TO: Illinois State Board of Education
FROM: Robert E. Schiller, Superintendent
Christopher Koch, Director


Materials: Draft Plan

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Purpose of Agenda Item
To review the revised draft of the 2002-2007 State Technology Plan.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item

- Board members will provide feedback to the staff regarding the draft plan, and
- The Board will provide direction for obtaining public feedback prior to final adoption of the Plan.

Background Information
The first State Technology Plan was adopted by the State Board of Education in 1995. In 2000, the Board initiated a statewide planning process designed to result in a new five-year plan for Illinois. This process replicated the technology planning process used at the local level and eventually engaged hundreds of educators and citizens from throughout the state.

Two reports on the progress of this initiative were provided to the Board, along with an initial draft of the findings and recommendations that emerged from the planning process. Staff were asked to refine the draft and, upon completion of that process, another draft was provided to the Board in December 2001. No action was taken, however, because of the then-unknown requirements of the Elementary and Secondary
Education Act Reauthorization, which were expected to have an impact on the state plan components.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 did include very specific expectations regarding technology, including a focus on using technology to support achievement, student technology literacy by the 8\textsuperscript{th} grade, assuring that teachers were competent in using technology in instruction, and assuring student access to technology. Cheryl Lemke, a nationally-known technology consultant, assisted State Board staff and a special advisory committee to develop an application that would meet requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and also reflect the earlier planning activities. The Illinois proposal was approved with highly favorable comments from federal reviewers.

This draft 2002-2007 State Technology Plan has been designed to serve as a framework for specific actions that will meet the federal requirements, capture the power of digital technologies for the benefit of Illinois students, and assure that these students are prepared to thrive in the Digital Age. It differs from earlier drafts in that it is very succinct, providing limited background information and focusing on the key goals and strategies for moving Illinois forward.

**Plan Summary**

Illinois is at an important crossroad in its efforts to assure that its students are prepared to succeed in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. Although the results of the first state plan were striking (e.g., Illinois moved from 49\textsuperscript{th} to 1\textsuperscript{st} in the use of digital technology in K-12 education – January 2, 2002, press release from Office of the Governor), the hardest parts of the challenge remain – assuring adequate and equitable access to digital technology, ensuring that educators are competent and confident in their use of technology in instruction, and transforming the educational process to make effective use of technology to engage students and improve their achievement.

Moreover, the state’s financial commitment to technology was reduced this year, providing an even greater challenge for the future.

With this in mind, the State Plan focuses on strategies that are expected to yield the greatest impact and establishes a mechanism (an advisory group) for periodic review and revision of our direction.

The goals of the plan are to:

(A) Improve student academic achievement through the use of technology in elementary and secondary schools

(B) Ensure that Illinois students are ready to thrive in a knowledge-based, global society

(C) Assist every student in crossing the digital divide by ensuring that every student is technologically literate by the time the student finishes the eighth grade,
regardless of the student’s race, ethnicity, gender, family income, geographic location, or disability

(D) Encourage the effective integration of technology resources and systems with teacher training and curriculum development, and to establish research-based instructional methods that can be widely implemented as best practices by the Illinois State Board of Education, local school districts, and schools.

The strategies are focused on five areas:

- Student Learning
- Educator’s Effective Use of Technology
- Transformative Learning System
- Robust Technology Access
- Policy, Leadership and Accountability

The key strategies include:

- the development and implementation of standards for student technology literacy, professional development, infrastructure, and electronic learning programs;
- strengthened technology professional development for educators at the preservice and inservice levels;
- promotion of technology programs that have demonstrated effectiveness in relation to student achievement;
- assessment of student and teacher technology literacy;
- state leadership for transforming local classrooms; and
- a state advisory committee to assist in developing policy recommendations and strategies throughout the life of the Plan.

Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action and Communications

When this Plan is formally adopted, it will serve as the framework for policy, budget and legislative initiatives during the next five years. The agency’s budget process will look at the funding level needed for the future, and the Board will eventually be asked whether the “Closing the Gap” distribution strategy used during the FY02 and 03 budget years will continued or modified.

An immediate need arising from this Plan will be to communicate with local educators regarding the new Technology Literacy Standards for Students. Local boards, administrators and teachers will need to understand why the Technology Literacy Standards have been adopted, the implications for their local educational efforts, and the plans for assessing 8th grade literacy through an as-yet-undetermined process.
The strategies within this State Educational Technology plan collectively fall within four primary spending categories: hardware, software, infrastructure and personnel development. The cost to implement this plan, to reach every student and teacher in each public attendance center over a five year period, is estimated to be $1,078,069,580 (see Appendix 2 in plan). Further cost analysis will be conducted in finalizing this report.

**Pros and Cons of Various Actions**

Federal rules require that each state adopt a state technology plan. Completion of this planning process will allow Illinois to update its state plan and continue in compliance with federal requirements. Completion of the plan will also provide the framework within which Illinois will continue its progress in this area. Failure to complete the plan for 2002-2007 would leave the earlier plan in effect.

**Superintendent’s Recommendation**

The Board should provide feedback to staff and authorize distribution for public comment prior to final adoption of the Plan. The structure for this authorization should be similar to that used for rules – i.e., the Board will approve the general direction of the Plan and make modifications only as needed to respond to public comment.

**Next Steps**

Consistent with Board direction, the Plan will be distributed for comment by local educators, technology advocates and others. The Plan will be presented to the Board for final action no later than November 2002.