

Position Paper #6: **Technology in Education**

Technology is an integral part of the education process in today's schools. It is used to enhance instruction, provide resource materials, and to support communication and assessment. Most all staff involved in day-to-day operations of the public schools use technology to assist them to complete daily activities. Maryland Eastern Shore counties are working to ensure that schools meet the five objectives of The Maryland Educational Technology Plan for the New Millennium 2007-2012:

- Improve student learning through technology.
- Improve staff's knowledge and skills to integrate technology into instruction.
- Improve decision-making, productivity, and efficiency at all levels of the organization through the use of technology.
- Improve equitable access to appropriate technologies among all stakeholders.
- Improve the instructional uses of technology through research and evaluation.

The following actions would assist local school systems to fully achieve these key objectives and meet the on-going challenge of making modern technology a more effective instructional tool:

1. Continued implementation and funding of the staff development and equipment grant programs so that all staff and all students in Maryland can benefit from educational technology.
2. Continue to maintain regional and local instructional and non-instructional support systems using state-of-the-art technology. Examples include the State and Regional Technology Academy, internet-based learning opportunities to support professional development and teacher training on using technology to deliver instruction.
3. Update existing computer technology to keep pace with the changing system requirements of evolving applications.
4. Provide online staff development courses on technology use and integration strategies for Maryland teachers to enhance the learning process. This is needed in rural Maryland where easy access to higher education, and technology training facilities are not as readily accessible.

5. Provide an infrastructure to support broadband access to the internet for all schools. This is required by necessary for rural Maryland schools to provide access to resources and to improve the instructional connection between home and school.
6. Promote the use of technology to overcome the geographical burdens of distance for state and regional meetings.

The Maryland State Department of Education should assist in the establishment of State-wide network infrastructure to provide network access for all public schools of Maryland. Access to broadband is an imperative, especially since MSDE offers an expanding list of on-line High School Assessment-related courses that can be used to enhance instruction or as stand-alone, credit bearing courses. This will be a critical tool for local school systems. Additionally, on-line Advanced Placement courses for rural students and those in smaller high schools will demand WAN/Broadband access.

The Eastern Shore Superintendents see informed use of technology as a major asset to rural Maryland. Through the use of computer and communication technology, we can make high quality educational opportunities an experience for all students without regard to domicile.