

April 30, 2008

The Honorable David Obey, Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor-HHS-Education
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James Walsh, Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor-HHS-Education
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Representative Walsh:

RE: FY2009 Appropriations for the Enhancing Education Through Technology Program

On behalf of the Mission Critical Campaign – a coalition of educators, state and local education leaders and public officials, and the high-tech industry – our organizations urge you to fund the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program (NCLB Title II, Part D) at \$496 million in the FY09 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 in NCLB in recognition of technology's importance in addressing the law's central goals and requirements and improving student achievement -- from online professional development to instructional software, and from distance learning to data applications. 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.

Despite the compelling national imperative to better address the educational needs of today's digital learners through technology, the \$496 million would only put the program back on a path toward the necessary levels of \$690+ million provided in FY02-FY04. After 60% funding cuts to \$267 million over the last four years, this partial restoration is needed to ensure grants are of sufficient size to maximize their local impact and meet local needs.

With adequate federal support, research shows that technology can have a significant impact on student achievement and preparedness. According to the *2008 EETT National Trends Report*, "States have released findings from experimental or quasi-experimental research studies on the impact of NCLB II-D programs on student academic achievement. Overall, results reported are generally positive." (<http://www.setda.org/web/guest/nationaltrendsreport>) These recent research studies include:

- **Iowa:** After connecting teachers with sustainable professional development and technology-based curriculum interventions, student scores increased by 14 points in 8th grade math, 16 points in 4th grade math, and 13 points in 4th grade reading compared with control groups.
- **North Carolina:** In a four year study, students in high need schools using the technology-based IMPACT program were 33% more likely to improve one full grade level each year than the control/comparison schools. College going rates in one high school increased from 26 to 84% in five years.

- **Pennsylvania:** A study in Philadelphia schools found students enrolled in schools using an Instructional Management System outperformed those in the control group in mathematics and reading over a three year period.
- **Texas:** The Technology Immersion Pilot (TIP), implemented in middle schools, demonstrated that discipline referrals went down by over ½ with the changes in teaching and learning; while in one school, 6th grade standardized math scores increased by 5%, 7th grade by 42%, and 8th grade by 24%.

In this and other ways, EETT funds provide schools with an important baseline of support for ensuring a competitive 21st Century learning environment and improving student learning. For many states and districts, these funds are a catalyst used to leverage further investments and reforms otherwise not possible.

We urge you to support restoration of funding for the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program to \$496 million. 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@siia.net) for additional information.

Sincerely,

Adobe Systems, Inc.
 American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
 American Association of School Administrators
 Apple Inc.
 Association of Educational Service Agencies
 Association of School Business Officials International
 Blackboard
 California Department of Education
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 International Society for Technology in Education
 Knowledge Alliance
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 National Association of State Boards of Education
 National Commission on Teaching and America's Future
 National Education Association
 National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition
 National School Boards Association
 New York State Education Department
 North American Council for Online Learning
 PBS
 Project Lead The Way
 Scholastic
 SAS
 State Educational Technology Directors Association
 Software & Information Industry Association
 U.S. Conference of Mayors

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