

May 29, 2014

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Labor, HHS and Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Senate Labor, HHS and Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Moran:

RE: FY 2015 Funding for Education Technology

The undersigned organizations — representing educators, state and local education leaders, and the high-tech industry — urge you to fund education technology at a minimum of \$200 million in FY 2015. We believe funding for education technology devices, resources and professional learning should be administered through the Enhancing Education through Technology (EETT) program, a proven formula program. At this critical juncture for education, it is imperative that school districts have both the technology infrastructure — including devices, equipment, software and connectivity — and technology professional development to transition to digital learning and leverage broadband investments made through the E-Rate program. We believe that the existing EETT program, with a few small changes, is the right dissemination mechanism.

Technology can open the door to new types and ways of learning that were not imaginable even a few short years ago. With high-speed connectivity, students can collaborate, communicate and create content through blogs, wikis, videos and other forms of project-based learning; teachers can choose from a wide array of digital textbooks, online resources and assessments that provide real-time feedback of student progress to personalize the learning experience; and entire classrooms can go on virtual field trips and even talk to astronauts at the International Space Station. However, without access to a sufficient number of devices and appropriate software, the limitless digital educational possibilities will be restricted for students and educators.

Furthermore, for digital learning to become a reality nationwide, educators must receive ongoing, sustainable and scalable technology professional learning opportunities. According to a 2012 survey from Project Tomorrow, one-third of all educators indicated that the lack of sufficient professional development was a major obstacle to implementing technology in the classroom. The advent of online assessments makes even more acute the need educators have for professional learning on how to develop and implement digital learning curriculum, incorporate technology into the classroom and use data from online assessments to personalize and strengthen instruction to the needs, styles, and interests of students.

We submit that a funded and slightly updated EETT would serve as the appropriate vehicle to ensure that digital learning can flourish. This program, unfunded since 2011, already prioritizes funding for professional learning, requiring districts to set aside 25 percent of funds received for that purpose. We believe that focus can be sharpened further, along the lines already proposed in two bills offered to revamp EETT (S. 1087 and HR 521), by increasing the funding requirement for professional learning to a minimum of 35 percent. Additionally, with a renewed need for devices and software to accommodate 1:1 initiatives and online assessments, we also recommend that EETT language be tweaked to allow districts to set aside a minimum of 40 percent of funds received for their infrastructure needs. We believe that the remainder of EETT's existing structure, including its use of a poverty-based formula for distributions to states, remains sound and is in need of no update. We would recommend, though, that the program be altered to establish a trigger that would permit states to allocate funds via competition rather than formula if the program is funded below \$300 million.

Thank you for your consideration of our request to fund EETT at a minimum of \$200 million and to make small but important changes to the existing program to emphasize support for education technology infrastructure and professional learning.

For additional information, contact Hilary Goldmann, senior director for government relations, International Society for Technology in Education at hgoldmann@iste.org or 202-549-0949.

Sincerely,

AASA: The School Superintendents Association
Alliance for Excellent Education
Apple Inc.
Association of Educational Service Agencies
Association of School Business Officials International
Atomic Learning
Cisco
Consortium for School Networking
Dell Inc.
Digital Wish
Discovery Education
Gaggle
Hope Street Group
Intel
International Society for Technology in Education
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Commission on Teaching & America's Future
National Education Association
National Network of State Teachers of the Year
National Rural Education Association

National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition
National School Public Relations Association
Nervanix, Inc.
PDK International
Software & Information Industry Association
State Educational Technology Directors Association

Alabama

Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators
Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals
Alabama Educational Technology Association
Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools

Alaska

Alaska Society for Technology in Education

Arizona

Arizona School Administrators, Inc.
Arizona Technology in Education Association

Arkansas

Arkansas Society for Technology in Education

California

CUE

Colorado

Colorado Association of School Executives
Colorado Association of Secondary School Principals
Colorado Association of Leaders in Educational Technology

Connecticut

Connecticut Educators Computer Association
New England ISTE

District of Columbia

District of Columbia Association of Secondary School Principals

Florida

Florida Council of Instructional Technology Leaders
Florida Society for Technology in Education

Georgia

Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals

Hawaii

Hawaii Elementary and Middle Schools Administrators Association

Idaho

Northwest Council for Computer Education

Illinois

Illinois Computing Educators

Illinois Principals Association

Indiana

Indiana Association of School Principals

Indiana Computer Educators

Iowa

Iowa Technology Education Connection

School Administrators of Iowa

Kansas

Kansas Association of Secondary School Principals

Kansas City Metropolitan Educational Technology Network

Kentucky

Kentucky Association of Elementary School Principals

Kentucky Society for Technology in Education

Louisiana

Louisiana Association of Computer Using Educators

Maine

Association of Computer Technology Educators of Maine

New England ISTE

Maryland

Maryland Society for Education Technology

Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals

Massachusetts

Massachusetts Computing Using Educators

Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators' Association

New England ISTE

Michigan

Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning
Michigan Association for Media in Education
Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals
Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association
Regional Educational Media Center Association of Michigan

Minnesota

Minnesota Association of Elementary School Principals
Minnesota Educational Media Organization

Mississippi

Mississippi Association of Secondary School Principals

Missouri

Educational Technology Association of St Louis
Kansas City Metropolitan Educational Technology Network
Kansas City TechNet
Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals
Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals
Missouri Educational Technology Community
Kansas City Metropolitan Educational Technology Network

Montana

Montana Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals
Montana Association of Secondary School Principals
Northwest Council for Computer Education

Nebraska

Nebraska Association for Middle Level Education
Nebraska Council of School Administrators
Nebraska Educational Technology Association
Nebraska State Association of Secondary School Principals

Nevada

Computer Using Educators of Nevada

New Hampshire

New England ISTE
New Hampshire Society for Technology in Education

New Jersey

New Jersey Association of Educational Technology
New Jersey Educational Computing Cooperative

New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association

New York

New York State Association for Computers and Technologies in Education
School Administrators Association of New York State

North Carolina

North Carolina Principals & Assistant Principals' Association
North Carolina Technology in Education Society

Ohio

Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators
Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators

Oklahoma

Oklahoma Association of Secondary School Principals

Oregon

Association of Computing Professionals in Education
Northwest Council for Computer Education

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Association for Educational Communications and Technology

Rhode Island

New England ISTE
Rhode Island Association of School Principals
Rhode Island Society of Technology Educators
School Librarians of Rhode Island

Tennessee

Tennessee Educational Technology Association
Tennessee Principals Association

Texas

Texas Computer Education Association

Utah

Utah Association of Secondary School Principals

Vermont

New England ISTE
Vermont Principals' Association

Virginia

Virginia Society for Technology in Education

Washington

Association of Computing Professionals in Education

Association of Washington School Principals

Northwest Council for Computer Education

Washington Library Media Association

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Association of School Administrators

Wisconsin Educational Media and Technology Association

Wyoming

Wyoming Association of Secondary School Principals

Wyoming Technology-Engagement-Curriculum Connection

Cc: Members of the Senate Labor, HHS and Education Subcommittee