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## For Immediate Release

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### **RTI Software Engineer Brings Coding to Area Classroom in Outreach Effort**

**HUNTINGTON, WV** – Benjamin Frazier, a software engineer at [Rahall Transportation Institute \(RTI\)](#), prior to summer dismissal, visited Pritchard Elementary School in Grayson, KY, to educate students on various web-programming languages and demonstrate how these languages are used to create video games.

As part of an educational outreach effort, Frazier took time to visit his daughter's fourth grade science class where he introduced students to first, second, third and fourth generation programming languages including HTML, Java, Assembly, Javascript and Python. In order to reach students, Frazier centered his discussion around how these languages can be used to manipulate elements within Minecraft, a popular online game that uses creative and building aspects to enable players to build constructions out of textured cubes in a 3D procedural generated world.

Frazier explained to students that coding is much like building something in Minecraft. For example, a fundamental unit to begin building something in Minecraft is called a block. It can be a stone block, lava block, ore block, etc., and with this fundamental unit, the user can construct buildings, roller coasters, etc.

"Programming is a lot like this," Frazier said. "If the kids can get some fundamental things down about programming, they too can build whatever they want. It just takes some time to learn."

As part of the activity, Frazier utilized TeachCraft challenges online at Github.com, an open source project created to get young people excited about programming. By completing these TeachCraft challenges, the students would learn they could manipulate the Minecraft world both programmatically and algorithmically. Frazier said he chose to use the TeachCraft challenges because he knew the challenges would ignite the kids' imagination.

“I think it is important to introduce kids to coding because it can be an outlet for their creativity,” Frazier said. “For me, coding is a creative process, just like painting or building something with your hands. It’s also a lot of fun to program. I wanted to introduce them to how much fun it can be.”

*RTI is a leader in transportation research and economic development solving transportation challenges and addressing future needs through applied multimodal research, workforce development and advanced technology transfer. To learn more about RTI, visit [njrati.org](http://njrati.org).*

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*Attachments (1) – Photo: Benjamin Frazier, 4-PS4-3 Software Engineer explaining to Mrs. Baldwin’s fourth grade science class how code is used in Minecraft*

