



For Immediate Release –

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**Education & Industry Leaders Urge Congress to
Restore Education Technology Funding**

Washington, D.C. – September 9, 2004 – The Consortium for School Networking (CoSN), International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) joined education and industry leaders today to urge Congressional restoration of education technology program funding and oppose pending cuts to the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program.

The EETT program is the only federal initiative that provides dedicated funding for technology needs to nearly all of the nation's K-12 schools. The U.S. House Appropriations Committee has approved a \$91 million cut to the program in their pending FY05 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Bill. This 13% cut was *not* included in President Bush's budget, and comes after several years of stagnant program funding despite the increased needs of teachers and students.

Schools rely heavily on EETT funds as a core means for meeting *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) goals and requirements around improving student achievement. "The proposed cuts send the wrong message at a time when the nation is calling on our schools to leverage technology to elevate school performance and student achievement," said Keith Krueger, CEO of CoSN, which helped bring education leaders to Capitol Hill this week to advocate for federal ed tech funding. "A \$91 million cut would have grave implications for the ability of states and communities to implement effective technology programs."

"For the business community, technology in schools is critical to ensuring all students gain the 21st Century skills necessary for success in today's highly competitive and technology rich global economy," said Ken Wasch, president of SIIA. "Given that today's students were raised in the digital age, classroom technologies are a vital part of engaging them in the learning process."

As part of this advocacy campaign, two letters – one signed by more than 30 companies and the other by dozens of local education institutions and national organizations – were delivered to Congress today urging restoration of EETT funding to the \$691 million level. The company letter was signed by many high tech entities, including AOL, Apple, BellSouth, Cox Communications, Dell, ETS, Gateway, Houghton-Mifflin, HP, Intel, Pearson Education, PLATO Learning and Texas Instruments. The institutional letter was signed by major organizations such as ISTE, CoSN, the National Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers and over forty school districts from around the country.

The EETT program targets funds to the most disadvantaged communities because they often have the highest telecommunications costs and the lowest Internet and computer penetration rates. “The proposed cuts will disproportionately affect low-income, minority, urban and rural students,” said Don Knezek, CEO of ISTE, which also helped bring educators from around the country to Washington for the day. “Studies, including from a 2002 federal National Telecommunications & Information Administration report, have shown that they are far more likely to rely on their schools for Internet access.”

Authorized as Title II-D of the NCLB, EETT enables schools to address core teaching and learning needs through technology tools, including:

- access to courses online otherwise not available to rural and urban students,
- continual assessment of student progress through computer-based testing, and
- disaggregation and reporting of student adequate yearly progress (AYP) data.

States distribute funds to districts with 50% allocated by poverty-weighted formula and 50% by competition. EETT gives schools broad discretion to spend their money on a wide range of technology acquisition, enrichment and integration purposes with *at least* 25% required for professional development.

About CoSN

The Consortium for School Networking (CoSN), a national non-profit organization, is the premier voice in education technology leadership. Our mission is to advance the K-12 education community’s capacity to effectively use technology to improve learning through advocacy, policy and leadership development. Our members represent school districts, state and local education agencies, nonprofits, companies and individuals who share our vision. For further information, visit <http://www.cosn.org>.

About ISTE

The International Society for Technology in Education is the largest teacher-based nonprofit organization in the field of educational technology, representing more than 75,000 computer-using educators. ISTE is dedicated to providing leadership and service to improve teaching and learning by advancing the effective use of technology in K–12 education and teacher education. ISTE provides its members with information, networking opportunities, and guidance as they face the challenge of incorporating computers, the Internet, and other new technologies into their schools. For more information, visit <http://www.iste.org>.

About SIIA

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 700 leading software and information companies. Many SIIA members provide technology products and services to education, while all depend on the nation's schools for a skilled, high-tech workforce. For further information, visit <http://www.sii.net>.

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