

## Arizona Update – January 2000

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Similar to an increasing number of other states, Arizona is relying on regional training centers as part of a state-wide network to facilitate staff development and information dissemination related to technology. The primary focus, thus far, has been how to complete on-line grant applications, staff training, and assistance in technology planning and integration. The five regional training centers are located in Flagstaff, San Simon, Tempe, Tucson, and Yuma.

The State is in the process of developing minimal guidelines and standards for technology acquisition and use in K-12 schools, which is being developed by the State Facilities Board for a report to the Legislature this fall. A draft would have every classroom have access to the Internet at least through a net-port modem and each school would have one multi-media computer linked to a school-wide network for every eight students. A proposal made to the Legislature for \$250 million to help meet these expected standards and guidelines was not passed by the Legislature last year nor this year. However, the FY2000 budget allows \$225 per student to be spent on a number of activities including technology, and particularly professional development.

This 1999-2000 school year, Arizona will administer new reading, writing, and math tests that are based on the standards in grades 3, 5, 8, and high school. The state also administers the commercially developed Stanford 9 in English and math in grades 2 through 11. There are currently no plans to assess science or social studies.

The class of 2002 is the first class required to "meet the standard" on the new high school reading, writing, and math tests to graduate from high school. ...Arizona requires districts to provide intervention to students struggling to meet the reading, writing, and math standards. It is not clear, however, if the state funds the intervention.

The State is planning to establish a Student Accountability Information System, one of the foci of which will be to provide information on how State and other funds are being expended by public schools. A copy of the SAIS status report is available on the Department's website. A contact is Chris Castillo, 602-542-5233.

## Arkansas Update – January 2000

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Almost 60 schools, involving 5,000 students, are involved in the Arkansas Environmental and Spatial Technology Model Program (EAST), which uses an inter-disciplinary laboratory environment to teach real-world problem solving skills. Advanced technology applications are used to help students develop and apply such skills to real-world problems in an efficient manner.

## California Update – January 2000

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The \$12.5 million education technology staff development program for grades 4-8 is being implemented with schools that have appropriate technology and Internet access. Applications have been submitted, with approval notifications expected in February. Winning schools will receive \$20 per student for staff development.

Assembly Bill 598, recently signed by the Governor, creates a new Commission on Technology and Learning. Seventeen commission members will be involved in developing a State-wide technology master plan and recommending guidelines to the State board. All schools and districts must have their own technology plans by January 1, 2003 to qualify for State or Federal funds. While the Commission's mandate is relatively broad, no funds have been provided to support the work of the Commission.

The State Board of Education approved a new requirement that schools must report the test scores of most limited-English proficient students in compiling the school's accountability index. Only LEP students, who have been in the district less than one year, can have their scores deleted in determining the index. State law calls for all students to take the SAT 9<sup>th</sup> Edition. USED has questioned whether or not California is currently testing both LEP and special education students in an appropriate manner.

Following a trend established in Michigan a couple of years ago, a group of school districts are suing the state for approximately \$1.6 billion in funding, which they say should have been provided to them for special education programs, beginning in 1980. In 1992, a State Appeals Court ruled that the State had to pay for programs it required that were above and beyond Federal mandates. The Commission on State Mandates identified eight areas in which State laws went beyond PL-94-142 and its successor, IDEA. Currently the Governor's office is attempting to negotiate a settlement with the districts. In a similar situation in Michigan several years ago, the state had to pay for almost two decades of special education services to districts that should have been

provided in the form of state funds, according to the districts' lawsuit. Well over \$1 billion was subsequently allocated to districts throughout Michigan, with provisions that such funds could be use to purchase items which had non-reoccurring cost. Beginning about a year and a half ago, many districts, such as Ann Arbor, began to use this so-called "Durant" funding to purchase technology.

## Colorado Update – January 2000

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As reported in the December 2, 1999 Education Week, superintendents in the Denver area are calling for the State to require that all Colorado students between grades 3 and 10 take reading and math tests each year, and to report the results in a single score rather than separate content area scores. The superintendents have been very critical of current State assessment procedures, questioning the validity of the statistical reporting and the inclusion of many students who have limited English proficiency. They estimate the cost of such an assessment program to be approximately \$10 million annually.

In response to the above concerns of local superintendents, Governor Owens proposed to use college entrance examination scores of students as a means of assessing instruction in high schools. The state would use each school's aggregate 11<sup>th</sup> grade student's score on the ACT in deciding whether a school receives grade A through grade F. If a high school fails the ACT assessment, the school would have three years to increase their grades, after which time the State Commissioner could, through a competitive process, select private firms to operate the school as a charter school. A Governor's aide has indicated that the ACT aligns with 80% of existing Colorado standards, and that most students planning to go to college would take it. Under the Governor's proposal, the State would cover the cost of \$22 per student to take the test, for a total cost of about \$1 million. This is part of an overall reform proposal which could cost well in excess of \$100 million. Other details about the overall reform initiative are not yet available.

The Colorado Legislature has funded the creation of a State telecommunications backbone with Aggregated Network Access Points (ANAPs) in all counties. An RFP has been issued to select a contractor to implement the network. Another recently signed law funds Community Incentive Grants to help communities connect to the State backbone. School libraries in the State will be receiving approximately \$5 million in hardware, software, and staff development from the Gates Foundation. Libraries in schools where the poverty rate is 10% or more can apply. State library authorities are working with

districts to ensure that they are qualified in terms of a 56K or better dedicated line. The Deputy State Librarian, Nancy Bolts (302-866-6733), was very instrumental in insuring that as many libraries as possible qualified for E-Rate funding.

## Delaware Update – January 2000

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Progress on the State-wide pupil accounting system continues to be made with six school districts now on-line using a Y2K compliant accounting system. Beginning in January, the remaining districts are expected to be on-line.

The fourth round of TLCF funding will be made in the very near future. Priorities will be placed on piloting curriculum management systems and the creation of demonstration sites in high-technology schools.

Unlike last year (when Delaware applied for a large amount of E-Rate funding but received significantly less), for the second year it applied for discounts of approximately \$1.3 million and received the total amount requested. The key contact remains Wayne Hartschuh (302-739-4692).

## Florida Update – January 2000

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For the second round of E-Rate funding, almost \$70 million of E-Rate discounts has been provided to the State and its districts. This is approximately \$15 million more than was received in the State last year.

The State has negotiated licenses with Bell and Howell Information and Learning for the use of Pro Quest Professional Resources. Pro Quest consists of over 50 on-line reference journals.

Sprint PCS Corporation is expanding its Education Connection Program to additional counties to enhance communication between schools and homes. Broward County has invested \$2 million in the IBM DataWarehouse Project. All staff in 103 Broward schools have received training in the use of DataWarehouse.

Governor Jeb Bush is currently developing proposals to be submitted to the Legislature which would guarantee minority students in the top 20% of their graduating classes entry into one of the State's ten public universities, assuming that they meet full admission requirements. The plan would also request slightly over \$1.6 million from the Legislature to allow all high school sophomores to take the preliminary SAT. Currently, no State funds are provided for such tests. An additional \$2.4 million would be used to expand Florida's on-line high school, which provides students opportunities to take college-prep courses. Another \$10 million would be available to expand a mentoring program, and \$1 million would be available to create a college outreach program. Bonuses would be offered to teachers who offer advanced placement courses. The amount of State funding for needy students, to cover the costs of college tuition, would increase from \$45 million to \$65 million in FY2000.

The Florida Commissioner of Education, Tom Gallagher, is also considering some changes in the current rating scheme for schools ranging from Grade A, for high-achieving schools, to Grade F, for lowest achieving schools. "A" schools would receive portions of a \$30 million fund created by the Legislature for awards. Any changes in the current rating system could have an impact on the Florida Voucher Program -- currently being conducted in four failing "F" schools -- which is the only one of its kind in the country. Suzanne Martin (850-488-0980) has replaced Pete Lenkway as Director of Educational Technology.

## Georgia Update – January 2000

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Late last year, the Legislature finally passed funding levels for technology initiatives including \$15.4 million to hire technology specialists, and \$4.8 million for Internet/GALILEO. Earmarks from the Georgia library were also specified including \$32.5 million for “computers in the classroom” or about \$23 per student; \$2.5 million for assistive technology; and a total of \$1.2 million for satellite dishes and technology training center equipment. Staff development is conducted by 13 Regional Education Technology Training Centers for more than 8,000 teachers who participated in 50 hours of technology integration activities during the last year.

Of the \$10.2 million TLCF third round of funding last year, approximately 30% was allocated for professional development.

Governor Barnes, a Democrat, is developing a comprehensive accountability initiative based upon results of a study commission’s review of recent test data among Georgia students. The Governor will also be recommending a variety of intervention strategies at different levels, which range from giving parents the option of enrolling their children in other public schools to expanding Charter Schools, or even creating a voucher initiative. Students will be assessed using criterion-referenced tests in grade levels K-8. High schoolers would take exit exams. The Governor will also likely propose the creation of a separate agency, responsible directly to his office, to implement the final accountability initiative. This is met with resistance from State Superintendent Linda Schrenko, a Republican, who is in her second term.

## Hawaii Update – January 2000

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Governor Cayetano has released \$8 million for retrofitting and internal connections in the school system. This is the first of \$45 million to be used to retrofit all schools in the State system. A contact is Diana Oshiro (808-586-3307).

## Illinois Update – January 2000

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Preliminary results from ongoing research conducted by the Consortia on Chicago School Research indicates that as teacher expectations of student capabilities increase and more challenging work is provided to students, student performance does actually increase. However, the researchers also found that 70% of the samples of “challenging” lessons and activities assigned by teachers were really not challenging or provided only minimal challenges to students. In the past, the Administration has cited Chicago Public Schools, particularly their extended summer school program, as a model for use in increasing inner-city student performance.

Illinois assesses students in reading, writing, and math in grades 3, 5, 8, and 10, and science and social studies in grades 4, 7, and 11 using State-developed tests based on the standards. Beginning in the 2000-01 school year, the State will give new high school tests based on the 11th-grade standards in the four core subjects. Beginning in 2001, students who pass the new high school tests will earn the "Prairie State Achievement Awards." The tests will first be administered in the 11th grade, and students will have the option to re-take portions to improve their scores in the 12th grade. As a part of the local promotion policy, each district is expected to develop programs for providing extra academic assistance to students not meeting the standards. Funding is provided for schools designated "low-performing."

## Indiana Update – January 2000

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Indiana recently provided 61 grants to junior high and middle schools under the TLCF Federal funding, with grants averaging about \$100,000. During the second year of E-Rate funding districts in the State received almost \$23 million. The Indiana Department of Education website is one of the most active and has current up-to-date information on upcoming grant rounds as well as recent recipients of State and Federal funds. The primary technology person responsible for E-Rate is Mike Huffman (317-232-6672).

## Iowa Update – January 2000

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Funded several years ago using Federal TLCF and State funds, the University of Northern Iowa Mathematics Instruction Initiative has been implemented in 16 middle schools. A variety of technologies are being used for instruction; staff development is provided for math teachers. Topics include inquiry and decision-making and action research. A reading initiative is also being implemented in 22 schools.

The Legislature has appropriated \$30 million (which is the fourth installment of a \$150 million five-year project) to facilitate technology integration into the curriculum. Each district receives a minimum of \$15,000, while the reminding funds are distributed to larger districts on a per-pupil basis. These funds can be used to purchase hardware, software, and related technology components. The State has invested almost \$300 million over the last five years to implement its statewide telecommunications network, ICAN. More than 700 classrooms, located in almost every school district, are now connected. A recent report found that 97% of all the telephones in the state have access to Internet without paying long distance charges. A State technology survey conducted in May 1999 found that the ratio of students to computers is 4.55 to 1, with the percentage of classrooms with Internet access being slightly over 80%. A new contact in the Iowa State Department of Education is John O'Connell (515-242-6354).

## Kentucky Update – January 2000

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The Kentucky Department of Education has developed guidelines which call for “computer labs” to be used in situations where drill-and-practice and computer-based skills are taught by teachers who are not very knowledgeable about technology. In situations where “project-based learning” is a priority, five computers in each classroom are recommended.

The Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference, formerly the Kentucky Education Technology Conference, will be held on March 2-4, 2000 in Louisville.

The Kentucky Commonwealth Virtual Library has negotiated licenses for 31 databases from Ebsco, OCLC, and Britannica. The cost of licenses were paid under the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund grant. The Kentucky Virtual High School is now providing AP courses in foreign languages, math, and science; this is the first state-wide high school AP initiative in the country. The Kentucky State website has more information on all of the Kentucky initiatives including E-Rate funding.

Almost \$58 million was provided to districts in E-Rate funding during the second year. Kentucky is unique in that for every \$1 of E-Rate funding discounts, an additional \$1 has been leveraged for additional technology expenditures from State and other sources. The primary contact continues to be David Couch (502-565-2020).

The State Educational Standards Board, established in 1990, will be an autonomous agency following recommendations by a task force created by the Legislature in January 1999. The task force also mandates specific activities to ensure that the 26 teacher preparation colleges better align their curricula with expected K-12 standards and goals. It would also allow for alternative certification of teachers, which has not been used widely in the State thus far.

## Louisiana Update – January 2000

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The Legislature has appropriated \$15 million for districts to purchase computers, Internet connections to the classroom, and software and additional technology tools called for in local technology plans. The State's \$10 million TLCF grant has been used primarily to provide professional development related to successful classroom technology integration. In 1999, the student/computer ratio was 10 to 1.

Louisiana's "Making Connections" project has a one-stop shop for instructional materials which can be used to support the State's current standards in Math, English, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language, and the Arts. It includes model lesson plans, software products, and state-wide assessment items. Go to <http://www.lcet.doe.state.la.us/con>.

Over 1,000 teachers have participated in the State's Technology Training Initiative, referred to as INTECH. Staff development is provided by five regional Teaching, Learning, and Technology Centers. Initially focused upon K-6, INTECH training next year will focus on grades 7-12. Most of the funds for the State Regional Technology Centers have come from the Federal TFCF Initiative.

Currently, there are three technology-related initiatives underway in the State including development of K-12 education technology standards, expansion of secondary computer education curriculum, and the development of standards for distance education. Three task forces have made recommendations to the State Board, which however has yet to approve them.

## Maryland Update – January 2000

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The Legislature has appropriated funding for the fourth year of the Governor's five-year "Technology in Maryland" initiative to provide connectivity, hardware, software, and staff development in 700 Maryland schools. Last year, 170 schools were added. About 220 schools will receive funds for the current year.

The third round of TLCF funds were recently allocated to 22 of the 24 county systems, with grants ranging from \$64,000 to \$425,000 to be used primarily for staff development.

The Johns Hopkins University and Towson State University have initiated the Technology Academy Summer Institute in which 120 individuals participated last summer. These fellows will serve as train-the-trainers in their districts. The primary focus of the training is technology integration and instructional leadership skills. These fellows also provide dissemination services on best practices. Johns Hopkins University is currently selling two model programs, which have been identified as exemplary on several USED "lists".

The amount of E-Rate funding for districts in Maryland has more than doubled to \$38 million during the second round, compared to \$15 million during the first round.

For the first time in several years, the number of schools meeting passing criteria at the 3rd, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Instrument dropped (from 44.1% to 43.8%). Some of the lowest performing schools are in the Washington, DC area, such as Montgomery County which has almost 6% limited-English proficient students. More than 100 schools, including 12 in Prince George's County, are being monitored because of consistently low test scores. Some of these could be "taken over" by the State, as happened in Baltimore City Schools several years ago.

## Massachusetts Update – January 2000

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Currently, more than 25,000 teachers and other school staff are taking advantage of the \$25 per year local dial-up Internet MassEd.net account. One-hundred million dollars was recently allocated to the Virtual Education Space Initiative, in which the Massachusetts Department of Education is developing a suite of on-line applications for teachers and students to support standards-based curriculum which includes an on-line catalogue initiative headed by WGBH and WGBY public television stations.

Last year, the State received \$8 million under TLCF, which was used by districts to support curriculum development, assessment preparation, and professional development.

## Michigan Update – January 2000

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Michigan has used a large portion of its Federal Technology Literacy Challenge Fund funds to support a number of on-line content projects that are tied to the Michigan Curriculum Frameworks and Standards; these include “Building Elementary Science Units”; “Civics On-Line” for social studies teachers; “Economics for Tomorrow” for teaching economics in grades 4-8; and “On-Line Advanced Placement Project” for developing AP college board courses.

The Ameritech Technology Academy is designed to train 2000 Ameritech technology scholars to serve as “trainers-of-trainers” in support of the 1998 State Technology Plan. This initiative has received strong support from Senator Carl Levin. For more information go to <http://www.ameritechacademy.org>. The person responsible for technology related initiatives in the State is Lucian Parshal (517-373-4333).

## New Hampshire Update – January 2000

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The State Supreme Court has ruled that a new property tax which would be used to implement a new State finance plan developed six months ago is unconstitutional. The court felt that the implementation schedule favored rich communities over less affluent ones and did not meet the intent of the initial court order several years ago. The State legislature must now come up with a \$450 million allocation to provide remaining funding to districts for this school year. The Governor has come up with a combination of property tax and capital gains tax to meet some of the shortfall.

New Hampshire tests English and math in grades 3, 6, and 10 and science and social studies in grades 6 and 10. These state-developed tests are based on the standards. New Hampshire does not require districts to provide intervention to students having difficulty meeting the standards.

## New Jersey Update – January 2000

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Approximately \$7.2 million in Federal Technology Literacy Challenge Funds have been allocated to 18 counties to promote collaboration among school districts and coordinate resources for technology activities. A portion of Goals 2000 funds has been used for a new initiative called “Pairing and Sharing Instructional Resources” which is designed to have “technology-advanced” districts work closely with poor, disadvantaged districts.

Fourth-year TLCF will be used for a new initiative referred to as “Access, Collaboration, and Equity” (ACE). Under ACE, approximately \$7.5 million will be made available to 50 economically disadvantaged districts, which will be used to provide students and their families with access to technology and staff at the ACE centers. Participating in this project is the TechCorp New Jersey.

In September, the results of a comprehensive SEA survey of technology use, designed to report on current progress in meeting the 1998 “Vision and Benchmarks 2002” projections, were released. The survey results provide extremely useful information to sales directors, who wish to target specific districts along various dimensions. For example, the student: multi-media-capable-computer ratio ranges from 10.2: (in Middlesex County) to 5.5: (in Camden County). It also includes information regarding the average percent of administrators, teachers, and students who have Internet access. For teachers, the access average ranges from 48% in Passaic County to 90% in Warren and Salem Counties. For those vendors who have staff development products and services, the percentage of teachers classified as “advanced technology users” ranges from 10% in Passaic County to 25% in Hunter County. And, while 92% of Cape May schools have distance learning capabilities, only 29% of the schools in Essex County have such capabilities. The total of amount of technology-earmarked State funding in New Jersey has increased from \$5 million in 1995 to \$52.2 million in 1998-99. For a

copy of the survey go to the Department's website at <http://www.nj.us/njded/techno/toc.htm>

Perhaps of all states, New Jersey has placed more Federal and State funds in economically disadvantaged districts to reduce the negative consequences of "digital divide" issues. Each year, a major allocation of State funds is being provided to the 28 most disadvantaged districts in the State, referred to as the Abbott districts. The primary contact in New Jersey continues to be Julia Stapleton (609-984-1644).

The State recently announced a new School Choice Initiative which will allow non-resident students to transfer into ten districts that have innovative education programs. Eventually all districts will have an opportunity to provide such choice programs. Salem City High School, for example, will offer a career preparation program in digital communications, while Cumberland and Mammoth County schools will run agricultural programs. A recent evaluation of choice programs in Michigan found that, neither Charter Schools nor inter-district transfer choice items, resulted in the use of more innovative programs; rather virtually all such schools continued traditional approaches.

## New Mexico Update – January 2000

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The New Mexico Council on Technology and Education has recommended that \$10 million in technology funds be provided by the Legislature to districts for FY2001. Current funding is \$5 million, which is provided to districts at a rate of \$15/student. The amount of E-Rate funding to districts increased to almost \$30 million during the second round, with Gallup/McKinley County Public Schools receiving almost \$15 million by itself.

## New York Update – January 2000

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The “Categorical Reading” program, which is designed to improve reading and academic performance of students in the Big Five city school districts (i.e., the five largest except New York City), received \$64 million for this school year. In addition, the Big Five city school districts are required to set aside a portion of their Comprehensive Operating Aid for intervention programs for early grade levels and also for Class Size Reduction; \$17 million of state funds are provided for this purpose. Both of these programs allocate funds for purchasing technology-based solutions and staff development.

The State is also providing approximately \$15 million for extended school violence prevention programs. Such funds are provided under competitive grants to consortia involving educational organizations and community-based organizations to create school-based intervention models. Priority is provided to high-poverty districts with large numbers of at-risk students.

The State Learning Technology Programs, funded at \$3.3 million, provides funds which can be used to provide learning technology to students enrolled in non-public schools. Similar programs exist in Wisconsin and New Jersey.

Under the State’s Pupils with Compensatory Education Needs (PCEN) program, districts with large percentages of students with compensatory education needs are required to set-aside a portion of their Comprehensive Operating Budget for Compensatory Education programs. Districts with fewer students in need of remediation are required to provide limited remediation components on an as-needed basis. Approximately \$300 million is allocated for such programs each year.

Two State programs address staff development. One is the Targeted Instructional Professional Development Program, which is designed to ensure that all students achieve new State learning standards. Districts must form consortia with Teacher Centers to provide staff development in five areas including effective use of technology in regular classroom programs and effective instruction with students with disabilities or other at-risk students; \$1.5 million is allocated for this initiative which was first created in 1984. There are now almost 200 Teacher Resource and Training Centers serving 660 districts across the State. The Teacher Centers, which receive \$20 million a year, provide services to schools based on locally-determined needs.

Several State formula programs are earmarked specifically for technology. These include Instructional Computer Hardware and Technology Equipment Aid estimated at about \$14 million, through which almost \$13 per appropriate student count is provided for equipment with up to 20% being used for repair or staff development. Approximately \$11 million, or \$4.50 per student, is provided to districts to purchase or loan computer software for instructional purposes. In both public and non-public schools, this allocation is scheduled to increase to almost \$8 per pupil next year and \$14 per pupil in the following year.

The Building Aid for Computer Technology is included as part of the overall Building Aid Program. A variety of computer elements are eligible for aid under this initiative most of which relate to infrastructure development and networking. A similar program is the Shared Service BOCES Program, where portions of State BOCES funds are used for instructional computer technology products and services. For many years, BOCES units have been the prime decision makers who provided access to their hardware purchased under this initiative to school districts. In 1998-99 districts could claim aid under this formula for the purchase or lease/purchase of instructional computer equipment that was not eligible for Building Aid. The authorized State allocation for 1999-2000 was \$25 million.

In his State of the State address before the State Legislature, Governor Pataki mentioned a few proposed initiatives -- such as subsidizing tuition for teachers who are willing to go to high-demand locations -- but failed to mention or emphasize any current or new technology initiatives or funding.

New York has requested \$12 million for the next fiscal year for the creation of a state-wide on-line library, which will provide free research services to citizens throughout the State. A staff development initiative (funded by the State Department of Education and the Annenberg Institute) is underway to promote lesson development consistent with State learning standards and assessment. Through State-sponsored peer reviews, teachers share methodology and assessments with peers, which are submitted to the Academy for Teaching and Learning for validation. Those that are approved are provided on the New York State website. This website can then be used for staff development.

Chuck Devoe has left the State Department of Education. A contact is Lynn Reuss (518-474-5922).

## North Dakota Update – January 2000

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This school year, 180 student courses will be available via the Internet, including a correspondence high school which allows a student to earn an diploma entirely through distance learning. Two-hundred courses available on-line are planned for next year; the \$3 million annual budget for staff development and technology-related infrastructure (the amount as last year) will be distributed on a formula basis rather than through competitive awards as in the past. The State has also received \$3 million from two Technology Literacy grants for staff development.

North Dakota tests students in the four core subjects in grades 4, 6, 8, and 10 using the commercially developed TerraNova and 'Test of Cognitive Skills' tests. According to State officials, the "Test of Cognitive Skills" is aligned with State standards. North Dakota only requires districts that are designated "low performing" to provide intervention to students having difficulty meeting the standards.

## Ohio Update – January 2000

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In late September 1999, Governor Taft proposed a \$10 billion initiative over 12 years for school construction and modernization. Some of the funding to support the initiative would come from the multi-state settlement that the tobacco industry would provide to districts on a matching basis, with more matching requirements for low-wealth districts. The proposal was submitted to the legislature during a late October session. If it passes, it is still unclear whether or not the State Supreme Court will see such a proposal as meeting their 1997 ad hoc court ruling that declared the Ohio financial aid system unconstitutional.

Ohio tests all students in grades 4, 6, 9, and 12 in the four core subjects using State-developed tests based on the standards. The State is developing new 10th-grade exams and is phasing them in to replace the ninth-grade exams. The new exams will be fully implemented beginning in 2003. To help describe the assessments, Ohio developed a variety of documents including Resource Manuals and Fact Sheets, which include test items, scoring rubrics, and examples of student work. Teachers, parents, and students may find these documents useful for understanding the type of work expected on the State assessments.

Students must pass the ninth-grade tests in the four core subjects to graduate from high school. These tests are based on the eighth-grade standards. The class of 2005 will be the first required to pass the new 10th-grade tests based on the standards in the four core subjects to graduate from high school. Students can earn an ‘honors diploma’ for taking advanced coursework, maintaining a certain grade-point average, and scoring at ‘honors’ level on the 12th-grade assessments or by reaching a certain score on the SAT or ACT tests. Students who pass the 12th-grade tests in the four core subjects also earn \$500 to use for college.

Beginning in 2001, any fourth-grade student who is unable to pass the fourth-grade reading test after receiving extra academic assistance will not be promoted to the fifth grade.

Ohio requires districts to provide intervention for students in grades 1 through 8 who are having difficulty meeting the standards. Ohio does not provide separate funding for intervention. Instead, districts are expected to use existing funds allocated by the State to fund the intervention.

## Oklahoma Update – January 2000

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The State Department of Education has awarded 160 grants, averaging \$50,000 each, to secondary schools to establish distance learning classes. Sharing of such classes is expected about a year from now. A one-time grant of \$8.2 million was recently allocated at a rate of \$5,000 per school to districts for purchasing technology. Under its \$4.3 million TLCF initiative, 40 districts received funding. Part of the funds have been used to support a tele-mentor program, which has trained 36 highly-skilled teachers to serve as trainers of trainers. The contact in Oklahoma continues to be J.P. Applegate (405-521-3994).

Governor Keating is planning to submit proposals to the Legislature which would include issuing \$100 million in school bonds for technology, increasing the number of remedial and extended summer school programs, and providing task rewards to students who successfully achieve high goals in core academic subjects. This plan would also eliminate remedial freshman classes at four-year universities, expand alternative teacher certification programs, and provide merit pay bonuses to teachers based upon student performance.

During its last session, the Legislature passed a bill which would provide state earmarked funds for technology once the price of oil exceeded \$15 a barrel. Currently, oil prices exceed that amount; technology funding will be an initial focus of the special session of the Legislature in January.

The \$109 million Tulsa bond package was approved by voters in November. Approximately \$6.7 million will be earmarked for learning materials and library books. Technology, instruction materials, and textbook line items have \$25 million earmarked.

## Pennsylvania Update – January 2000

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The Legislature has passed a bill requiring teachers to take a specified number of hours of education courses in order to receive re-certification. Teachers in regular schools would have to take six credit hours of college courses, or participate in over 180 hours of professional development every five years. The Governor has signed a bill allowing for-profit firms to manage alternative schools for at-risk students. Philadelphia will be allowed to contract with the Houston-based Community Education Partners to operate a high school for students with behavioral problems who are behind academically.

Unexpectedly, Governor Ridge provided an additional \$20 million in the Link to Learn Initiative, designed to build networks, train teachers, purchase software, and prepare schools for Y2K. For the first time schools applied for grants on line. A contact in Pennsylvania is John Bailey (717-787-5820).

## South Carolina Update – January 2000

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South Carolina administers state-developed assessments based on the standards in grades 3 through 8 in English/language arts and math. Science tests will be given in the 2001-02 school year and social studies in the 2002-03 school year. These tests will also be given in grades 3 through 8.

South Carolina currently administers high school tests in reading, writing, and math that are not based on the standards. The State is field testing new high school tests, based on the standards, in English/language arts and math (science and social studies will be added later) to replace the current high school tests. The new English/language arts and math tests will be given in spring 2003, science in spring 2004, and social studies in spring 2005.

To graduate from high school, students must pass the high school tests in reading, writing, and math. The current exit exams measure eighth-grade level work and are not based on the standards. Beginning in the 2002-03 school year, students must pass the new high school assessments based on the 10<sup>th</sup>-grade standards in English language arts and math. Beginning in 2004, students will also have to pass the science test and in 2005 the social studies test.

Students who meet the graduation requirements, maintain a 3.0 grade point average, and complete the “college” or “tech-prep program” will earn the “Superior Technology or Academic Requirements” (STAR) diploma.

The State also has a new promotion policy for grades 3-8. Each district sets its own policy, but achievement on the State assessments is one of the factors for determining promotion.

Districts are required to provide intervention to students who fail any of the State assessments. Students who fail any of the high school exit exams cannot retake the exams before receiving extra academic help. The State provides funds for the intervention programs.

About 45% of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who took the new state Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test for the first time failed to meet math minimum standards. State officials called for increased teacher training in the development of critical thinking skills as a result of test score analyses. Under the previously used State assessment, approximately 80% of students generally passed or meet minimum State standards.

Three million dollars has been appropriated for initial funding of the Governor's Institute of Reading, which will provide technical assistance and grants to local districts for, among other things, professional development to improve student skills in grades K-3. Twenty million dollars has been appropriated for the Governor's First Steps initiative, which targets children up to age five to provide readiness, health, and related services.

## Texas Update – January 2000

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The Texas Center for Education Technology at the University of North Texas is one of several centers for professional development, but the only one that focuses on technology proficiencies and integration. For more information go to <http://www.tea.state.tex.us/technology/ta>. The TEA's "Call for Textbooks Proclamation 2000" will encourage publishers to submit web-based, network-based, and CD-ROM-based textbooks for use by students with disabilities. The proclamation also lists technical references of groups that could assist in making products accessible to students with disabilities. Approval of Proclamation 2000 is expected in January.

The State Board of Education has approved a rule that would increase emphasis on phonics under State textbook adoptions. Under previous rules, publishers had to assure that at least 51% of words in their text were decodable or easy to sound out following the phonics philosophy of instruction. The new rule would change the requirement to 80%. Most of the textbook publishers in question and the American Association of Publishers have called the change unfair and "probably illegal."

School districts are beginning to implement a new policy that requires districts to notify parents if their children are being taught by teachers who have either unlicensed or emergency credentials. Approximately 50,000 teachers currently have emergency permits or lack proper licenses; this represents approximately 20% of all teachers in the State. Supported by the Texas Federation of Teachers, the new legislation has been justified as a means to have parents create a demand for qualified teachers.

Texas tests students in math and reading in grades 3 through 8 and in high school; writing in grades 4, 8, and in high school; and science and social studies at grade 8. The state also administers end-of-course exams in English, Algebra I, Biology I, and U.S. History to all

high school students. These State-developed tests will be fully aligned to the State's standards in 2000. New Educator's Guides have been developed that show which standards are eligible for testing on the Statewide assessments.

Beginning in the 2002-03 school year, new tests based on the standards will replace the current tests. Students will be assessed in English and math in grades 3 through exit level (approximately grade 11). Science will be assessed in grades 5, 10, and exit level, and social studies in grades 8, 10, and exit level.

All students must pass high school exit tests in reading, writing, and math to graduate from high school. The tests are based on the eighth-, ninth-, and 10th-grade standards. If students pass the Algebra I, English II, and U.S. History or Biology assessments, they do not have to pass the 10th-grade exit exams in these subjects. Beginning with the class of 2005, students will have to pass the new exit level exams in the four core subjects to graduate from high school. Students can also earn a "Distinguished Achievement Program" seal for meeting advanced requirements set by the State.

The State will also implement a new promotion policy for grade 3 in reading and grades 5 and 8 in reading and math. Districts will have several options for enforcing the policy, including automatic retention and immediate intervention, or intervention prior to retention. The policy will be in effect for the third grade in the 2002-03 school year, for the fifth grade in the 2004-05 school year, and for the eighth grade in the 2007-08 school year.

Districts are required to provide extra academic help to students who fail any of the State assessments. The state funds the intervention.

## Utah Update – January 2000

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Utah has appropriated almost \$25 million for technology for the 1999-2000 school year. Funds can be used for purchasing hardware, software, training, and Internet connectivity, as well as distance learning. The State has negotiated a state-wide license with World Book to provide all K-12 students access throughout the next year.

## Vermont Update – January 2000

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The new “Putting Standards Into Action” on-line instructional planning and assessment tool and teacher forum for lesson plan sharing is now up and running. This effort, which was part of the IBM Reinventing Education Grant, which allows any teacher to access the system by using a password and an Internet browser from home or school, was developed under the direction of Douglas Walker within the Vermont Department of Education. The assessment component builds upon Vermont’s long history in promoting authentic assessment. The Vermont Institute for Science, Math, and Technology has a five-member team providing staff development to teachers who use the on-line system.

Over 95% of schools in the State have approved technology plans, with 77% having established LANs/WANs, which is one priority use of E-Rate-generated “refunds”. Fifty percent of schools have direct Internet access, another priority use of E-Rate refunds is acquisition of greater band width. A new State Technology Plan is expected in October 2001. A contact in Vermont is Phillip Hyjeck (802-244-8767 ext 25).

## Virginia Update – January 2000

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Virginia is in the process of designing a system for assessing the impact of technology use in education. Most of the 110 grantees under the \$5.7 million TLCF round of funding used these Federal dollars primarily for staff development.

## West Virginia Update – January 2000

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West Virginia has been working under its Reinventing Education IBM grant for a number of years to develop a system for assessing middle and secondary students to determine learning objectives with which they are having difficulty. Under a recent Federal grant this web-based assessment system will now be used at elementary schools.

The State has developed an alternative assessment framework which is aligned with the West Virginia instructional goals and objectives, which is the curriculum used for all students. This alternative will measure the progress of students with certain disabilities attainment of skills through the use of performance indicators the require students to demonstrate the use of skills in real world situations and settings. The framework and alternative instrument will be pilot tested this school year. For more information contact Mary Pat Farrell (304-558-2696).

West Virginia tests all students in the four core subjects using the commercially developed Stanford 9 for grades 1-11 and the Metropolitan Achievement Test for kindergarten. The state also tests writing in grades 4, 7, and 10. According to officials, all of the tests are aligned with the standards. A new State-developed, end-of-course test in algebra will be piloted in spring 2000. The test will be based on the standards and given to all eighth graders.

Students who reach a certain level on the state assessments in high school receive a certificate of “Proficiency and Warranty” at graduation; this guarantees that the student is ready to enter the work force. If an employer finds that a student’s basic skills are unsatisfactory, the State will retrain the student. The state requires districts to provide extra academic help to any student that scores below the 50th percentile on the reading, language, and math tests. The state provides funds for summer reading and math programs.

The SEA has teamed up with the Florida DOE to allow West Virginia high school students to take AP courses through the Florida Virtual High School. The first course to be available is the web-based AP Calculus course. A contact in the West Virginia Department of Education is Vicky Allen (304-558-3538).

## Wisconsin Update – January 2000

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As of November 1, 1999, over 200 of the State's 426 districts state-wide (involving 15,000 teachers) have participated in the Levels of Technology Integration (LOTI) self-assessment. This assessment focuses on practices, implementation, and teacher skills in using technology.

The State Superintendent has proposed to the Legislature new certification and licensing rules for teachers and technology coordinators who must meet ten new standards.

Department of Public Instruction staff are currently developing information technology literacy and core content standards and aligned integrated learner-based activities and projects. This overall matrix will be completed within six months. The State Technology Plan, originally published in 1996, is being updated by a task force of 22 representatives, and should also be available in the Spring 2000. This Wisconsin Educational Media Association Conference will be held April 2-4, 2000 in Madison with more than 1,500 technology and media specialists expected to attend.

Earlier this year, Governor Thompson allocated \$15 million to the Milwaukee Public Schools as a loan to install high-speed data wiring and fiber-optic cable to connect all of the 1,800 classrooms. Milwaukee received E-Rate generated discounts of approximately \$24 million during the first year of E-Rate funding.

State Superintendent John Benson has released a proposal, developed over the last several years, which would create three types of licenses for teachers; one for beginning teachers, another for mid-career professionals, and another for veteran educators. Other requirements placed upon teachers would be the development of an "individualized professional development plan" and required work with mentors. In addition, teachers colleges would have to develop detailed curricula for teacher preparation programs which

would have to be approved by the State. The bottom line is that teacher licenses would be based on demonstrated competencies rather than required number of courses taken. The Governor's proposal would have to be approved by the Legislature and, if approved, would go into effect in 2004.

## Wyoming Update – January 2000

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The K-12 budget for FY99 has increased almost 15 percent to \$726 million. For the first time, the State will cover all costs of district expenditures on special education students. In the past, the State reimbursed districts for only 85 percent of their costs.

Wyoming tests students in English and math in grades 4, 8, and 11 using State-developed assessments based on the standards and by using the commercially developed TerraNova tests.

All students must meet the State standards in the four core subjects to earn a high school diploma. It is not clear how the State will measure successful completion of the standards, but students in the class of 2003 will have to meet the English and math standards. The class of 2004 will also have to meet the science and social studies standards.

Wyoming requires districts to provide intervention to students having difficulty meeting the standards, but the State does not directly fund the intervention.