SETDA

LEADERSHIP • TECHNOLOGY • INNOVATION • LEARNING

STRATEGIC PLAN
2017-2020

SETDA
LEADING
INSPIRING
EMPOWERING

In 2016, SETDA celebrates fifteen years of leading and learning in the Digital Age. Emerging in 2001, during the era of federal Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) funding (Title II, Part D of the No Child Left Behind Act), SETDA provides a collaborative community for state leaders who understand how educational technology can be leveraged across all areas of learning. Although funding was discontinued in 2012 for EETT, 2016 ushers in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESSA does not single out education technology as a siloed initiative, rather, it weaves the importance of leveraging digital learning to support all priorities of the law. ESSA gives state leaders unprecedented flexibility and the opportunity to break down the traditional silos that have separated technology from programs that support curriculum, instruction, and professional development. Given these interrelated priorities, new collaborations between departments in state agencies will form and other relationships will be strengthened.

While technology has been part of teaching and learning for decades, we are now at an important crossroads in education. The variety of devices available, combined with ever-increasing broadband capacity, the availability of digital content in multiple formats to meet the needs of diverse learners in every content area and grade level, and the growing human capacity of our teachers and leaders means that educators can now truly strive to leverage digital tools to maximize learning for each individual student.

State leaders and policymakers across the country are examining policies, ranging from purchasing to how instructional materials are vetted. Teams are looking at their state-level approach to instructional materials to plan for the portfolio of print material, purchased digital materials, and openly licensed instructional materials that educators will access to teach students. Learning object repositories, content and learning management systems, and online assessment systems are becoming important tools so that digital content, whether purchased or open, can be adequately structured and effectively delivered to students. Innovative procurement practices such as cooperative purchasing or statewide pricing agreements are becoming more common. Most importantly, the field has come to understand that schools can no longer rely on one-time grants to purchase devices or build their infrastructure. Rather, sustainable funding must be provided so that devices, content, professional development and infrastructure can be upgraded on a reliable cycle.

Leveraging technology for learning not only unlocks the ability of educators to personalize learning for all students, but it is the strongest pathway to equity of education for all students. Digital tools can be used to ensure that no matter where a student lives, they can have access to high quality courses and high quality teachers. Teachers can utilize technology to adjust the pace of learning based on the needs of students - allowing them to accelerate in the subject areas where the students are strong, and take the time they need in subjects where they require longer to master the content. Digital learning allows students to demonstrate what they know in a variety of formats and can provide formative feedback along the way. The power of digital learning has ushered in the conversation of what to do for students who do not have access to devices and/or infrastructure from home. Fear of a widening "homework gap" has partnered the public and private sectors to think through reframing access to the internet as a utility rather than a luxury. Providing affordable home access not only makes education equitable for students, but it also allows the adults in the house to access services and participate in the 21st century economy.

In recognition of this shift in education, the SETDA Board of Directors committed to developing a new strategic plan in 2016. The SETDA strategic plan is intended to be a concise statement of our direction and of the value for state and partner engagement. It reaffirms SETDA's commitment to be the national leadership organization supporting all states to advance education through technology policy and practice. Via the approach detailed herein, we intend to sharpen the focus of our work, to do so collaboratively with others who share our goals, and to make a marked difference in teaching and learning.

> "Congratulations to SETDA on 15 years of contributions to the digital transformation of schools. State educational technology leaders are powerful collaborators with schools and districts in spreading innovation, connecting and empowering forward-thinking educators, sharing effective practices widely, and amplifying successes."
>
> **Joseph South**
> **Director of Educational Technology, U.S. Department of Education**

VISION

SETDA leads, inspires, and empowers the education community to leverage technology for learning.

MISSION

The mission of SETDA is to build and increase the capacity of state and national leaders to improve education through technology policy and practice.

OUR VISION AND MISSION

It is critical that the SETDA strategic plan embrace the concepts repeated throughout the strategic planning process and give voice to the desire to position SETDA and its members as central to leading the transformation of education by advancing effective educational technology policy and practice. To reaffirm our current and future role in the education sector and our core purpose, the SETDA Board of Directors establishes the statements at the left as our organizational vision and mission.

In carefully crafting this vision and mission, the SETDA Board of Directors asserts SETDA's unique role in leading the transformation of education through a focus on the dynamic interrelationship of effective federal, state, and local education and technology policies and practices.

OUR VALUES

Our statement of values reflects the commitment of SETDA leadership, staff, members and partners to a shared approach to interacting as a community of professionals.

SETDA is committed to:

- **Serving every U.S. state and territorial education agency**

  Meaningful state engagement makes SETDA stronger and is necessary to fulfill our mission and affect the changes we seek in education.

- **Maintaining a future-focused, holistic view on how to leverage technology for learning**

  As leaders, we must be intentional about the future of education and clear-eyed in our assessment of what needs to evolve if we are to be successful.

- **Fostering collaboration among our members, strategic partners and other education leaders and policymakers**

  A shared understanding of complex issues is necessary to making real and lasting change.

- **Taking action on the important issues facing public education**

  SETDA exists to make a difference; we are oriented to solving important problems and being a recognized, positive force for change.

- **Ensuring equity of access to all facets of digital learning**

  This includes devices, broadband, content, and instructional practices that provide the opportunities for all students to use technology for personalized learning. All students should have opportunities to master skills needed for society and the workplace in this digital age.

OUR WORK

The SETDA Board of Directors has established six priorities for the association's focus and work through 2020. These priorities include externally facing goals that speak to our engagement with audiences that influence policies and practices of concern to us, internal goals that speak to core work with our members and strategic partners, and operational goals that speak to the management of the association.

SETDA PRIORITIES: 2017-2020

1) **ADVOCACY:** Advocate for education and technology policies and practices designed to effectively leverage technology for learning.

2) **STATE ACTION:** Inspire and assist states to act collaboratively to advance education through technology policy and practice.

3) **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS:** Establish and engage in strategic partnerships to advance education through technology policy and practice.

4) **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING:** Provide relevant, high-quality professional learning opportunities for members.

5) **COMMUNICATIONS:** Ensure effective communication between and among SETDA, our members, strategic partners, and other key audiences.

6) **OPERATIONS:** Provide effective organizational governance, planning and management to fulfill our mission.

ADVOCACY

Advocacy – the act of guiding policy and practice decisions and resource allocation – has been integral and remains central to the work of SETDA. We focus primarily on federal education and technology policy and budget issues, but also on state issues, especially the interrelationship of policy at the two levels. As an organization that bridges policy and practice, we are mindful that success for our advocacy work is determined ultimately only by its impact on teaching and learning.

SETDA employs the full range of advocacy tools – media outreach, public speaking, conducting and/or commissioning research and writing white papers, use of social media, direct dialogue with policymakers and other leaders – including empowering members and partners to be good advocates at the federal, state and local levels. SETDA also lobbies within the legal limits established by the IRS for 501(c)3 non-profit organizations.

ADVOCACY GOAL:

Advocate for education and technology policies and practices designed to effectively and equitably leverage technology for teaching and learning.

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES:

● **Develop and advance a national advocacy agenda on behalf of our members.**

The agenda – developed with member input and periodically updated to reflect changing circumstances – will provide a framework for clarifying the policies and positions with which SETDA is concerned. It will serve as the foundation for advocacy activities conducted and coordinated by staff.

● **Empower members and strategic partners as agents for positive change through the use of SETDA's advocacy agenda.**

Grassroots advocacy is critical to being effective. As such, SETDA will train and support our members and strategic partners to increase their capacity to lead and advocate.

● **Track, curate, and communicate information on relevant, evolving education-related issues.**

Given that educational technology is a constantly evolving field, it is critical that SETDA conduct the research necessary to remain a trusted and honest broker of information on topics and issues of importance to the membership.

● **Provide subject matter expertise to other associations and organizations, policymakers, and the media.**

SETDA will proactively communicate to and dialogue with a broad cross-section of stakeholders who influence policy and practice issues of importance to the membership.

STATE ACTION

While each state is unique, common problems of policy and practice related to the use of technology in education emerge. SETDA members have a long and remarkable history of sharing best practices and collaborating across state lines to address both internal state issues and national needs.

The SETDA Board of Directors envisions our organization as a collective voice informing state and national policy makers. This national leadership role involves establishing a shared understanding for how the field is evolving and together we set a vision for maximizing opportunities for digital learning.

STATE ACTION GOAL:
Inspire and assist states to act collaboratively to advance equitable education through technology policy and practice.

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES:

- **Align SETDA initiatives and projects with member priorities and national needs.**
  In developing our state action agenda, we will need to strike a balance between national needs and the individual priorities of states while staying sufficiently nimble to address new developments as they arise.

- **Assist states to improve teaching and learning by collectively addressing issues through relevant policies and practices.**
  Issues currently include but are not limited to: instructional quality and educator effectiveness; equitable opportunities for students to use technology to develop the skills valued in the workplace and society; student safety and privacy; effective use of data; interoperability of systems; and access to quality instructional resources, devices, and robust broadband connectivity.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

SETDA highly values its strong private sector partnerships with those who share our passion and our aims, and nurtures its relationships with leading educational technology companies, associations, foundations and other private organizations. We know that working together enables us to accomplish more than working alone and ultimately helps us to better meet the needs and wants of the education communities we serve.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS GOAL:

Establish and engage in strategic partnerships to advance equitable education through technology policy and practice.

Whether it is by working closely with our partners to shape the products and services coming to the K-12 market or with other associations and nonprofits who share mutual goals for school improvement, SETDA members and staff have been instrumental in brokering meaningful partnerships with a range of companies, organizations, and foundations.

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES:

- **Secure strategic partnerships with organizations that align with SETDA's core initiatives and advocacy agenda.**

  SETDA is committed to working in coalition with other organizations that share our advocacy and state action goals and are instrumental to helping us to accomplish them.

- **Encourage educational technology product development and grow the pipeline for creating solutions to educational needs through relationships with established and emerging companies.**

  By taking responsibility for engaging with established and emerging education and technology companies and investors, state educational technology leaders play a valuable role in ensuring that future educational technology products and services are of high-quality and align with state education goals and needs.

- **Operate under a code of conduct on member-strategic partner engagement.**

  Public-private partnerships are vital to advancing education. Under this activity, SETDA will codify and institutionalize our expectations for behavior in those partnerships.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

SETDA is committed to strengthening the leadership capacity of our members through a variety of professional learning opportunities that address key topics relevant to the work of our state agencies. The specific job duties of our members vary as do their professional learning needs. As such, SETDA aims to provide a range of unique opportunities that members value as being of high quality and relevant to their needs over time.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING GOAL:
Provide a variety of relevant, high-quality professional learning opportunities for members to help empower them to be effective leaders and agents of change in their states.

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES:

- **Offer a variety of face-to-face, blended, and online professional learning opportunities for members.**

  SETDA will engage members in a variety of professional learning opportunities using and addressing emerging technologies. We are committed to refining our offerings over time to maximize member engagement and satisfaction.

- **Foster informal networking and relationship building among members, other state colleagues, strategic partners, and others.**

  Relationship building serves to increase the level of trust necessary for real and lasting collaboration. Through this activity, SETDA remains committed to being intentional in the fostering of informal relationships through structured and unstructured learning opportunities.

- **Convene state leaders and national experts to develop resources that provide guidance, exemplary practices and solutions to support members in their work.**

  The most powerful learning arises from collaborative problem solving, informal sharing and relationship building. SETDA provides one of the few professional learning networks for state leaders and at the same time provides SETDA-developed national resources that members can disseminate to their constituents.

COMMUNICATIONS

The primacy of our advocacy goals and intent to inspire state action, coupled with a commitment to engaging meaningfully with every state and territory, is challenging in the ever-changing landscape of digital learning. It is imperative that SETDA develop a strategy for communications and marketing that models current best practices, utilizes digital tools and resources, and is multifaceted in approach. This is an ambitious task that requires commitment and capacity to execute.

COMMUNICATIONS GOAL:
Ensure effective communication between and among SETDA, our members, strategic partners, and other key stakeholders.

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES:

● **Cultivate and strengthen the SETDA brand.**

Building on 15 years of leadership in education technology, SETDA will continue to participate and contribute to the dialogue and evolution of digital learning in order to maintain high visibility of the SETDA brand.

● **Refine and implement new and established marketing and communications plans to effectively communicate our work and views.**

If we are to advance our advocacy and state action goals and remain meaningfully engaged with state and national leaders over time, SETDA requires a strategically implemented marketing and communications plan which includes media outreach.

● **Cultivate an online, mobile, and social media presence that fosters dialogue among members, strategic partners and other key audiences.**

The SETDA website and social media (and mobile) presence should reflect our advocacy and state action goals, support member professional learning, and be a hub for inter-state dialogue and public-private partnerships.

OPERATIONS

An operations goal is an entirely internal goal, but activities to be carried out as part of this goal will ensure that the current generation of SETDA leadership and staff have the tools and processes in place to effectively steward the organization. SETDA must have the internal governance, planning, and management capacity to carry out our mission and fulfill our advocacy and state action goals.

OPERATIONS GOAL:
Provide effective organizational governance, planning, and management to fulfill our mission.

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES:

- **Ensure governance policies and practices are appropriate and sufficient.**

  The SETDA bylaws, board policies, and board practices should be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure they reflect the needs of the organization and best practices in non-profit management.

- **Maintain the efficient operations and management of the organization.**

  The SETDA staff – working in partnership with the SETDA Board of Directors – intends to continue to ensure the efficient operations of the association and maximize the return on investment in SETDA by the states and our strategic partners.

- **Secure sufficient and diversified financial support to meet organizational goals.**

  SETDA goals and activities must be sufficiently resourced if we are to deliver on the promises we make to our membership. In so doing, SETDA revenues must be appropriately diversified to ensure SETDA is not overly dependent on any one funder or type of funding. Moreover, a diversified funding model will ensure that SETDA is better able to maintain core activities and services during less favorable economic and policy cycles.

THE NEXT THREE YEARS AND BEYOND

While this strategic plan document was a year in the making, involving multiple opportunities for input and engagement from SETDA staff, members and strategic partners, the creation of the plan itself is not the end goal. Rather, the SETDA Board of Directors and staff will use this document as a compass to reorient our work and activities, our fundraising and spending plans, and our governance.

We will continue to seek out input and comment on how best to realize our mission and accomplish our goals and will put into place accountability metrics so as to report on our progress to the membership annually. And, at the conclusion of the next three years, we commit to evaluating this plan and our progress, to systematically reviewing internal and external changes to the association, and to engaging the membership and our partners in an inclusive process to revise and update the plan.

In releasing this plan, SETDA is declaring to the states, to our strategic partners, to policymakers and to the wider education field that our commitment is to lead, inspire, and empower the education community to leverage technology for learning and teaching.

We invite you to join us on our journey as we navigate toward an improved and empowered future for teaching and learning.

Acknowledgements

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