



NATIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE'S TOOLKIT 2004 EVALUATING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Assessment of the 8th Grade Technology Literacy Requirements Policy Statement

As students will tell you, technology literacy is quickly becoming as important and essential as reading literacy, and an absence of these skills places students at a competitive disadvantage in their continuing education and in their entrance to the workforce.

As stated in Title II, PART D of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), state educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to assist every student in crossing the digital divide by ensuring that every student is technologically literate by the time that student finishes the eighth grade, regardless of the student's race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, geographic location, or ability. In addition, SEAs must encourage the effective integration of technology resources and systems with teacher training and curriculum development to establish research-based instructional methods that can be widely implemented by state and local educational agencies. Finally, SEAs must be able to describe how they will ensure ongoing integration of technology into school curricula and instructional strategies in all schools so that technology will be fully integrated into curricula and instruction by December 31, 2006.

Deliberate flexibility in the law has allowed SEAs to measure their progress toward the statutory requirements of Title II, PART D as they see fit. Furthermore, it has been left up to individual states to determine how they will demonstrate progress toward meeting these statutory requirements.

However, the eighth grade technology literacy statutory requirement is not a component of the Consolidated State Performance Report required by federal guidelines. This leads to ambiguity in terms of what is expected of states, and action is needed to clarify this issue.

State-level reporting on progress toward meeting the eighth grade technology literacy requirement should be included in the Consolidated State Performance Report with the following conditions:

- Reporting will begin on a specific date no sooner than 2006;
- Back reporting will not be required; and
- States must be allowed to maintain flexibility regarding their individual definitions of technology literacy, as well as their standards, data elements, and methods of data collection.

States must clearly understand that technology literacy by the completion of eighth grade is part of the statutory requirement. Although there are no specific reporting requirements at this time, it is essential that state and local entities develop systematic ways of determining the extent of progress they are making towards satisfying this requirement.

The following question should be added to the Consolidated State Performance Report:

Based on the State Educational Agency's working definition of technology literacy, report on the progress the State Educational Agency and Local Educational Agencies have made toward meeting the eighth grade technology literacy requirement.