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**Media Contact:**

Krystal Morris

C.Pharr & Company for Blue Sky Educational Foundation

Office: (972) 931-7576 x355

Cell: (214) 502-2566

[Krystal@pharrpr.com](mailto:Krystal@pharrpr.com)

**DALLAS ISD PARTNERS WITH BLUE SKY EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION AND  
FRONTIERS OF FLIGHT TO INTEGRATE SCIENCE OF FLIGHT INTO STEM  
CURRICULUM**

**Dallas residents Jim and Angela Thompson announce \$1 million commitment to launch Blue Sky Educational Foundation to inspire students to pursue STEM careers.**

**DALLAS – Jan. 6, 2014** – The [Dallas Independent School District](#) (Dallas ISD) has partnered with [Blue Sky Educational Foundation](#) and [Frontiers of Flight Museum](#) to bring the Science of Flight curriculum to 14 elementary schools as part of the Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) education program. This rigorous STEM curriculum correlates with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Science and the Dallas ISD Imagine 2020 initiative.

On January 6, teachers from 14 elementary schools in Dallas ISD will spend the day training for the Science of Flight curriculum at the Frontiers of Flight Museum near Dallas' Love Field. The training will be conducted by an elementary classroom teacher who has taught STEM through aviation science for 12 years and administrator who holds a commercial pilot's license.

"We appreciate the great support and enthusiasm provided by all connected with this STEM learning project," said Dr. Lee J. Siudzinski, executive director of the Blue Sky Educational Foundation and retired school superintendent. "Dallas ISD and Blue Sky Educational Foundation believe this innovative aviation curriculum will engage students and teachers and bring classrooms alive with student learning."

"We're thrilled to have the opportunity to bring this curriculum to upper elementary students throughout Dallas ISD," said Superintendent Mike Miles. "Engaging our younger students in aviation through STEM will spark a natural excitement and curiosity about flight that could continue throughout their school career and beyond into adulthood."

"This official Dallas launch of Blue Sky Educational Foundation is an outgrowth of our vision to use aviation experiences to inspire young people to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math," noted Jim and Angela Thompson, business executives and philanthropists. "We are delighted to introduce this curriculum to our hometown Dallas ISD and look forward to extending the program to many more school districts across the country."

In addition to hands on training of the curriculum, each teacher will be given a kit that contains all the materials they will need to teach Science of Flight. Valued at \$1,000 each, every kit contains materials for each student including stop watches, balsa planes, foam rockets, books on Texas birds, tape measurers, safety goggles, demonstration materials, laminated cards and several aviation books.

The Blue Sky Educational Foundation paid for the professional development of the aviation curriculum and will provide teacher and school support on an ongoing basis. Student learning successes of this project will be closely monitored and evaluated.

All 28 classrooms participating in this learning experience will be provided a learning field trip to the Frontiers of Flight Museum following the completion of this STEM learning through aviation. A museum visit and additional activities will also be planned for the families of participating students as another means of spreading interest in STEM studies and careers. All fees and bus transportation costs will be assumed by the Blue Sky Educational Foundation.

“We’re pleased to share our enthusiasm for aviation with a whole new group of teachers and youngsters,” said Cheryl Sutterfield-Jones, president and CEO of Museum of Flight. “The Museum’s mission is to educate, motivate and inspire, and with our involvement in the Science of Flight program we can do just that for the students of Dallas ISD.”

Extended optional learning experiences will include free opportunities for participating Dallas ISD students, teachers and administrators to take individual flights in small airplanes through the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Young Eagles Program. These opportunities are parent- or teacher-directed and will not be administered through or with Dallas ISD.

#### **About Blue Sky Educational Foundation**

The Blue Sky Educational Foundation was founded by Jim and Angela Thompson to inspire young people toward careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) by providing them opportunities to experience aviation excitement first-hand. By partnering with like-minded individuals and organizations, Blue Sky offers scholarship opportunities to students who would otherwise be unable to attend aviation-focused camps and receive STEM education. Blue Sky also promotes STEM education in schools through the Aim Higher program.

#### **About Dallas ISD**

The Dallas Independent School District is the 14<sup>th</sup> largest school district in the country serving more than 157,000 students. Through the district’s Destination 2020 initiative, Dallas ISD seeks to improve student achievement by providing an effective teacher in every classroom, making effective principals key levers to improving schools, creating an efficient central office, expanding leadership density and engaging the community and parents.

#### **About The Frontiers of Flight Museum**

The Frontiers of Flight Museum, a Smithsonian Institution Affiliate, is a gem in our North Texas community that attracts over 100,000 visitors annually including 30,000 students. The Museum is a learning laboratory using aviation and space flight to encourage and promote student excellence in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Educational classes for all ages are offered throughout the year, designed to excite the imagination in STEM through spacecraft design, aerodynamics, model-building, space science and other disciplines.

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