

# EDUCATION WEEK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Kevin Bushweller, (301) 280-3100, [kbushweller@epe.org](mailto:kbushweller@epe.org)

## Special Report Examines Education Startups, New Approaches to Schooling

*American Education's Newspaper of Record Launches New Line of Coverage  
About the K-12 Industry and Innovation in Schools*

WASHINGTON—March 12, 2012—As schools face uncertain budget times and rapidly changing economic and technological forces, education leaders are turning to new approaches to schooling, prompting what could become a major shift in how K-12 education is organized and delivered. This openness to innovation is spurring policy changes, sparking entrepreneurship, and giving birth to new programs and products with the potential to transform student learning and school operations. Fueling this engine of ideas and enterprise, venture capital has flowed into K-12 education at an explosive rate, with 2011 marking the highest transaction values in a decade.

As part of its efforts to track this rapidly evolving field, *Education Week* has released a new special report—*Accelerating Innovation: New Companies and Initiatives Bet on Transforming K-12*—that examines the dynamic education marketplace and new approaches that are sweeping across the nation's schools. (A special digital edition of the report can be downloaded for free with registration at [www.edweek.org/ew/collections/innovation-report-2012](http://www.edweek.org/ew/collections/innovation-report-2012).) The report examines the growth of education startup companies over the past few years, the reasons many fail while others succeed, and the lessons regular public schools can learn from charters. Among the other forces propelling change are new models of hybrid learning that blend online and face-to-face instruction, state efforts to emphasize academic performance and competency rather than seat-time requirements, and the federal government's emerging role as an accelerant for innovation in schools.

The report also points to concerns among business leaders and educators that, despite vibrant pockets of K-12 innovation, precollegiate education has been slower than other sectors of the economy to embrace new ways of doing things. "When you look at how much faster innovation happens in other sectors than it does in education, I always wonder why we are such a laggard," U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said in an interview.

*Accelerating Innovation* is part of an ambitious new "Industry & Innovation" project launched by Editorial Projects in Education—the nonprofit publisher of *Education Week*—to chronicle the business side of K-12 education, broad-based efforts at innovation, and an array of influential players that includes entrepreneurs and startups, major corporations and established businesses, and policymakers and philanthropists. With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the project will produce a robust body of news coverage, as well as blogs, e-newsletters, live and virtual events, and a dedicated online channel. Readers can start following developments in the education industry at *Education Week's* new Marketplace K-12 blog ([www.edweek.org/go/marketplaceK12](http://www.edweek.org/go/marketplaceK12)).

###

**Editorial Projects in Education (EPE)** is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization based in Bethesda, Md. Its primary mission is to help raise the level of awareness and understanding among professionals and the public of important issues in American education. EPE covers local, state, national, and international news and issues from preschool through high school and beyond. It publishes *Education Week*, America's newspaper of record for precollegiate education, *Digital Directions*, the *Teacher Professional Development Sourcebook*, and the *Top School Jobs* employment resource. EPE also produces periodic special reports on a wide range of issues, publishes books of interest to educators, and hosts numerous live and virtual events.