

For Immediate Release

### **Bristol Tennessee City Schools join Eastman Chemical Company's Putting Children First Partnership**

KINGSPORT, Tenn., Mar 8, 2010 - Eastman Chemical Company announces that Bristol Tennessee City Schools (BTCS) has joined Eastman's *Putting Children First* program. *Putting Children First* (PCF) is a business and education partnership between Eastman and eight school systems in northeast Tennessee and southwest Virginia, including Hawkins County, Johnson City, Kingsport City, Rogersville City, Scott County, Sullivan County, Washington County, and now Bristol Tennessee City.

PCF began in the early 1990's as a way for Eastman to consolidate and formalize its outreach programs to local schools; it started with four school systems originally, and has expanded over time. The philosophy behind this initiative is that all citizens are stakeholders in the education system, since business and industry depend on a well-educated workforce, and communities must be able to attract and maintain sound businesses and good employees in order to flourish. The premise of PCF is that when business and education work together, remarkable progress can be achieved.

Putting Children First is a supporter of our local schools through various programs such as: PCF Science and Math Education Grants, the Eastman Scholar Mathlete program, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Expos, Newspapers in Education, TN/VA Scholars, and Growing Educational Mentors for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (GEM4STEM), as well as other needs the schools identify.

Eastman is very pleased to have BTCS as its newest partner in education.

"Eastman looks forward to partnering with Bristol Tennessee City Schools on several educational initiatives," said Paul Montgomery, vice president of Talent Management for Eastman. "We believe the rich networking, which currently exists between our seven other partnering school systems, will benefit significantly from the addition of Bristol Tennessee City Schools, which has demonstrated a willingness to implement innovative and progressive programs that enhance education in our region."

BTCS includes five elementary schools (Anderson, Avoca, Fairmount, Haynesfield, and Holston View), Vance Middle School, and Tennessee High School, serving over 3800 students and employing over 550 people.

BTCS Director of Schools Gary Lilly said, "We are excited about the collaboration between our school system and Eastman's *Putting Children First* program. The programs they've implemented hold enormous potential to help both students and faculty. We appreciate Eastman's support of our educational mission."

Eastman's chemicals, fibers and plastics are used as key ingredients in products that people use every day. Approximately 10,000 Eastman employees around the world blend technical expertise and innovation to deliver practical solutions. The company is committed to finding sustainable business opportunities within the diverse markets it serves. A global company headquartered in Kingsport, Tennessee, USA, Eastman had 2009 sales of \$5 billion. For more information, visit [www.eastman.com](http://www.eastman.com).

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