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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ACCEPT RECEIVES GRANT FROM DOUG FLUTIE, JR. FOUNDATION FOR AUTISM FOR \$20,000

Natick, MA (Feb 26, 2018) - ACCEPT Education Collaborative is pleased to announce it has received a \$20,000 grant from the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism. These funds will support the purchase and adoption of the Practical Assessment Exploration System (PAES), a functional skills curriculum that helps students discover their vocational passions, interests and skills via simulated hands-on work experiences.

More than 70 students from Metrowest communities who attend ACCEPT's new state of the art Center for Transition in grades 9-12 or ages 18-22 will directly benefit from PAES. Using the five 10-week modules, ACCEPT Transition classrooms will be transformed into a workplace that makes the student the employee and the teacher the supervisor. By monitoring student interest level in their "job," as well as tasks attempted and completed, the embedded assessment system will help students determine aptitude and interest in various occupations and skills for entry-level jobs in five contexts: computer technology, construction/industrial, processing/production, consumer/service, and business/marketing.

According to ACCEPT Executive Director Marcia Berkowitz, "Our goal is to help students identify vocational pathways that are a good fit, which influences internship placements and training needs for independent living and working. For many students, including those with autism, the years from 16-22 are critical in gaining job training and adult living skills. It is the ideal time to explore vocational work options, develop appropriate on-the-job skills and behaviors, and assess employment potential and fit for various occupations. We are so appreciative of the generous support of the Flutie Foundation that allows us to purchase PAES."

The Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism awards grants annually through a competitive application and review process. The grants that the Flutie Foundation distributes each year help to support family-focused programs in three key areas: promoting active lifestyles, improving access to services, and enhancing the independence of adults with autism.

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About ACCEPT

ACCEPT is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) educational service agency, founded more than 40 years ago to address the demands for special education services, including services for students with autism,

in the suburbs west of Boston. Our mission is to use the collective power of member school districts to provide programs and services that maximize the potential of students, their families, educators, and communities. We anticipate and respond to evolving educational needs with innovative, forward-thinking, high-quality, best-in-class special education programs and services. ACCEPT functions as an entrepreneurial public school partner to its 16 member public school districts including Ashland, Dover, Dover-Sherborn, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopkinton, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Natick, Needham, Sherborn, South Middlesex Regional Technical, Sudbury, and Wellesley. In addition to our member school districts, ACCEPT provides services to students from 24 other communities. ACCEPT's core operations include school programs for more than 125 students, specialized transportation for more than 500 students daily, professional development offerings for over 1,100 educators, school consultation and evaluation services, and home-based services for more than 50 families. For more information about ACCEPT, visit www.accept.org

About the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism

The Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism (DFJF) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation helping families affected by autism live life to the fullest. Through programs and partnerships, DFJF helps people with autism get access to care; lead more active lifestyles; and grow toward adult independence. NFL Quarterback Doug Flutie and his wife Laurie, whose personal experience raising a son on the autism spectrum inspired their passion to help other families, established the Foundation in 1998. DFJF serves families throughout New England, New York, New Jersey, Southern California, Central Florida and Canada. For more information on the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism, visit www.flutiefoundation.org.