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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 21, 2011

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Literacy Coach in St. Johns County School District Wins Leadership Grant

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — Melissa Lime, an instructional literacy coach at Pacetti Bay Middle School in St. Augustine, Fla., has received the 2011 Eve Proffitt Emerging Leaders Project Grant from the PDK Educational Foundation.

Lime's project, "St. Johns County Secondary Literacy Cadre," is focused on establishing a secondary literacy cadre in her school district that will provide additional opportunities for teacher collaboration, research sharing, participation in literacy-based community service projects, and recognition of literacy leaders within district. Through this project, she aims to improve reading instruction and student achievement.

"Reading is my passion," Lime said. "I have been an instructional literacy coach for five years and enjoy sharing best practices and learning new teaching strategies. My goal is to provide reading teachers in the district with a professional learning community where they can discuss current research, review student and teacher resources, and explore best practices. Ultimately, the project will benefit everyone in the district — the teachers, the students, and the schools."

As the third Proffitt grant recipient, Lime will receive a \$2,500 award from the PDK Educational Foundation. The foundation provides support for programs and projects established by PDK International, a global association of education professionals. The grant was established in 2008 by Eve Proffitt, an educator and former PDK International board president. It provides funding for a project that emphasizes PDK's three tenets — leadership, research, and service — and is only available to PDK's Emerging Leaders, a group of elite young educators.

"I find Melissa's project timely in that we certainly must embrace literacy in all content areas at the secondary level," Proffitt said. "At a time when resources are difficult to find, increased collaborative efforts are essential to teacher effectiveness and student achievement. I'm impressed by her ambition and vision for collaborating with additional teachers and the community in developing a literacy cadre which could serve as a prototype for other communities."

"PDK is dedicated to cultivating tomorrow's great educators," said William J. Bushaw, PDK International's executive director. "Melissa is an extraordinary example of the young leaders whose visionary ideas we are thrilled to support."

Since joining St. Johns County School District in 2004, Lime has served as an instructional literacy coach at St. Johns Technical High School and as a middle school language arts and reading teacher at Gamble Rogers Middle School. In 2009, she received the St. Johns County High School Literacy Coach of the Year award. She has also served as an adjunct instructor at the University of North Florida in the College of Education and Human Services. She is president of the Florida Matanzas PDK chapter and has recently joined the board of directors for Learn to Read of St. Johns County.

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About PDK International

Founded in 1906, PDK International is a global association for professional educators. The organization's mission is to support education, particularly public education, as the cornerstone of democracy. More information is online at www.pdkintl.org.

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