearning Academy® teaches busy parents how to turn everyday moments into learning opportunities to support school readiness.”

Toyota bornlearning Academies® were created in Kentucky in 2012. This past school year Toyota provided funding for 31 Kentucky public schools to participate in Toyota bornlearning Academies®. During the 2014-2015 school year, Toyota is expanding the program to other states, including West Virginia, where they operate manufacturing plants.

“We are committed to helping develop the workforce for the future, not just for Toyota but for all business and industry,” said Millie Marshall, President, TMMWV. “And research has shown that setting that future worker on the path to success really begins at birth and with directed parent education. TMMWV is proud to make this investment, through Toyota bornlearning Academies®, in the future of our company and in the future of the state.”

The six lesson bornlearning series teaches busy, overwhelmed parents and caregivers how to turn everyday moments into learning opportunities. The school-based workshops allow a meaningful conversation to start with parents early, offering them the essential building blocks of education to support their child's future academic successes and to create a strong connection between home and school. Parents of young children are engaged in hands-on activities and discussion about what it means to be ready for kindergarten and offered strategies they can use at home to maximize their child’s early learning and development.

For more information on the Toyota bornlearning Academy®, visit EducationAlliance.org/bornlearning or contact Emily Pratt at 304-342-7850 or emily@educationalliance.org.

About The Education Alliance

Founded in July 1983 as the first statewide public education fund in the nation, The Education Alliance is a private-sector initiative to help businesses understand the importance of financially and resourcefully supporting the state's public schools and to give business a voice in public education that advances policies and practices to continually improve public school student achievement in West Virginia.

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