

PRESS RELEASE

Chariho High School Launches INCubator Program

Chariho High School seniors will soon have the opportunity to turn their entrepreneurial dreams into reality. As the first high school in New England to adopt the INCubator^{edu} for High Schools Program from Uncharted Learning, Chariho students, with support from industry mentors, will think big, plan strategically, develop and build, and then pitch and promote their product or business idea during an annual Pitch Week.

With generous financial support from the Community 2000 Education Foundation, Rotary Club of Chariho, RI Office of Innovation, and Horace A. Kimball Foundation, the launch of the INCubator Program at Chariho High School marks another step in the continuing transformation of the senior year experience.

This year's seniors will have an opportunity to enroll in INCubator in the second semester, in a double-block format. Going forward, the course will run for a full year. In INCubator, "Students demonstrate their learning through explanation, interpretation and application of content to their team's real business idea. Principles and process from the LEAN movement help students test their thinking. From concept to Minimum Viable Product to Pitch, students are hypothesizing, testing, adapting and learning. Importantly, they work and learn in teams." Further, "coaches provide authentic business expertise in a specific area...to provide all students with a real-world context for a specific curricular area. Mentors are assigned to one team and follow them through the entire process providing students with feedback and encouragement." "INCubator^{edu} creates a foundational experience for high school students who will study entrepreneurship and business in college as well as for those students who enter the workforce after graduating from high school." (<http://incubator^{edu}.org>)

Susie Scanapieco, Chariho's INCubator instructor, attended the 2017 INCubator^{edu} National Summit on High School Entrepreneurship in Chicago this past summer. "After attending the National Summit, I am certain we are offering Chariho students an authentic 'real world' experience through INCubator^{edu}. This program offers our students a top-notch curriculum, lessons co-taught with local experts, and guidance from community mentors. The students will learn the rigorous Lean Business Model while also sharpening their soft skills, which will be essential to success in a 21st century career. I'm beyond excited to teach this class!"

The Chair of the Chariho High School Business/Technology Department, Madeline Crocker, sees a natural fit between business courses and pathways and the INCubator opportunity. "INCubator is a tremendous opportunity for our students who have studied the various structures of business and the important roles that entrepreneurs serve in our economy to have the chance to see their ideas become a reality."

Executive Director of Uncharted Learning, Margarita Geleske, welcomed Chariho High School as Rhode Island's first INCubator^{edu} member school. "We are honored to work with Chariho. The

school district's leadership has a strong commitment to creating innovative learning opportunities for students which makes for a terrific environment for the entire community."

Chariho High School Principal Craig MacKenzie sees the value of adding the INCubator program to the senior year experience. MacKenzie notes that, "We challenge our students, who identify themselves as Chargers and The Herd, to Lead the Herd and work to distinguish themselves from other students regionally, nationally and internationally as they compete for scholarships, admissions, and jobs. INCubator provides our students with that opportunity by engaging their creativity, resourcefulness and entrepreneurial spirit."

Superintendent of Schools Barry Ricci welcomed the news that INCubator would become part of the Chariho High School senior experience. "With opportunities for internships, personalized pathways, independent study, virtual learning, advanced placement and other college credit earning opportunities, and career and technical programs, the Chariho senior has a variety of authentic ways to apply knowledge and pursue areas of interest and passion as they transition to college and careers," he remarked. "Further, with Chariho's unique arrangement with Uncharted Learning, all Rhode Island high schools will want to participate in the INCubator for High Schools Program. What a unique and promising economic development opportunity for our state!"

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