

LEGISLATIVE BILL 1117

Approved by the Governor April 6, 1988

Introduced by Education Committee, Withem, 14,
Chairperson; Dierks, 40; McFarland, 28;
Baack, 47; Chizek, 31; Nelson, 35;
Scofield, 49; Lamb, 43

AN ACT relating to schools; to state intent; to establish the Educational Technology Center; and to provide powers and duties for the center and the state educational technology consortium.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. The Legislature hereby finds that the utilization of appropriate technologies can provide enhanced educational services and broadened educational opportunities for Nebraska learners. The Legislature further finds that the state educational technology consortium established in section 79-4,140.08 has established a plan for the introduction of technologies in the schools. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature: (1) To utilize technology to provide effective and efficient distance learning; (2) to provide assistance and direction in the training of Nebraska teachers in uses of technology for instruction through electronic means; (3) to establish and support an electronic data network and data bases for Nebraska educators and learners; (4) to support the evaluation and dissemination of models of successful technologies which improve instruction or learning; (5) to provide support for cooperative education-technology ventures in partnership with public or private entities; and (6) to provide support for cooperative purchase or leasing of administrative or instructional software or software licenses in partnership with schools, educational service units, and other states.

Sec. 2. There is hereby created an Educational Technology Center within the State Department of Education. The mission of the center shall be to achieve the legislative goals set forth in section 1 of this act and to provide leadership and support for the introduction and integration of technology and innovation into Nebraska elementary and secondary schools in order to provide quality education and equal opportunity for Nebraska learners.

Sec. 3. The Educational Technology Center shall have, but not be limited to, the following specific duties:

- (1) To design, implement, and evaluate a distance learning project, including at least one course transmitted via interactive audio, video, or computer in order to equalize student access and educational opportunities in geographically isolated areas of the state;
- (2) To provide clearinghouse services for information concerning current technology projects as well as software and hardware development;
- (3) To serve as a demonstration site for state-of-the-art hardware appropriate to an educational setting;
- (4) To provide technical assistance to educators in working with hardware and software;
- (5) To provide in-service and pre-service training for educators, in conjunction with other public and private educational entities, in the use of computers, telecommunications, and other electronic technologies appropriate to an educational setting;
- (6) To sponsor activities which promote the use of technology in the classroom;
- (7) To serve as a liaison between business and education interests in technology communication;
- (8) To experiment with various applications or technology in education;
- (9) To assist schools in planning for and selecting appropriate technologies;
- (10) To design, implement, and evaluate pilot projects to assess the usefulness of technologies in school management, curriculum, instruction, and learning;
- (11) To seek partnerships with the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission, the University of Nebraska, the state colleges, educational service units, the Nebraska Library Commission, and other public and private entities in order to make effective use of limited resources;
- (12) To encourage sharing among school districts to deliver cost-efficient and effective distance learning;
- (13) To establish an electronic data network and access to appropriate data bases for learners and educators through purchase of necessary hardware, software, and licenses for national data bases. The center shall provide assistance to schools for training communication costs and, through work with Nebraska

educators and learners, shall develop state-level data bases; and

(14) To identify, evaluate, and disseminate information on school projects which have the potential to enhance the quality of instruction or learning.

Sec. 4. The state educational technology consortium established in section 79-4,140.08 shall establish a program to provide grants for model educational technology projects to Nebraska schools and educational service units. The state educational technology consortium shall establish guidelines for such grants, receive applications therefor, and make awards to schools or educational service units for projects which have the greatest potential to enhance the quality of instruction in Nebraska schools or to broaden the educational opportunities for Nebraska learners.

Sec. 5. The Educational Technology Center shall establish a program to provide funds to support partnerships between the Educational Technology Center and educational services units and other public or private agencies or entities for technology projects which have the greatest potential to enhance the quality of instruction in Nebraska schools or to broaden the educational opportunities for Nebraska learners.

Sec. 6. The state educational technology consortium established in section 79-4,140.08 shall establish a program to provide funds for the cooperative purchase of software or software licenses in partnership with schools, educational services units, or other states. The funds shall support the Educational Technology Center's share of costs for such purchases. The state educational technology consortium shall establish guidelines for partnership activities, receive applications therefor, and make cooperative purchases for proposals which have the greatest potential to enhance the quality of instruction in Nebraska schools or to broaden the educational opportunities for Nebraska learners.