

Mission Critical Campaign

www.missioncriticalcampaign.org

For Immediate Release

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Senate Includes Education Technology Funding as Critical Component of U.S. Competitiveness Agenda

Education-Industry Coalition Thankful, But Continues Advocating for Further Investment

Washington, D.C., July 19, 2006 – A coalition of national education and industry organizations expressed appreciation today to the Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee for voting to level-fund the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) initiative. The coalition views this \$272 million commitment as a good start in light of constraints placed on Chairman Specter and Ranking Member Harkin by the inadequate education funding allocation.

As part of their Mission Critical Campaign (MCC), education and business leaders have urged Congress to restore funding for the EETT program to a minimum of \$496 million as provided in FY2005 as a key component for student success, meeting the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act and ensuring the nation's competitiveness. Funding for the EETT is proposed for elimination in the pending FY2007 U.S. House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill.

Don Knezek, CEO of the International Society for Technology in Education and MCC co-chair organization, stated: "The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) applauds the Senate subcommittee for recognizing the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program's direct connection to our nation's competitiveness and funding it at \$272 million. As we have stated all along, EETT is uniquely positioned to help ensure that America's students achieve academically and possess the requisite skills to compete successfully in the global economy. While we understand the financial constraints that led the Subcommittee to support level funding the program, ISTE will continue to seek the restoration of funding for EETT to its FY 05 funding level and will continue the battle to turn back the House action to eliminate the program."

Ken Wasch, President of the Software & Information Industry Association and MCC co-chair organization, said: "We thank Chairman Specter, Senator Harkin and other Senate appropriators for recognizing the mission critical role played by school technology in addressing the nation's competitiveness. This partial funding restoration of EETT is a strong start in light of the inadequate budget allocation, but we call upon the Congress to further restore funding to the \$496 million level to give our students the tools they need to be successful in the 21st Century. To do less would not only prevent us from moving forward, but also puts at risk the progress we have made through the EETT program in leveraging technology to improve education."

Keith Krueger, CEO of the Consortium for School Networking, added: "The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee's approval yesterday of level-funding for the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program in FY07 represents a base hit for ed tech but not a home

run. CoSN appreciates the leadership of Subcommittee Chairman Specter for providing \$272 million for this program, but we will continue to press for full funding for EETT at the FY05 level of \$496 million, until FY07 appropriations are completed. To paraphrase Yogi Berra, the appropriations process is never over until it's over."

G. Thomas Houlihan, Executive Director of the Council of Chief State School Officers, stated: "On behalf of the nation's chief state school officers, I am pleased that the Senate has made education technology a funding priority in the FY07 Labor, HHS, Education spending bill. However, there is still much work to do to ensure that this important program is sustained and receives the resources necessary to continue to close the achievement gap."

Judith A. McHale, CEO of Discovery Communications, said: "We are thrilled that the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee recognizes the correlation between education technology and student performance. At Discovery, we have first-hand experience with how high-quality digital content can improve test scores and set students on the path to meeting No Child Left Behind's academic benchmarks. I urge Senator Specter to keep fighting for more funding for this important program."

Brenda Musilli, Director of Education, Intel Corporation, stated: "Intel is pleased that the Senate is supporting EETT as part of a US competitiveness initiative. We believe that supporting 21st Century teaching and learning is a critical investment in our country's future."

Reg Weaver, President of the National Education Association, said: "NEA shares the desire of the president and Congress for the United States to remain competitive in the changing global economy, but that simply cannot happen without a strong commitment to 21st century skills and funding for education technology."

Anne Bryant, Executive Director of the National School Boards Association, stated: "The National School Boards Association has heard dozens of compelling stories from its members about the importance of Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) funds in helping to close the achievement gap. It is essential in this rapidly changing world marketplace that all US students be equipped with the 21st Century skills they need to be competitive. The use of technology in today's schools is no longer an option, but an essential tool in the delivery of instruction."

Susan Patrick, President of the North American Council for Online Learning, said: "Funding for Enhancing Education Through Technology is critical for tens of thousands of inner city and rural schools to access needed technology and online learning. Today's reality is that 40 percent of our nation's high schools cannot access a college preparatory curriculum. This is a national tragedy. Through online learning we are providing disadvantaged students with access to rigorous courses to develop the skills they will need to get ahead and to compete in the increasingly technological workplace."

Mary Ann Wolf, Executive Director, State Educational Technology Directors Association, stated: "States appreciate the Senate's understanding of the role of EETT in supporting NCLB goals around student achievement, highly qualified teachers, and data systems; as well as the importance of educational technology and EETT in the nation's Competitiveness efforts. EETT is demonstrating results and substantial gains for students and teachers across the country and is

also serving as a catalyst for state investment in many states, including Alabama, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Funding EETT will ensure that these efforts continue.”

The following organizations support MCC’s goal of increasing EETT funding to a minimum of \$496 million:

Apple, Association of Educational Service Agencies, Consortium for School Networking, Council of Chief State School Officers, Cox Communications, Dell, Discovery Communications, EDUCAUSE, Federation of American Scientists, Florida Virtual School, Hewlett-Packard, Information Technology Association of America, Intel, International Society for Technology in Education, Juniper Networks, Microsoft, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Education Association, National School Boards Association, National Science Teachers Association, North American Council for Online Learning, PBS, SchoolNet, Inc., School Superintendents of Alabama, Software & Information Industry Association, State Educational Technology Directors Association, TechNet, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and United States Conference of Mayors.

About Mission Critical Campaign

The Mission Critical Campaign (MCC) is a national campaign to advance technology as mission critical for K-12 education. The MCC is focused primarily on continued funding for the Enhancing Education Through Technology program (NCLB, Title II-D) and continuation of the E-rate program to meet the mission critical educational needs of students, educators and parents. For more information, visit www.missioncriticalcampaign.org.

About Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT):

Authorized as Title II-D of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), EETT enables schools to address core teaching and learning needs through technology, including:

- access to courses online otherwise not available to rural and urban students,
- delivering professional development to ensure that teachers are highly qualified and can effectively take advantage of new and emerging technology tools,
- providing students with skills and tools to compete in a highly competitive, technology-driven, global employment market,
- continual assessment of student progress to inform instruction through computer-based testing, and
- disaggregating and reporting of student adequate yearly progress (AYP) data to enable accountability.

Authorized in NCLB at \$1 billion per year, EETT was funded at about \$690 million for its first three years in Fiscal Years 2002-2004, but was reduced to \$496 million in FY2005 and to \$272 million in FY2006. States distribute funds to school districts with 50% allocated by poverty-weighted formula and 50% by competition. EETT gives schools broad discretion to use program resources on a number of technology acquisition, enrichment, professional development and integration purposes aimed at improving student achievement and student technology access.