



## **NATIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE'S TOOLKIT 2005 EVALUATING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

### **Evaluation of Online Learning: A Buyer's Guide to Evaluate Online Programs and Courses**

This Buyer's Guide is aimed at providing an easy first-step tool to help SEAs and LEAs sort out quality courses and programs—whether homegrown or commercially developed. Unfortunately, in the absence of a Buyer's Guide to help assess online courses and programs, states and districts are often forced to make uniformed decisions, or decisions that are based on a product's marketing or cost rather than on its quality. There is a growing body of literature on the effectiveness of online courses and programs, but it needs to be distilled into a form that state directors, school officials, and district leaders can use. An evaluation tool, such as a Buyer's Guide, should have two components: evaluation of online learning programs (at the state or district level); and an evaluation of online courses as shown through assessments of student performance.

SETDA's Profiling Educational Technology Integration (PETI) criteria and framework can be used to analyze the quality of online learning courses and programs. Each number below (i.e. *SI-1*) corresponds to a PETI Guiding Question.

## Implementation Evaluation

Student Learning	
<i>SI-1</i>	<i>Is student academic achievement improving where online learning is being used effectively?</i>
<i>SI-2</i>	<i>Are students demonstrating proficiency in technological and information literacy (e.g. performance reviews, assessment of student products, observations)?</i>

## Impact Evaluation

Course Delivery	
<i>C1-5</i>	<i>How are the best and most effective practices with online learning identified and shared?</i>
<i>C2-1</i>	<i>Are teachers suitably proficient and familiar with technology to strategically incorporate effective uses of online learning?</i>
<i>C2-2</i>	<i>Are teachers skilled in designing standards-based curriculum that maximizes the unique features that online-experiences have for learning?</i>
<i>C2-4</i>	<i>Do teachers have strategies for evaluating online student learning?</i>
Infrastructure and Support	
<i>C3-3</i>	<i>Does the infrastructure have the capacity to support online learning?</i>
<i>C3-7</i>	<i>Does the school/district provide human, technical, and financial resources to provide adequate and timely technical and network support?</i>
<i>C4-1</i>	<i>Has the school/district ensured that the local socio-economic status is not a barrier to student online learning outside of the school environment and school hours?</i>
<i>C4-4</i>	<i>Is the school/district ensuring that special needs populations have sufficient and appropriate access to online learning opportunities?</i>
<i>C5-7</i>	<i>Does the school/district provide comprehensive professional growth opportunities for administrators to help them understand how to build the capacity for online learning?</i>
<i>C5-8</i>	<i>Does the school/district provide comprehensive professional growth opportunities for teachers to build their own capacity for supporting and using online learning?</i>
<i>C5-9</i>	<i>Does the school/district provide comprehensive, prioritized funding for the full cost of online learning as a regular part of its budget?</i>