

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Burns & McDonnell and PLTW Grant Provides Opportunity for STEAM Program in Cicero District 99**

CICERO, Illinois — Through a \$260,000 grant from Burns & McDonnell, Cicero District 99 is expanding its cutting-edge STEAM curriculum with Project Lead The Way (PLTW) to students in grades kindergarten through six across 13 schools in Cicero.

For the past several years, seventh and eighth graders attending Cicero's Unity Junior High School have had the opportunity to participate with PLTW in engaging computer science, engineering and technology education curriculum in a school-friendly format. But now, with each of the district's elementary schools receiving \$20,000, PLTW will be available to all students in District 99 across grades K-8.

On Tuesday, Nov. 1, officials from the school district, PLTW and Burns & McDonnell celebrated the grant during a tour of Sherlock Elementary School, where they observed student and staff demonstrations of the PLTW curriculum and saw firsthand how the grant will benefit elementary students districtwide.

"Cicero District 99 is ecstatic about being afforded the opportunity to expand upon our already great partnership with Project Lead The Way in introducing science, technology and other modern, 21st-century skills to our students," said Dr. Aldo Calderin, superintendent of Cicero District 99. "It is our hope that with this generous chance to introduce our district's youngest students to these concepts, that by the time they reach high school, they are very familiar with STEAM education and are more apt to continue along a path toward a STEAM career."

Over the past six years, Project Lead The Way's Gateway curriculum has allowed Cicero to connect students with future careers and address real-world problems in a hands-on, forward-thinking fashion, all while boosting classroom engagement and innovative thinking in science and engineering concepts along the way.

"We are excited about this partnership with Cicero District 99 and Burns & McDonnell," said Dr. David Dimmitt, PLTW President and CEO. "We know introducing STEM skills early is essential to helping students see beyond the classroom. Together with teachers and leaders in business and industry, we are providing students with real-world, relevant learning experiences to help them thrive in college, their careers and beyond."

The Burns & McDonnell Foundation has committed to provide \$1.5 million in grants over the next three years to implement PLTW programs. The Foundation also provided \$460,000 to support STEM education and \$850,000 to support science museums and centers in 2021.

"It's my sincere hope that this investment in Cicero and Project Lead The Way will help spark an interest in students around sciences and technology and will help inspire students to pursue STEM careers for years to come," said Scott Newland, senior vice president for the Chicago office of Burns & McDonnell. "It is inspirational to watch how engaged the students are with science, technology, engineering and math."

About Burns & McDonnell

Burns & McDonnell is a family of companies bringing together an unmatched team of 10,000 engineers, construction and craft professionals, architects, and more to design and build our critical infrastructure. With an integrated construction and design mindset, we offer full-service capabilities. Founded in 1898 and working from more than 60 offices globally, Burns & McDonnell is 100% employee-owned. Learn how we are [designed to build](#).

About Cicero District 99

Cicero District 99 is a public elementary school district in Cicero, Ill., a near-west suburb of Chicago that is home to more than 82,000 residents. The District includes 15 schools and educates more than 9,000 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, most of whom (95 percent) come from bilingual or English-learning households. District 99 is igniting the road to excellence by cultivating a 21st-century learning environment.

About Project Lead The Way

Project Lead The Way (PLTW) is a mission-driven organization that is transforming the learning experience for millions of PreK-12 students and thousands of teachers across the U.S. PLTW empowers students to develop in-demand, transportable knowledge and skills through pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science. PLTW's teacher training and resources support teachers as they engage their students in real-world learning. Approximately 12,200 elementary, middle, and high schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia offer PLTW programs. For more information on Project Lead The Way, visit pltw.org.