Educational Technology Plan (Update) for K-12 Public Schools in Washington State

The Educational Technology Department at OSPI (EdTech) is involved with a variety of programs and projects. Below is an update to the department’s last report to the Legislature.

**Summary**

**E-rate.** Districts receive $30 million to $35 million annually in discounts on the cost of telecommunications and Internet access. During the 2011–2012 school year, these discounts totaled $34.8 million and benefited 293 school districts. EdTech provides direct technical assistance to districts that apply for the E-rate discount.

**District Technology Plans.** Districts that apply for the E-rate discount must create and submit a technology plan to OSPI. EdTech manages the technology planning process, and reviews and approves each district’s plan. Over the 2010–2013 technology planning cycle, EdTech supported the development of 293 district technology plans.

**State Initiatives.** EdTech supports the state’s online testing initiative. In the 2014-15 school year, schools will use the new assessment system designed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). EdTech provides technical, communication and logistics support, and data review and analysis. EdTech also supports the Microsoft IT Academy, Open Educational Resources (OER) and OSPI’s roll-out of the Common Core State Standards.

**School & Student Data.** OSPI’s ability to provide school/student data has expanded with the development of the Student Longitudinal Data System

Enabling legislation

- [RCW 28A.650](#)
- [RCW 28A.150.210](#)
- [RCW 28A 655.075](#)
(SLDS). The system now integrates data from the state’s Annual Technology Survey.

Now, districts are able to:

- Compare their technology environment with other districts.
- Pull data that helps to make decisions about classroom technology.

**Educational Technology Assessments.** OSPI must report how many school districts use the OSPI-developed assessments for educational technology (RCW 28A.655.075). During the 2011-2012 school year, total use of the assessments came to 47,500.

**iTunes U.** EdTech staff developed *Washington State on iTunes U*, an online library for instructional, assessment and professional development content. Content contributors include OSPI, the ESDs, schools and community partners.

**Regional Educational Technology Programming.** The EdTech director oversees the Educational Technology Support Center Program (ETSC). Through the work of ETSC directors, educators across Washington learn to use instructional technologies.

- Between September 2011 and August 2012, more than 2,000 teachers and principals participated in the ETSC-developed *iPads for the Classroom* professional development sessions.
- The ETSC continues to deliver programming for Internet safety and digital citizenship: direct technical assistance, training materials and webinars are free and available for all grade levels.

**Background**

Educational technology is important to K–12 education. Integrating technology into our classrooms and lessons should be a priority because:

- Data can improve instruction and monitoring.
- Students need to learn how to analyze information, collaborate and be creative.

Technology literacy is important and should be taught at all grade levels. Teachers must be able to use technology. Teachers must also be able to format and present subjects in ways that address different learning styles. These skills are important because teachers are dealing with bigger classes and greater diversity among students.

OSPI’s last report to the Legislature, *Educational Technology Plan for K–12 Public Schools in Washington State*, ([http://www.k12.wa.us/EdTech/StateTech/default.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/EdTech/StateTech/default.aspx)), presented these key strategies:

- Develop a sustainable funding mechanism that integrates technology into teaching and learning as well as the physical classroom.
- Develop instructional resources and assessments that support including the standards for educational technology in K–12 core subject areas.
- Expand state support for educational technology through policy, technical assistance for technology initiatives and professional development.

Many of the goals of the *Educational Technology Plan for K–12 Public Schools in Washington State* have been realized:

- Washington has a sustainable funding mechanism that could place educational technology in Washington’s public schools if the Legislature funds [RCW 28A.150.210](https://app.leg.wa.gov/billstatus/redmine/cha_2023_000000/29987), Section 2, as amended by [SSB 5392](https://app.leg.wa.gov/billstatus/redmine/cha_2023_000000/29987). This legislation would equip every classroom with technology and every student with a computing device. Without full funding, adequate classroom technology is only possible for the most affluent districts.

- EdTech has developed assessments for educational technology, which are easy to use and have free and low-cost digital resources. These assessments integrate the Common Core State Standards and are well-matched to the SBAC assessment system. Field tests of the assessments show a need for teacher training and support.

- The ability to provide professional development (PD) programs that promote technology for teaching and learning has stalled with reductions in funding. EdTech and the ETSC directors have developed outstanding training programs—Enhanced Peer Coaching, Teaching & Learning in the 21st Century, Empowering Rural Educators, Teaching Through Technology and Peer Coaching for Teacher-Librarians—proven to increase teacher effectiveness. With sustainable funding, the state can use the ETSC program and its staff to lead these PD programs.

**For More Information**

For more information regarding educational technology, please see, [http://www.k12.wa.us/EdTech/default.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/EdTech/default.aspx) or contact Dennis Small, director of Educational Technology, at (360) 725-6384 or [dennis.small@k12.wa.us](mailto:dennis.small@k12.wa.us).