

January 11, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

RE: FY2011 Education Budget 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 (ESEA Title II, Part D) at a minimum of \$500 million in your Fiscal Year 2011 budget.

We know that providing every child with a high-quality education that will enable them to succeed in a global economy predicated on knowledge and innovation is both a moral imperative and critical to America's economic future. Educational technologies are mission critical to this purpose. Congress included EETT as a core provision of ESEA to ensure a sustained, systematic, and coordinated investment in educational technology leadership needed to drive education innovation and continuous improvement. The program's primary goal is to improve student academic achievement through the effective integration of technology in curriculum and instruction, and to ensure every student is technologically literate by the end of eighth grade.

Targeting investment in technology-based innovation through EETT is foundational to achieving the nation's education reform goals. EETT is a critical vehicle for both enhancing state and local leadership capacity toward next generation education reform, as well as for coordinating disparate school improvement program investments that leverage educational technologies. And EETT state-administered competitive grants are critical to further building out the research and evaluation framework needed to help transform education into an evidence-based system of continuous improvement, and to do so at scale. Additionally, EETT plays an integral role in supporting science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education initiatives critical to America's competitiveness.

Technology plays a critical if not indispensable role in accomplishing the nation's educational goals and, more specifically, meeting the objectives of ARRA's "four assurances" including through:

- **Achieving equity in teacher distribution and quality:** Online learning can deliver high quality instruction to students isolated by geography or underserved. Online professional development and learning communities enable educators to improve their knowledge, skills and effectiveness.
- **Establishing longitudinal data systems:** Data systems are comprised of technologies such as software applications and data storage servers. Local and state data systems enable the use of real-time student data (including formative assessment) to improve instruction, decision making and accountability.
- **Enhancing the quality of academic assessments and improve State academic standards:** Computer-based and online assessment 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.
- **Supporting struggling schools:** Technology is the engine for a continuous improvement model, enabling personalized learning through real-time assessment, adaptive software, virtual learning opportunities, online professional development, and benchmarking of performance data.

We greatly appreciate your recognition of the program's importance to education reform, including your support and enactment of \$650 million for EETT in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). However, coupled with a disappointing FY10 investment of only \$100 million, the progress being gained through national, state and local leadership in innovation through technology is at-risk of being lost. We

cannot afford to lose education reform momentum, and urge you to fund EETT at a minimum of \$500 million in your FY11 budget.

For additional information, our coalition co-chairs are Hilary Goldmann of the International Society for Technology in Education (202-861-7777; hgoldmann@iste.org) and Mark Schneiderman of the Software & Information Industry Association (202-789-4444; marks@siia.net).

Sincerely,

American Association of School Administrators
American Association of University Women
Apple
ASCD
Association of Educational Service Agencies
Blackboard, Inc.
Common Sense Media
Consortium for School Networking
Council for Exceptional Children
Discovery Communications
Federation of American Scientists
Intel
International Association for K-12 Online Learning
International Society for Technology in Education
Knowledge Alliance
National Association of Federally Impacted Schools
National Association of Independent Schools
National Association of State Boards of Education
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
PBS
SAS
Scholastic
SMART Technologies
Software & Information Industry Association
State Educational Technology Directors Association
U.S. Conference of Mayors

cc: United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan
Office of Management and Budget Director Peter Orszag