EDUCATORS FIND DIGITAL GAMES ARE PROMISING TOOLS IN THE CLASSROOM ACCORDING TO NATIONAL SURVEY

Joan Ganz Cooney Center Inquiry Finds Educators Are Using Digital Games in Reaching Underserved Students; Costs Are Main Barrier to Further Integration

New York, NY, May 2, 2012 – The first national survey of teachers who are using digital games as part of their students' instruction, released today by the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop, found that digital games are becoming a consistent and valuable part of classroom activities. Fifty percent of teachers of grades K-8 reported they are using digital games with their students two or more days a week, with 18 percent using them daily. The survey, *Teacher Attitudes about Digital Games in the Classroom*, conducted in collaboration with and support from BrainPOP®, was released at The NewSchools Venture Fund-Aspen Institute Summit in San Francisco. An accompanying series of video case studies of teachers who are using digital games in the classroom was also previewed.

Nearly 70 percent of educators reported that lower-performing students engage more with subject content with use of digital games, while three-fifths reported increased attention to specific tasks and improved collaborations among all students. Teachers said games make it easier to teach a range of learners in their classroom. Sixty percent said that using digital games helps personalize instruction and better assess student knowledge and learning.

The survey found that teachers are most often using literacy (50 percent) and math (35 percent) games. They identified the most valuable quality of digital games as aligning with Common Core State Standards. The majority of teachers are using games on Mac or PC platform, 25 percent report students are using iPads or tablet computers and less than 10 percent are using other portable devices, mobile phones or video game consoles.

"With over 90 percent of all school age children now playing digital games on a regular basis, and many underserved students struggling to benefit from traditional approaches, it is common sense to deploy interactive technologies to engage students in more personalized and joyful learning," said Dr. Michael Levine, Executive Director of the Cooney Center. "The survey confirms that in many classrooms teachers are asking students to put down their pencils and play."

The number one obstacle teachers cited to integrating digital games into the classroom is cost. The second most reported obstacles cited in the survey are lack of access to technology resources and emphasis on standardized test preparation.

A summary of the findings are available for download at www.joanganzcooneycenter.org/images/presentation/jgcc_teacher_survey.pdf. Three videos in a series of five case studies of educators who are using digital games in their classrooms are available on the Cooney Center YouTube channel. The case studies include profiles of a school technology integrator who uses a version of the commercial game Minecraft modified for educational purposes and a fourth grade teacher who uses games from BrainPOP® and Mangahigh.com to engage students in math and science content.

Conducted by VeraQuest, Inc., the survey sampled 505 U.S. school teachers online within the United States in March 2012. Respondents were randomly selected from a targeted panel of classroom/specialist teachers of kindergarten through eighth grade to be generally proportional of the demographic strata of total U.S. teachers. The estimated sampling error for the sample of 505 respondents is +/- 4.4 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

The *Teacher Attitudes about Digital Games in the Classroom* survey is part of research being conducted by the Games and Learning Publishing Council with the aim of identifying areas of innovation in the games and learning space. The Games and Learning Publishing Council, convened by the Cooney Center and E-Line Media, is generously funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

The Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop is an independent, non-profit research group that is fostering innovation in children's learning through digital media. The center conducts and supports research, creates educational models and interactive media properties, and builds cross-sector partnerships. It is named for Sesame Workshop's founder, who revolutionized television with the creation of *Sesame Street*. Core funding is provided by the generous support of Peter G. Peterson and Sesame Workshop.

BrainPOP® creates animated educational content for use in classrooms, at home, and on mobile devices. Our award-winning digital resources include BrainPOP Jr. ® (K-3), BrainPOP, BrainPOP Español™, BrainPOP ESL™, BrainPOP Educators, and GameUp™, a collection of cross-curricular game titles from leading publishers.

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