

Alabama Update – April 2000

As a result of E-Rate, 60% of classrooms have Internet access up from 31% in 1998. A number of staff development initiatives are underway including Technology in Motion, which trains teachers in project-based teaching; a WebCast which addresses specific use of technology for teachers is expected to become available in the near future. The SEA has also developed web-based courses to help students in rural schools pass the exit exam and meet graduation requirements; recently, a commercial test preparation course was made available via Internet for all teachers to assess how students will likely do on the State's exit exam required for graduation. Seven Thousand hits occurred during the first 24 hours.

Governor Seigelman has proposed a sizable increase in teacher salaries and changes in the tenure-based system which constrains policy makers in dismissing and/or firing teachers and/or principals. He also proposed to have schools send parents report cards on student performance in their shoals. Currently, the information is made available but not through direct communications with parents. Also proposed are financial incentives to schools that meet the new accountability standards.

Alaska Update – April 2000

Under a Technology Innovation Challenge Grant, funded over a year ago and delivered via the Internet, a second year Technology Integration Leadership project involves over 100 teachers. A primary focus of technology-related staff development is to train teachers in a variety of approaches including mentoring as well as technology delivered reading, writing and mathematics instruction. As part of this train-the-trainer model 10 teachers have received 18 weeks of training and returned to their districts to model the use technology in their teaching. Fifty teachers will have been immersed in such training before the end of the project. All district technology plans are in the process of being updated in order to apply for Year Four of the E-Rate program. A contact within the Department is Michelle DeShaw (907) 465-8703.

Governor Knowles has proposed a slight decrease in K-12 expenditures due to fewer students enrolled in schools; \$7 million would be re-allocated to the Quality Schools Initiative, which will implement the aligned curriculum assessment/state standards; this represents an increase from \$16 to \$52 per pupil.

Governor Knowles has proposed a \$550 million school bond issue for the State which would be paid for in part through the State's tobacco settlement; \$7.6 million would be allocated for summer school, tutorial, and class size reduction efforts.

Governor Knowles has proposed a \$5 million grant to Fairbanks to renovate and modernize the Hutchinson Career Center in Fairbanks.

Arkansas Update - April 2000

As noted in previous updates, distance learning is occurring in various ways throughout the State with different hubs including; AETN, The Arkansas School for Mathematics and Science, and the Arch Ford Regional Service Center, which will introduce a virtual high school shortly. The State board has published regulations governing distance learning that are available on the Arkansas website. To help insure all K-4 students are performing at grade level in math and reading by the end of the 4th grade, one of the programs in the State is an individualized, student self-directed, service oriented curriculum to develop problem solving skills. A primary contact within the State is James Boardman, Assistant Director for Information and Technology, (501) 682-4239.

California Update - April 2000

Governor Davis has proposed a 12.3% increase to almost \$30 billion dollars for pre-K-12 for FY 2001, this would increase per pupil pending in grades 8 through 12 from \$6,000 to \$6,300. Approximately \$112 million would be allocated to merit scholars, which would provide 1,000 scholarships to 9-10-11 grades students who score in the top 10% of their grade levels on state-wide tests or in the top 5% of their classes at their own school. Some students could earn \$3,000 worth of scholarships toward college.

The State recently released results of the State's ranking of 8,000 schools on a one to ten scale based on students' performance on standardized tests. Only 12% of the schools included in the index met or surpassed the State's target of 800. For those low-ranked schools the test results provides targets for them to meet in order to qualify for \$150 million rewards program being implemented for the first time. The targets are approximately an increase of 5% on State tests every year. In addition, 430 schools will be receiving a total of \$96 million to be used for program improvement purposes. However, if they fail to meet the targets within two years sanctions could be provided.

The California Department of Education is revising its "report card reports" on schools as half of the 8,000 schools in the State provided incorrect information on student demographics. The only ranking that will continue to appear is only the SEL is one based strictly how students performed on the SAT 9. Schools will receive \$2.50 for student data, but will have to refund \$1.25 per student, if the information is incorrect.

Secretary of Education, Gary Hart, will be retiring from his position in March. He will return to the Institute for Education Reform at CSU Sacramento, which he founded

Governor Davis has proposed to provide scholarships to students, up to \$11,000 in forgivable college loans, who become teachers and those which are at the top of the graduating class would receive an additional \$20,000 competitive teaching fellowship. For credentialed teachers, both the teacher and

the school would receive a \$2,000 bonus and teachers would be eligible for a \$10,000 forgivable loan for the down payment of a new home. The Governor has also proposed to create five teacher training and recruitment centers that will have an aggressive out-of-state teacher recruitment campaign.

In December 1999, the California Department of Education awarded a grant to the Stanislaus County Office of Education to create a clearinghouse for all technology-based instruction materials. The initiative, funded at \$1 million under the State-wide Education Technology Services (SETS), is designed to provide a one-stop shopping center for educators to seek information on whether software meets State standards, legal compliance, and quality criteria. While it is not necessary now for publishers to have materials reviewed by the clearinghouse to sell them in California, this could become a requirement in the near future. Groups such as SIIA are against the initiative as the clearinghouse places the “State in control not only of the review of adopted technology-based instructional materials, but also gives the State substantial influence over the review of supplemental non-adopted technology-based materials.”

Governor Davis has proposed six initiatives, totaling \$380 million, to improve technology integration including:

- \$175 million for grants to provide students access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses on-line, and to increase the number of computers in schools;
- \$25 million for staff development to be provided by the California State University system;
- \$165 million for the final year of the Digital High School Initiative; funds would be used by new grantees to purchase hardware, software, and staff development, while previously funded high schools could use a portion of the funds for maintenance, staff development, and support;
- \$16 million to expand AP courses, of which \$3 million would be provided the University of California to develop AP courses.

The Governor's proposal would also provide funding to cover the costs of a Commission on Technology and Learning, and to conduct a survey on technology use in schools. The Governor has also proposed \$600 million for the instructional materials budget line item, which includes \$163 million for instructional materials and \$250 for standards-aligned textbooks.

Colorado Update - April 2000

Work on the Multi-Use Telecommunications Network (MTN) is to begin shortly and after three years will connect all 64 county seats plus schools, libraries, and other agencies. Particular focus will be on rural areas which have the greatest need for infrastructure. A \$4.6 million budget is being provided to provide the “last mile connectivity” between regions and county seats. The State is experimenting with incentive funding for the development of regional networks. The Colorado State Library has new software for all librarians who have access; and the Legislature is considering a large increase in funding for libraries. The Deputy State Librarian is Nancy Bolt, who was very instrumental in ensuring that all Colorado libraries received their E-Rate discounts (303) 866-6733.

Most of the TLCF funds are being used to ensure districts are connected with a minimum of 56 KB connectivity. Eight new professional development centers, funded with State and Federal funds are providing staff development throughout the State on content, pedagogy, and technology integration. Under a Star Schools Grant (which includes LA County Office of Education and New Mexico), the state is developing online instruction and professional development modules in the three state region. Colorado also participates in a new T³ Federal grant. The Director of Technology is Eric Fedder (303) 866-6859.

Delaware Update - April 2000

Governor Carper has proposed a 6% increase in K-12 funding to over \$700 million for FY 2001; \$2.5 million in new funding would be allocated for improve professional development opportunities for teachers, and \$3 million would add two more days each year for professional development to teacher's schedules. One million dollars would be allocated to districts to hire reading intervention specialists to help teachers use new effective instructional techniques for at-risk-students.

The "Learning Disabilities Report" prepared by the Delaware Department of Education found that 61% of State special education students are categorized as learning disabled, which is higher than the national average of 51% and that the overall special education enrollment is 15%, which is much higher than the national average. Currently, State law mandates that any special education student must receive 12.5 hours per week of direct instruction from a certified special education teacher. This limits flexibility and ability to ensure special education students are served in regular classrooms between the 9th and 12th grade. Over 60% of special education students do not graduate.

Florida Update – April 2000

In March a Circuit Court Judge in Leon County ruled the state voucher plan unconstitutional as it is one of the first in the country that pays for tuition of students in low-performing public schools when they attend private schools. This case is likely to be appealed all the way to the Supreme Court.

A new State sponsored survey of new teachers found that about 45% felt they were inadequately prepared to teach the State's academic standards for students, and 75% reported that they were at best only minimally prepared to assess student progress. Commissioner Tom Gallager has proposed a uniform standard for all of the State's 29 teacher preparation colleges which would provide bonuses for graduates of colleges that adhere to new requirements in terms of adequate coverage of content and standards.

In the next round of TLCF funding 35 grants will be made in early Summer running through July 31, 2001. The DOE website has abstracts of previous grant awards. The Governor's Information Technology Taskforce, headed by Julia Johnson, has made recommendations to the Legislature relating to Internet access and staff development (go to <http://www.itflorida.com>). Julia Johnson was very instrumental in the early formulation of the E-Rate Federal initiative. The Governor's mentoring initiative plans to recruit over 200,000 mentors to work with at-risk students to improve student achievement. The Governor has encouraged private sector firms to provide increased flexibility for mentors who wish to get involved. Suzanne Martin is the new Technology Bureau Chief replacing Peter Lenkway.

In late February the State passed the A Plus Education Reform Act passed by the House earlier. Schools will be graded on an A to F basis using students assessment data. Those schools doing well will receive bonuses and those which fail over time would face sanctions including firing staff. Students would be assessed on those absolute cut off scores, as well as improvement progress made over time. A wide range of sanctions would be brought upon schools who continue to fail over three years. The administrative office responsible for implementation would be under the Governors Office, and not within the SEA, which is headed by Linda Schrenko a political opponent of the Governor. Governor Barnes has also proposed increases by almost 100% up to \$3,300 per student, for those who enroll in charter schools for a total of \$13,000,000.

The Legislature is currently considering continued use of lottery funds to be used by schools for hardware and software purchases and use of assistive technology for students with disabilities. Other items in the legislature include:

- funding for the 13 Regional Technology Training Centers;
- funding increases for technology specialists in K-12 schools;
- teachers having to meet specified technology It is also considering a requirement that all new and existing teachers must be certified in meeting technology standards in order to teach in the State.

The amount of lottery funding is \$21 per FTE. The School Technology Specialist funding increased from \$15 million last year to \$40 million for FY2001, which will result in approximately 1,250 positions being made available. In addition, the State's TLCF program (funded at \$10 million) will be used to help districts implement their technology plans which are being upgraded for E-Rate purposes. Under a proposal made in January by Governor Barnes, five to seven schools around the State would receive funds to purchase laptops for all students in attendance. The Governor pointed out that in the first pilot program in Towns County, that received funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission, the number of parents and caretakers taking the GED increased dramatically. A contact within the State is Phillip Thomas, Director Education Technology, (404) 656-2521.

Georgia Update – April 2000

In late February the State passed the A Plus Education Reform Act passed by the House earlier. Schools will be graded on an A to F basis using students assessment data. Those schools doing well will receive bonuses and those which fail over time would face sanctions including firing staff. Students would be assessed on those absolute cut off scores, as well as improvement progress made over time. A wide range of sanctions would be brought upon schools who continue to fail over three years. The administrative office responsible for implementation would be under the Governors Office, and not within the SEA, which is headed by Linda Schrenko a political opponent of the Governor. Governor Barnes has also proposed increases by almost 100% up to \$3,300 per student, for those who enroll in charter schools for a total of \$13,000,000.

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Regional Commission, the number of parents and caretakers taking the GED increased dramatically.
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Idaho Update – April 2000

The Governor has proposed a 6% increase in K-12 funding to \$1.2 billion. Approximately \$500,000 would be available to provide grants to help district offer distinct options for students, and approximately \$50,000 would be used to develop a state test for reading instructors. A \$10,000,000 grant by the Albertson Foundation to fund the Professional Academy Plan “fell through” as a result of Albertson corporate stock prices dropping by more than 50% over the last year. Five percent of the Corporation’s assets base was to be used to fund grants amounting to almost \$100 million dollars. Current and multi-year signed commitments will be funded although new proposals will not. Over \$55,000,000 was given to school districts to purchase computers, staff, reading materials and other support efforts. The \$10,000,000 grant was to have being used to train students for high tech positions, to hire teachers from the private sector, and conduct a summer technology program for over 100 teachers.

Illinois Update – April 2000

Under the Technology Integration Program, approximately \$26 million will be provided to 225 of the poorest school districts to implement technology plans. Approximately 50% will be spent on equipment, 25% on staff development, and 25% on instructional materials and software. The second round of TLCF funded 121 school districts last year. Funds were distributed through the “hubs” based upon a formula which took into account the number of poverty children in the “hub area.” Hence, most of the districts with relatively large per-pupil allocations were those in high-poverty areas. A contact is Lugene Finley (217) 782-5596.

Confusion exists over Title I assessment throughout the State. The State Superintendent has stated that Title I programs must administer the Iowa Standard Achievement Test to 10th grade students this spring. The Legislature has indicated that the test was optional, while previous State Department officials indicated that the test was being eliminated and should not be given. It is likely that the test given in individual districts will eventually be selected by the district as the Title I assessment instrument, at least for this current year.

Governor Ryan has proposed an increase of \$528 million over last year’s education budget to a total of \$5.9 billion. Over 50% of the State’s new revenue will be targeted upon schools and job training programs. All State categorical programs would be fully funded with increased State funding on early childhood, summer school, and staff development. He also proposed career scholarships of \$1,000 for high school graduates who pass vocational courses but decide not to go to college.

His budget will also provide career scholarships of \$1,000 each to high school graduates who wish to go to school for secondary training, but not college. Early childhood programs would be increased by \$32 million to over \$200 million; an additional \$15 million would be provided for extended day care increasing that budget to almost \$30 million, bypassing many community colleges which such funds flow through now.

Indiana Update – April 2000

The State plans to award 20-25 grants up to \$300,000 per grantee to junior high and senior high schools under the TLCF program. The Technology Plan Grant Program is in its 4th year with approximately 50 districts receiving State funds of which 70% can be used to purchase hardware and software, with at least 30% being used for professional development. The State has supported a Leadership Training Program for K-12 administrators related to technology use since 1990 in which 1,500 have participated. Several programs related to libraries are funded through the State's high-tech fund. One initiative funds media specialists who work with individual teachers to plan, implement, and assess lessons or projects in that school. Another focuses on technology use related to on leadership, librarian automation, information literacy, and technology standards; Indiana Service Centers provide related staff development. Approximately 80 grants will be made to individual teachers ranging from \$3,000 to \$4,500 to help them implement projects which incorporate technology into curriculum standards and instruction.

The Indiana SEA website is one of the best in the country and usually has current, up-to-date information on all technology initiatives including recent grantees under programs such as TLCF. A person to contact is Chuck Bujarsky (317) 232-9175.

In his state of the state address Governor O'Bannon cited the success of Cisco Academies which provide technical training to junior and senior high school students many of whom graduate and enter \$30,000 per year jobs. Current capacity for Cisco Academies in the State is approximately 5,000 students.

The SEA has released the Achieve evaluation of its State assessment instruments and standards entitled "Measuring Up: A Report on State Standards and Assessments for Indiana." The report has specific recommendations based on a general finding that Indiana State Testing and Education Progress (ISTEP) cover the State standards unevenly, are not rigorous enough for the given grade levels, and are often less challenging than what the standards indicate. The report recommended that

standards should be more rigorous in the areas of literacy, algebra, and geometry and the assessments should be “sufficiently challenging”. Based on the report, the SEA indicated that it plans to rewrite its standards in math and English to make them more challenging over the next year.

Louisiana Update – April 2000

In order to meet the new demands of the State's accountability system, the Governor has proposed \$30 million remediation summer school program up from \$7 million this year, \$1.7 million would be allocated for technical assistance to low-performing districts; the K-3 reading programs would be about level funded at \$20 million. Overall, the K-12 budget would increase by almost 10% to \$2.4 billion.

Superintendent Cecil Picard has taken a leadership role along with the state superintendents from Arkansas, Mississippi and Alabama to obtain Federal and private funds to establish quality pre-K programs. The multi-state efforts could be similar to one in North Carolina, where millions of dollars were pledged by large firms in the state to the Smart Start pre-school initiative.

A Parent Coalition called "Parents For Educational Justice" is suing the state to prevent officials from using the state's new state assessment, to determine if fourth and eight grade students should be promoted.

Maryland Update – April 2000

Governor Glendening has proposed a 3% increase in K-12 funding to slightly over \$3 billion in FY 2001; over \$50 million would be allocated to cover costs of enrollment increases. Under his plan, \$6 million would be provided for religious and private schools to purchase textbooks, instruction materials, etc; only a limited number of states currently have such programs. Approximately \$10 million would be allocated for bonuses and mentoring support to encourage more teachers to move to Maryland, and almost \$10 million would be used to provide a telephone in every classroom. Class size reduction at the first and second grade level would receive almost \$12 million. Over a four-year period, an additional \$260 million in school renovation funding would be provided. Some of these funds are used to pay for infra-structure development and hardware purchases.

The status of Maryland Connected for Learning, which is a seven-year \$112 million initiative, is as follows:

- \$51 million has been allocated to 565 schools thus far; each school is provided school-wide wiring as well as hardware and funds for software and professional development;
- Net Weekend 99 provided 300 public schools direct grants totaling \$750,000 last year which were used for purchasing hardware, software, or teacher training;
- Career and Technology Education Programs are being implemented in all of the funded schools serving approximately 80,000 students.

Several related telecommunications and distance learning activities are underway including the development of the Maryland Digital Library which would be involved in licensing online services and reference materials, the Maryland Community College TeleConsortium which provides opportunities for students to access community college courses outside of their region even though they don't receive degrees, and Network Maryland which is supposed to connect all schools and other state and local agencies in the future. As noted in a previous update, the Maryland Education Enterprise Consortium has negotiated state-wide license agreements with Microsoft for substantial

discounts (e.g., \$10-15 per license). A contact in the SEA Barbara Reeves, Director of Instructional Technology (410) 767-0382.

The State Department has decided to invoke a 1994 State reconstitution policy by "taking over" 3 Baltimore City low-performing schools. two for-profit corporations Edison Schools Inc. and Mosaica Education Inc. will run the schools. Three-year contracts will be awarded. Student achievement gains will be built into the contract requirements with substantial student gains to be met if the three-year contract is to be renewed. As reported in Education Week (February 9th) one of the skeptics who is opposing the take-over is Samuel Springfield who is a City School Board member. He is also a research scientist at Johns Hopkins University and was heavily involved in the Success for All "model" which is one of the more widely used "proven models" used in the Title I Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration initiative. Over a decade ago, Baltimore City Schools contracted with Education Alternatives to operate 12 of their schools; for a variety of reasons the contract with the firm were re-negotiated and finally canceled. Throughout the State almost 100 schools have been designated as "reconstitution eligible," with 12 in Prince George's County.

Massachusetts Update – April 2000

The Legislature is considering relaxing its State's special education policies which are more rigorous than IDEA. It is also considering better ways for students being classified or placed in special education following a report by McKinsey and Co. which found \$125 million could be saved. Some opponents of special education have argued that over half of the funds appropriated for education by the Legislature goes to special education programs. Currently, approximately 17% of all students are enrolled in special education programs.

Massachusetts has a requirement that districts have their technology plans online and update them at least twice a year. Such plans constitute a database which is used to formulate State priorities related to technology. Under the State's purchasing cooperative referred to as ETIS, over \$50 million last year of information technology products were purchased with savings of approximately \$7 million through volume discounts. Vendors are qualified through a competitive process and must agree to cost disclosure. Subsequent consumer satisfaction is taken into account in leveraging sole source relationship with schools.

The Boston School Board signed off on a plan which would delegate responsibility of professional development to the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching, and shift more than \$3million to schools from the central office. An earlier report found that the districts spent \$23 million or about \$5,000 for every teacher on staff development during the 1999 school year; however, such training was not tied to the district's overall standards in reform movement.

Under the Youth Technology Entrepreneurs Initiative, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students participate in information technology training, they are used to support districts' use of technology and are employed by districts in paid summer internships. Mass Ed Net now provides unlimited Internet access for all students and citizens in the State for \$25 per year. The DOE claims it is the fastest growing ISP in the State. Another effort between the DOE and MCET is to provide a top speed premium Internet access between all schools and libraries and municipal offices. This is being

funded by an additional \$9 million from the State's capital supplemental budget. The so-called Massachusetts Community Network is scheduled to be launched on July 4th.

Governor Cellucci called for increased testing of teachers to ensure they have adequate content knowledge and would require teachers be assessed in schools where more than 30% of students are failing subjects such as math. High schools students by 2003 will be required to pass subject matter tests in order to graduate. About 40% of students failed the 8th grade math exam, and more than half of the 10th graders also failed the exam.

A proposal has been made in the Legislature that would replace the State's bilingual education law passed in 1971, with a one year English immersion course.

Michigan Update – April 2000

Governor Engler has proposed almost a 5% increase to \$10.5 billion for FY 2001 for pre-K-12 which would increase per pupil expenditures by almost \$700 to \$6,500 per student over a three-year period; almost \$40 million would be allocated for summer school program grants for 4th graders who are behind in reading and math on the state test; the following year it would be expanded to third graders, and to second grade students. Fifty-five million dollars would be allocated each year over the next two years to train teachers on the use of technology, and provide every trained teacher with computer and Internet access. Twenty-seven million dollars would be used to expand pre-kindergarten and Headstart programs, and \$8 million would be used to provide individual rewards to staff members in elementary schools whose students scores have improved the most.

Under its TLCF program, the Michigan Department of Education is currently in the second year of its Educator on Loan Program where selected individuals from a limited number of districts work with other districts in adopting technology effectively, Some of activities conducted with teachers thus far include creation of websites and showing teachers how to organize student research strategies. The next round of identifying individuals to serve on the Educator on Loan Program began in March, 2000 with final selection in June. Full grants will be provided to support the program. For more information go to the State's website <http://www.mi.us/school/eol>. Lucian Parshall is the primary technology contact (517) 373-4333. A former State technology contact, Jamie Fitzpatrick, is now President of the Michigan Virtual University which, among other things, is developing relationships with firms that have online or Internet-based courses, including advanced placement programs.

Mississippi Update – April 2000

Under the third TLCF funding round, \$6.5 million was allocated to over 60 projects bringing the total amount for the first three rounds to \$16 million covering 125 districts. Each school district in the third round is allowed to select one teacher to participate in TEACHNET in which they receive training in technology integration and then go back to their district to train other teachers. Teachers can also participate in Connected University which is designed to help teachers throughout the State integrate Internet into their curriculum. The West Bolivar school district is participating in Next Day which is designed to establish model ways to bridge the “digital divide” and is described in more detail at the Next Day website. The State Department recently added a television production capability, including a studio and editing suite, located at Central High School in Jackson. During the fifth annual Mississippi Edtech 2000 Conference, over 140 vendors and 2000 other attendees were present to see demonstrations of emerging technology and learn how to integrate technology into classrooms. The Mississippi DOE website at <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us> updates information daily for anyone in the State to access and has worked with 75 school districts who now have their own websites.

Mississippi has 24 Cisco Academies with plans to add more this summer. Two high school students have completed the Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) test with many more anticipated as students finish their fourth semester. The State Student Information System (MSIS) which operates on the State’s backbone begins data loading in May and should be fully operational in September. As a result of \$54 million in E-Rate discounts over the first two years, all districts have upgraded their State backbone connections with T1 lines and all districts have updated technology plans. The DOE has developed an interactive CD ROM entitled “Success Mississippi Style” which includes the best practices as well as lesson plans, curriculum frameworks, and other resources. The State relied on the North Central Regional Education Lab in identifying many of the best practices.

Governor Musgrove, a former key State legislator responsible for many of the technology initiatives and funding in the State, is proposing to find a combination of public and private financing to insure

that a computer would be available in every K-12 classroom. The overall proposed K-12 budget would increase 6% to \$1.6 billion.

Former CEO of Netscape, James Barksdale and his wife, have donated through their foundation \$100 million to establish a reading institute at the University of Mississippi and other State universities. Forty-one schools are now piloting the systematic phonics instructional program which will be expanded throughout the State over the next two years. The primary contact is Helen Soule, Director of Technology, (601) 359-3954.

Missouri Update – April 2000

The Governor has proposed an 8% increase in K-12 funding, or \$3.4, billion for FY 2001. Eighteen million dollars would be allocated to the A-Plus Program for next year, with \$15 million allocated this year. Funds would be provided in a form of bonuses to high schools who show academic gains increased attendance rates; it would also contribute scholarships to selected students who graduate from these schools. This state's special education allocation would increase from \$313 million this year, to \$336 million next year with increases in gifted and talented students. An additional \$47 million from another state funding grant would also be allocated to special education students this year.

The State Department of Education has allocated some of the State level E-Rate refunds during the first year to expanding a program which identified 50 districts in which two teachers in grades 3 through 5 would participate in intensive training. This project, referred to as the E-MINTS and focuses on technology tools including multi-media workstations, laptop computers, video conferencing, and other equipment. Applications for participation in E-MINTS have been distributed to districts with deadlines in May. Projects should be funded by mid-May. Districts in the State have been updating their technology plans. Peer review panels will be evaluating plans against an eight point scoring rubric beginning in mid-April. The Missouri Department of Education is also planning to conduct its 2000 Census of Technology to be conducted in April-May with results available shortly as the survey census is being conducted online.

New Jersey Update – April 2000

Bell Atlantic has continued its commitment to provide, over multiple years, \$130 million in savings for New Jersey's schools and libraries under Access New Jersey. Education discounts are provided for ISBN, frame relay, ATM services. As of December 1999, over 800 contracts are underway in 1,300 K-12 schools, 130 non-public schools, and 360 library sites.

In her State of the State address, Governor Whitman proposed the creation of a Virtual Academy that would offer public school teachers everything from interactive workshops to online training to State assessment programs and curriculum alignment. Five-hundred thousand dollars would be used to create the Virtual Academy.

The FY2000-01 Governor's proposed budget requests \$56 million for the State's Distance Learning Network (DLN) or an entitlement of \$43 per pupil. The DLN is available to all school districts with approved updated technology plans and has multiple networks with high-speed voice, video, and data services to connect all State and local government agencies. The Governor's proposed budget also includes \$8 million, or \$40 per student, to use for technology in non-public schools, up from \$4 million last year. Public school districts administer technology funding for students attending non-public schools. Allowable expenditures are on the Department's website.

The Governor has proposed an overall 9.7% increase in K-12 spending up to \$6.1 billion for FY2000. Using the \$100 million tobacco settlement along with additional funds from lottery and cigarette taxes, a \$10 billion school modernization program will likely begin. Almost \$5 million has been proposed for a new character education program and \$8 million for a new teacher mentoring program. An initiative targeting at-risk teenagers would be funded at \$200 million for FY2001 and increase to \$280 million a year over four years.

Governor Whitman has also proposed allocating \$15 million to help colleges prepare students better for high-tech jobs including lab assistant and technical jobs that don't require advanced

degrees. The contact continues to be Julia Stapleton, (609) 984-1644.

New Mexico Update – April 2000

Governor Johnson has once again proposed a voucher's program which would provide parents a \$600 tuition voucher totaling over \$17 million to send their children to private schools. Sixty six million dollars would be provided to modernize schools state-wide; an additional \$50 million would be made available for merit-based compensation for teachers, expanded student's assessment, and for supplemental education technology funding. Overall, the budget would increase 3% to \$5.6 billion in FY 2001.

In order to foster competition, the Governor has called upon the Legislature once again to provide funding of approximately \$3,000 to parents in the form of vouchers to attend public, private, or religious schools of their choice. The estimated cost during the first year would be about \$16 million. While the Governor is unlikely once again to get legislative approval for vouchers, his proposal to expand state-wide testing to students in K-2 and increase start-up aid for charter schools is likely to receive some support.

The SEA has merged Curriculum and Instruction with Education Technology into one unit which should be positive for education software publishers and vendors of instructional technology and service.

The State Board of Education has increased the criterion level for passage of the teacher exam taken by new teachers. Last year only 60% of teachers received a score of 69 or better, which is the new criterion level.

Governor Johnson has signed legislation which would create a base funding amount for school districts receiving education technology funding based upon an equity factor. The total amount budgeted this year is \$5 million, which would be distributed on this equity-based formula to almost 90 districts on a per-pupil basis which will be this year \$3.75. Proposals for the latest round of TLCF funding (\$3.4 million) are due in April, with final announcements to be made in May. Results will be on the ESEA's website <http://www.sde.state.nm.us>.

New York Update – April 2000

Under Governor Pataki's proposed budget, K-12 funding would increase by 3% to \$12.8 billion in FY 2001; twenty-five million would be allocated to a new program that would pay tuition for teachers who go to college in exchange for teaching in areas with shortages. The funds should also be used to cover the cost of preparing teachers for certification. A \$40 million initiative would cover the cost of early childhood interventions to increase student's reading skills to grade level. Pre-K programs would increase 40% to \$120 million. School building aid would increase by \$200 million, or 23%. A number of the State school building and renovation programs provides funding that can be used to purchase hardware and infra-structure.

Commissioner Richard Mills has rejected an alternative by a group of school districts to substitute individually tailored projects for the English examination, which is now required by the State for graduation. The group of school districts considered themselves as alternative schools which emphasize portfolio and authentic assessments as being more valid than the State's paper and pencil test.

The Model School Coordinators, a network that oversees technologies across the State, now includes institutes of higher education, and has created a directory of teacher integration experts who serve as trainers-of-teachers, which will be available this Summer. The State DOE continues to place a high priority on implementation of State standards and aligned State assessments. Teachers who produce lessons that are correlated to such standards and assessment domains can submit them to the New York State Peer Review which is held annually in March. Teachers with adopted lessons are recognized as members of the New York State Academy for Teaching and Learning. About 200 teachers are so identified each year. For more information go to <http://www.ny.sed.gov>. Also available at this site are technology-based lesson plans which are also available for use throughout the State. The contact continues to be Lynn Reuss (518) 474-5922.

North Carolina Update – April 2000

The Legislature has appropriated an additional \$10 million for the Technology Trust Fund which is used by many districts to pay for E-Rate eligible items prior to being notified of approved discounts. Additional funds are allocated to the Trust Fund from specialized license plates, fines, forfeiture fees, and other revenue sources. The Legislature also appropriated \$50 million last year to be used to implement the North Carolina Windows to Information for Student Education (NCWISE) which replaces current State information management systems. The NCWISE will be pilot-tested this year in 18 schools, 3 central offices, and the Department of Public Instruction. The software can be used for student classroom management and also instructional management. Full implementation will begin in February 2001. The State has also launched NCWISE Owl which is a website of online resources available to teachers and parents with Internet access. Reference materials from Gayle and Grolier have been licensed. A two-year evaluation of this service is underway. The SREB Evalutech database of software and supplemental materials reviews will once again be available this year to all states. The North Carolina SEA has trained representatives from approximately 16 other states in the software evaluation process. This database may be accessed at <http://www.evalutech.sre.org>. Frances Bradburn is the Director of Education Technology Programs (919) 715-1530.

Ohio Update – April 2000

The Legislature has appropriated an additional \$53 million to continue the School Net Plus initiative which has provided more than \$480 million since 1996 to districts for purchasing computers. The most recent appropriation will pay for almost 30,000 interactive multi-media computers. The Ohio SchoolNET Telecommunity, which is funded under a \$26 million grant from nine Ohio telephone companies, is designed to provide two-way fully interactive distance learning capabilities to schools, colleges, and community agencies. Thus far, it has awarded 60 grants to 510 public schools and 47 charter and non-public schools. The \$23 million Interactive Video Distance Learning Pilot, currently in 125 school districts, provides an ATM network for voice, video, and data transmission to be used for staff development, student learning, and providing access to learning resources.

In each of the 125 districts, a high school is currently online; next year \$50 million will be allocated to fund an additional 200 schools. Through ONenet Ohio, improvements and upgrades are being made to the State infrastructure. Ohio SchoolNET has developed an online catalog of product and service specifications as well as pricing to help schools evaluate and procure technology. The Gartner Group, working with Ohio SchoolNET, provides two online resources to help districts evaluate more than 51,000 title and 12,000 companies. The Ohio E-Clearinghouse includes a website with over 3,000 instructional resources and websites identified by school staff as supporting Ohio Learning Outcomes. Since Ohio SchoolNET began providing staff development for teachers, more than 75,000 individuals have attended training sessions and more than 50,000 teachers have been certified at Level One. The key contact is Sam Orth (614) 728-8234.

Governor Taft has requested that approximately \$4.5 billion of the State's tobacco settlement be allocated to education. Under his proposal, a summer reading initiative would expand from 1,200 teachers last year to 12,000 teachers this summer. Third grade students would have a chance to take the State's 4th grade test a year early, thereby identifying those who will most likely need direct remediation which would be provided to them prior to taking the 4th grade exam while in the 4th grade. Two years from now, the State would implement a plan that would prevent social promotion of 4th grade students to 5th grade if they fail to show proficiency on the State's reading test. The

Governor has also proposed a commission to identify ways to hold students and parents responsible for achievement and to determine feasibility of requiring all high school students to certify all graduates are proficient in computer use.

Oregon Update – April 2000

As noted in a previous update, Oregon is the second state to have adopted a state “E-Rate” program. In return for an agreement to de-regulate telephone companies in the state, US West, the largest phone service provider, is committed to paying almost \$120,000,000 in fees. In January, US West sent a check for \$25,000,000 to the state for distribution to K12 schools and another \$25,000,000 will be set in 2001. Much of the money will be used to install Internet access and two way video/audio hooks-up in all of the 200 high schools in the state. The funding would be provided to districts following the Federal E-Rate “model” although several significant differences exist. For more information on services and specific priorities and allowable uses of funds go to the Oregon SEA Website for details.

South Carolina Update – April 2000

Since 1996, more than \$125 million has been appropriated by the Legislature to initially increase connectivity and then provide staff development followed by an initiative to provide down-links and compressed video to facilitate distance learning. Currently, efforts are underway to digitize curriculum resources for delivery through www and to provide resources electronically to State library system. The Legislature will likely fund Technology Trust Fund at approximately \$40 million, but is likely to expand substantially funding for increased pilot sites to use two-way video distance learning in rural and less affluent areas. During the first year of E-Rate discounts, the State received refunds which were reinvested in network connectivity. During the second round, approximately \$6 million of “discount savings” or refunds will be made available to school districts which have portable classrooms that are not connected.

The Governor has proposed an \$88 million increase over last year’s \$2.4 billion State K-12 funding. A new pre-school initiative funded at \$10 million would be increased to \$12 million.

As part of the State Accountability Act of 1999, over \$26 million will be provided over the next 5 years to develop a Comprehensive Student Information System which can be used across the board, but particularly in special education, and a Curriculum Management System. The new contact in the State Technology Office is Barbara Teusink (803) 734-8395.

Governor Hodges has proposed a 7% increase in funding to almost \$2.4 billion for FY2001. The budget for summer school remediation courses and professional development for teachers of at-risk students would increase from \$14 million to \$24 million, while the relatively new School Readiness program budget would increase \$10 million to \$30 million. One-hundred thousand dollars would be allocated to an expanded character education program and \$7.5 million to provide middle school counselors and psychologists.

Over \$4 million has been provided by the State to school districts and universities to provide

technology-related training. In addition, 13 Regional Technology Specialists provide professional development to all the districts in the State to assist them use technology, including television, more effectively. All public libraries in the State has Internet access. The South Carolina ETV 32 channel satellite system now broadcasts to all schools. SCETV has begun digitizing its expensive video library. In addition, anyone in the State can access the state library system DISCUS, which is a virtual library.

Texas Update – April 2000

The Technology Pilot Demonstration program in 14 districts will be experimenting to determine what approaches work best in increasing student performance. (Go to TEA website <http://www.technology/pilots>)

This Spring, T-STAR Network will broadcast a nine-part television series on technology applications that have been successful in helping districts achieve the TEKS standards across the State. The Texas Application Center for Education Development has also developed a packet of resources that will be distributed this year related to the technology applications TEKS. The TEA issued Proclamation 2000 in early March which has guidelines and requirements to assure that electronic media-based instruction is accessible to teachers and students with disabilities. For more information, go to <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/textbooks.archives.instable.htm>.

Utah Update – April 2000

The Legislature has appropriated about \$25 million to continue funding Internet connectivity, infrastructure, maintenance of computers, and distance learning infrastructure including digital conversion of TV programming. The State has contracted with a number of vendors for online resources. Many of the State technology funds which go to rural districts will be used for staff development and directly-related purposes. Vicky Dahn is the Instructional Technology Coordinator (801) 538-7732.

Governor Levitt has endorsed the Utah performance assessment system for students (UPASS) which has been proposed by a Legislative task force in which all students would take annual end-of-grade tests in reading, math, and science in grades 1-12. Standardized tests would also be administered to students in grades 3,5,8, and 11 and a basic skills test for grade 10; passage would be required for graduation. Overall State funding would increase approximately 7.5% for education.

Vermont Update – April 2000

Results of the most recent State Technology Survey will be posted on the State's website when they are available at <http://www.cit.state.vt.us.edu/>. Based on the survey, the New State Technology Plan will be developed by October 1, 2000. The TLCF competition in 2001 will place a priority on distance learning initiatives. The number of teachers using the Wired for Learning Tools developed under the Vermont/IBM Reinventing Project continues to increase as does the number of school-based mentors that have been trained to assist in developing standards-based and aligned instructional units. Beginning in September, a pilot involving nine sites will implement the Bell Atlantic Distance Learning Network which eventually will link all high schools via high-speed full-motion video network. In addition to providing instruction to high school students, it will also be used for ongoing professional development. Phillip Hyjek is the primary contact (802) 828-0063.

Harcourt Education Measurement, which does the State's assessment, is renegotiating its agreement because of rejected scoring errors in the math and language arts tests given in 1998-99. The new contract includes penalties for future scoring errors or reporting test results beyond the targeted date.

Virginia Update – April 2000

The Standards of Learning (SOL) for Computers/Technology which must be met by grade 12 are available for public comment. These competencies extend those currently in place for grades K-15. Go to <http://www.pen.k12.va.us>. The Legislature has enacted a requirement that the technology standards for instructional personnel must be met by new teachers or through teacher renewals as a pre-requisite to employment on or after July 1, 2003. The TLCF priorities this year have been technology-related staff development at various levels, but has included the purchase of software which is the object of some staff development. Most however, has focused on integration of technology across curriculum areas. Some of the funds have also been used to provide computer loaner programs.

The Governor's Best Practice Centers are now working with districts to help students successfully meet the State SOL's test requirements. Eight Regional Centers that include a curriculum specialist, and assessment specialist, and an instructional technology specialist currently exist. The recently completed Virginia Department of Education connectivity study is available in PDF at <http://www.ten.k12.va.us/vdoe/technology/connect.pdf>.

Governor Gilmore is proposing an almost 10% increase in K-12 funding up to \$4.0 billion in FY 2001. Most of the funding will be allocated to teacher's salary raises and increase formula aid due to enrollment increases to districts. An additional \$8 million would expand the State's reading program to grades 2 and 3 going beyond the current K-1 grades. Approximately \$40 million would be allocated in FY 2001 for hardware purchases to reduce the student computer ratio from 8 to 1 to 5 to 1 in every high school in the state by 2003. An additional \$9 million would be allocated to a math tutoring program during the second year of this initiative. The Governor has also proposed \$100 million to be allocated to among other things, expand on-line state assessments and test preparation.

Governor Gilmore has requested the Legislature to dedicate all of Virginia's lottery profits over the next two years, which are estimated to be \$250 million, to be allocated to public schools.

Approximately half of such funds would be allocated to non-reoccurring line items including technology-related staff development, software, and hardware. Additional funding would be provided to hire 3,500 new teachers as part of overall class size reduction initiatives. Three million dollars would be allocated to improving the timeliness of test scoring and reporting on the State SOLs. This would provide more time for teachers to prepare students to take the SOL tests.

The State Board of Education is considering a proposal which would provide a “new basic diploma” for special education students who demonstrate basic skills competencies and show they have skills to get a job. The State’s SOL exams are given to students in grades 3, 5, and 8 and in high school. About 25% of the State’s special education students, or about 40,000 students, did not participate in the SOL curriculum in 1998 nor the State SOL exams. Under the proposal, special education students would have to successfully pass competencies in English and math and be certified by the local district as having completed occupational training to ensure they are employable. This new initiative stems from the 1999 IDEA regulations which state that if a special education student obtains any type of certificate other than a regular high school diploma, then parents can require the district to continue providing services to that child until age 22. Virginia joins a host of 30 or more states which are very quickly trying to make such adjustments in their state assessments for special education students to meet the July 2000 deadline. (See Washington Update item)

West Virginia Update – April 2000

Governor Underwood will increase K-12 spending by 4% up to \$4.4 billion in FY 2001, approximately \$16 million; would continue the multi-year effort to upgrade school technology, and increase classroom use at both the elementary and middle-high school level. One million dollars would be used to improve the quality of early childhood programs.

The Legislature has passed legislation to mandate the Governor's request to develop a West Virginia Virtual School. Beginning in July, the State Board will approve policies and procedures and guidelines for student learning and faculty/staff development. The West Virginia Success Initiative for Grades 7 through 12 is continuing and is being evaluated by MDT of America. Findings will be presented to the Board and Legislature in the near future. The RFP for vendors with products that would fit into the new elementary technology program covering K-6 is now available; and a contract to provide hardware, software, and staff development and related connectivity services should be in place by July.

The Legislature is likely to provide funding for other technology initiatives including the World School Internet, Technology Demonstration Sites, and Technology Resource Centers. Through use of Federal and State funding, the IBM Reinventing Education Wired for Learning Curriculum Planner is being expanded. The fourth round of TLCF funding has been completed with 55 applications submitted to compete for the \$4 million allocation. The contact is Vicky Allen (304) 558-3538.

Wisconsin Update – April 2000

The Common School Fund will receive an increase from \$15 million to \$27 million for school library aid which reflects an increase from \$16 to \$31 per student. The State has published “A Guide for Integrating Information and Technology Literacy” which includes lesson ideas for each of the performance standards and each of the Information Technology Literacy standards. K-12 lessons are also correlated to each of the four standards and include suggested activities, resources, and assessments. On May 4th and 5th, the TLCF Conference will be held in Wassau, Wisconsin to provide opportunities for new applicants to view successful practices in the area of assessment and professional development. Technical assistance will be provided to those who yet to receive any TLCF funding. The State also holds regional conferences for existing grantees to share information on successful practices.

The TEACH Wisconsin Board is considering developing requests for proposals to use technology and provide telecommunication access. During the first phase, planning grants will be made followed by implementation grants subsequently. For more information go to <http://www.teachwi.state.wi.us>. More than half of the 426 districts in the State have participated in the optional teacher self-assessment initiative which focuses on data driven decision making related to the use of technology. Over 20,000 teachers have taken the Levels of Technology Implementation (LOTI) self-assessment. The State’s Technology Plan is being updated and should be available in the Spring. The Executive Summary will be on the SEA’s website. Ninety-six percent of the districts in the State have certified Technology Plans.

The Governor’s Wisconsin Education Technology Conference will be held October 12th through 14th in Madison, with approximately 200 vendors exhibiting products. Twenty-five hundred pre-K through 16 educators attended the conference last year. Go to <http://www.gwetc.org>. The 16th Annual Conference on Distance Learning will also be held in Madison August 2nd through 4th with over 1,000 attendees expected. For details go to <http://www.uwes.edu/disted/conference>.

Governor Thompson has proposed to provide cash awards of \$3,000 each to all school employees if the performance of their students in their schools improves. Performance would be measured on year to year gains on standardized tests, attendance, and drop-out rates. He also has proposed \$100 million for open reading academies and would establish a contest whereby teachers could place “best practices” in the area of reading on the Internet.

Under a proposed new teacher licensure rule, all teachers must meet ten standards, two of which involve technology, including the use of technology in developing critical thinking and problem solving skills and to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom. Professional development continues to be high priority in this state, \$7 million was provided over the last biennium for TEACH Wisconsin training grants and an additional \$45 million in block grants for purchasing technology

A recent survey found that 73% of the State’s classrooms have access to the Internet. The University of Wisconsin system has a small grant to develop a web-resource page for teachers while the Milwaukee public schools is developing a web-based curriculum design assistant, which will help teachers develop lesson plans keyed to Wisconsin’s academic content and performance standards. The Wisconsin Education Technology Plan Pre-K through 12 is currently being updated and will be published this Spring.

During the next Technology Literacy Challenge Fund (TLCF) round of grants (\$7 million), 30% of the budget requested by an applicant must be for professional development. No funds can be used for connectivity. Hardware and software purchased under TLCF must relate to professional development. Single district grants will average about \$60,000 and consortia about \$250,000. Applications were due February 25th with grants to be awarded in May. The contact person is Robert Roy, (608)261-6332.

