



Support the Enhancing Education Through Technology Program Restore Funding to \$496 million FY 05 Level

Message

Technology is critical in our schools to both meet the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act and ensure students are prepared to compete in the 21st Century. America cannot create a competitive workforce if its schools don't have technology-proficient educators, well-equipped classrooms, sufficiently supported administrative structures and a curriculum that recognizes the role technology plays in all disciplines. A robust and targeted federal investment is needed to address these needs and goals, and the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program (Title II part D of NCLB) is an integral component of this national support. Restored funding for the EETT program to a minimum of \$496 million, its FY 05 funding level, is necessary to meet educational goals and needs.

EETT and NCLB

Congress authorized EETT within NCLB to provide school districts, particularly those serving low income students, with the resources necessary to integrate technology into learning. Congress supported EETT because it recognized that technology has an important role to play in achieving key NCLB goals -- raising student achievement, ensuring high quality teaching, and increasing parental involvement -- among others.

Specifically, EETT undergirds NCLB's goals by supporting:

- professional development to ensure teachers are highly qualified by both providing online training as well as enhancing their skills to integrate digital resources into the classroom,
- implementation of effective and appropriate educational software and digital content for use in curriculum, instruction, and classroom/school administration,
- computer-assisted and online testing, as well as data-driven decision making systems, that allow for more immediate, relevant and meaningful assessment of student skills,
- technology-based strategies to improve parental involvement, including through improved communication with teachers and access to student assignments and grades.

EETT allocates funds by formula to states. The states in turn reallocate 50% of the funds to local districts by Title I formula and 50% competitively. While districts must reserve a minimum of 25% of all EETT funds for professional development, recent studies indicate that most EETT recipients use far more than 25% of their EETT funds to train teachers to use technology and integrate it into their curricula. In fact, EETT recipients committed more than \$159 million in EETT funds towards professional development during the 2004-05 school year alone. Moreover, even though EETT recipients are afforded broad discretion in their use of EETT funds, surveys show that they target EETT dollars towards improving student achievement in reading and math, engaging in data driven decision making, and launching online assessment programs.

EETT and Competitiveness

Aside from its importance to achieving NCLB goals, EETT is critical to the nation's future workforce competitiveness. EETT provides all students, especially those who lack access to technology at home, with opportunities to gain the critical technology skills and knowledge that are prerequisites for obtaining jobs in this global, information-technology rich marketplace. These skills include technology literacy, communication, problem solving and the ability for self-directed learning as necessary to improve one's abilities over time as employment needs evolve. A 2003 US Department of Commerce report credits US industry's massive investments

in information technology between 1989-2001 with “producing positive and probably lasting changes in the nation’s economic potential.” Unfortunately, the same study indicates that, of the 55 industries surveyed, Education Services ranked dead last in the intensity of its use of IT equipment per worker. America’s students must not be short-changed in a global economy that is increasingly replete with and dependent upon information technology. Our nation’s future depends on it!

EETT Funding History

While authorized in NCLB at \$1 billion per year, EETT has never received more than \$700 million in annual funding. In the past two years, it has sustained major cuts, culminating in FY06’s 45% reduction, which left the program with only \$272 million. In its FY07 Budget, the Administration proposes to eliminate all funding for the EETT program – the second year in a row that it has sought to eliminate EETT entirely. These cuts have already seriously eroded state and district efforts to both ensure our competitiveness and effectively implement NCLB; a complete elimination of EETT would be devastating.

Districts rely on EETT funds as a core means for providing a competitive 21st Century learning environment. In 14 states (AZ, CA, DE, IL, LA, MD, MI, MN, MO, NH, OK, VT, WA, and WI), EETT is the sole source of education technology funding for local schools, and in the majority of states it is the primary source.

States and districts will be unable to replace EETT dollars with other federal funds. For example:

- Title I: These dollars cannot be used for technology purchases that cover all students (including local data systems), because they are strictly targeted to high-poverty school districts, are focused at the K-6 level, and carry a significant number of mandates.
- Teacher Quality (Title IIA): While this program receives significant funding each year (nearly \$3 billion), it has not received an increase since its inception. This leaves little additional funds to compensate for the eliminated EETT funds. Additionally, technology purchased through this program can only be used by teachers, not students.

Recommendation to Congress

Restore funding for the EETT program to a minimum of its FY05 funding level of \$496 million, in order to meet the goals of NCLB and ensure students and teachers are prepared to compete in the 21st Century.

The **Consortium for School Networking (CoSN)** is the country’s premier voice in education technology leadership with a mission to serve as the national organization for K-12 technology leaders who use technology strategically to ultimately improve teaching and learning. CoSN provides products and services to support and nurture leadership development, advocacy, coalition building, and awareness of emerging technologies. For further information, visit <http://www.cosn.org>.

The **International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)** is the trusted source in education technology for professional development, knowledge generation, and advocacy. A nonprofit membership organization, ISTE provides leadership and service to improve teaching and learning by advancing the effective use of technology in PK–12 and teacher education. Home of the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS), the Center for Applied Research in Educational Technology (CARET), and National Educational Computing Conference (NECC), ISTE represents more than 85,000 worldwide leaders and potential leaders in educational technology. We support our members with information, networking opportunities, and guidance as they face the challenge of integrating technology into schools. For more information, visit <http://www.iste.org>.

The **Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA)** is the principal trade association for the software and digital content industry. SIIA provides global services in government relations, business development, corporate education, and intellectual property protection to more than 750 leading software and information companies. Many SIIA members provide educational software, electronic learning resources and related technologies to students, educators and educational institutions, while all depend on the nation’s schools to provide a skilled high-tech workforce. For further information, visit <http://www.sii.net>.