

June 24, 2009

The Honorable Tom Harkin, Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor-HHS-Education
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran, Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor-HHS-Education
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Senator Cochran:

RE: FY2010 Appropriations for the Enhancing Education Through Technology Program

The undersigned organizations – representing educators, state and local education leaders and public officials, and the high-tech industry – urge you to fund the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program (NCLB Title II, Part D) at a minimum of \$269 million (the FY09 level) in the FY10 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill.

Educational technologies and the EETT program are mission critical to our educational success and national competitiveness. Congress included EETT as a core provision of NCLB in recognition of technology's importance to address the law's requirements and central goals to improve teacher quality and student achievement. Additionally, education technology plays an integral role in addressing the science, technology, engineering, math (STEM), foreign language and other educational gaps that lie at the heart of efforts to upgrade America's competitiveness.

The importance of innovation in our classrooms, instruction and curriculum through technology and the EETT program was recognized in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which provided \$650 million for the program. But the ARRA investment follows several years of under-funding after EETT was cut 60% from its FY02-FY04 levels to \$269 million in recent years. Increased funding in FY10 is necessary to leverage the ARRA funding, offset the recent cuts, ensure grants are of sufficient size to maximize impact, and meet the needs of today's digital learners.

Successfully accomplishing the nation's educational goals to improve teacher quality and student achievement, as well as meeting the ARRA's so-called "four assurances," either requires the use of technology or can best be addressed in part through leveraging technology, including to:

- **Achieve equity in teacher distribution and quality:** Online learning provides the opportunity to deliver high quality instruction to students isolated by geography or underserved by high quality programs. Online professional development and online professional learning communities enhance opportunities for educators to improve their knowledge, skills and effectiveness.
- **Establish longitudinal data systems:** Data systems are, by their very nature, comprised of technologies such as software applications and data storage servers. These local and state data systems enable the collection and monitoring of real-time student data (including from formative assessment) to inform and improve classroom instruction and local/state decision making, as well as to enable transparency and accountability.
- **Enhance the quality of academic assessments and improve State academic standards:** Computer-based and online assessment provide significant enhancements to traditional assessment methods. They provide real-time data, adapt to individual student responses,

enable alternative test-items for special populations, and are necessary for robust assessment of the knowledge/skills required for success in the changing global economy.

- **Support struggling schools:** Technology is the engine for a continuous improvement model for students, teachers and institutions. Technology can enable personalized learning through real-time assessment, adaptive software, expanded educational opportunities through distance learning, enhanced teacher professional development, and benchmarking of performance data to inform program improvement.

With adequate federal support, technology can have an even greater impact on student achievement and preparedness for even more students. EETT funds provide schools with an important baseline of support for ensuring a competitive 21st Century learning environment and improving student learning. In most states and localities, these funds are a catalyst used to leverage further investments and reforms otherwise not possible. In many states, EETT is the only targeted investment in school and classroom technologies.

We urge you to provide at least \$296 million for the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program in FY10. For additional information, please contact our coalition co-chairs Hilary Goldmann of the International Society for Technology in Education (202-861-7777; hgoldmann@iste.org) or Mark Schneiderman of the Software & Information Industry Association (202-789-4444; marks@siaa.net).

Sincerely,

Adobe Systems, Inc.
American Association of Colleges of Teacher
Education
American Association of School Administrators
Apple
Association of Educational Service Agencies
Blackboard
Common Sense Media
Consortium for School Networking
Discovery Communications, LLC
EDUCAUSE
Federation of American Scientists
Intel
International Society for Technology in Education
Knowledge Alliance
Microsoft
National Association of Federally Impacted Schools
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Association of State Directors of Career
Technical Education Consortium

National Association of State Directors of Special
Education
National Commission on Teaching and America's
Future
National Council of Teachers of English
National Education Association
National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition
National School Boards Association
National Science Teachers Association
New York State Education Department
iNACOL
PBS
Pearson
Project Lead The Way
SAS
Scholastic
Software & Information Industry Association
State Educational Technology Directors Association
The McGraw-Hill Companies
The U.S. Conference of Mayors

cc: Members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education