



Great Schools Partnership, Inc.  
22 Monument Square, Suite 404  
Portland, Maine 04101

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 5, 2009

## **150K GRANT FROM THE ARTHUR VINING DAVIS FOUNDATIONS WILL SUPPORT BREAKTHROUGH INSTRUCTIONAL-IMPROVEMENT TOOL**

### CONTACT

Stephen Abbott, Director of Communications  
207.773.0505 | [sabbott@greatschoolspartnership.org](mailto:sabbott@greatschoolspartnership.org)

PORTLAND, ME: The Great Schools Partnership announced today that it has received a \$149,709 grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, a \$250 million philanthropy that supports “innovative professional development programs that strengthen teachers and their teaching in grades 9–12.” The grant will support the ongoing development of iWalkthrough ([www.iwalkthrough.org](http://www.iwalkthrough.org)), a cutting-edge tool that is helping revolutionize instructional-improvement efforts in Maine and around the country. The Partnership will use the funding to strengthen its iWalkthrough training program and build new interactive, Web-based resources that can deliver low-cost, high-quality support to high-need schools and districts that are working to strengthen academic instruction and athletic coaching for the benefit of their students.

A breakthrough instructional-analysis tool for schools and athletic programs, iWalkthrough is opening new frontiers in data collection, professional development, and the systematic observation of teaching and coaching. During brief observations in the classroom or on the playing field, educators record instructional characteristics on digital handheld devices. These electronic records are then uploaded to an online database and reporting system that allows administrators, teachers, and coaches to easily analyze strengths and weaknesses in their programs. There are currently more than 32,000 classroom observations archived in the iWalkthrough system, and this unprecedented repository of data on instructional characteristics and trends is available to schools using the tool.

“Every educator and parent knows that teaching quality has a significant impact on student learning and long-term educational aspirations,” said David Ruff, co-executive director of the Great Schools Partnership. “The iWalkthrough system gives teachers the detailed information they need to improve their own instruction, while principals are eager to use the tool to inform school-improvement efforts and design professional-learning opportunities for staff.”

As a mission-driven nonprofit organization committed to redesigning educational policies, programs, and practices to enhance educational opportunity and classroom learning for all students, the Partnership has three ambitious goals for the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations grant: (1) increase the quality of daily classroom teaching experienced by tens of thousands of students across the country, (2) provide cost-effective, data-driven tools and processes for instructional improvement to thousands of educators, and (3) develop an array of support resources that will ensure effective implementation of iWalkthrough in hundreds of schools across Maine and the country.

– END –