

## ISTE's Higher Education Act Reauthorization Priorities and Recommendations

As a critical part of advancing our mission, ISTE is committed to ensuring that Institutions of Higher Education adequately prepare our nation's pre-service educators to meaningfully use technology to support student learning and achievement. Towards that end, we are providing our priorities and recommendations for the upcoming Higher Education Act (HEA) reauthorization.

### Background

ISTE is concerned that too many educators are arriving at their first jobs without the appropriate background and training in how to use and integrate technology into curricula. Project Tomorrow's 2013 Speak Up Survey revealed that 31% of educators felt that their pre-service education inadequately prepared them to effectively use a wide range of technologies within their teaching practices. A 2011 article published in ISTE's Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher education found that "study after study has shown that teachers do not [feel adequately prepared](#) to integrate technology into their classroom instruction for student-centered learning." Furthermore, "participants in this study perceived a disconnect between their technology training and the rest of their teacher preparation program. Over and over again, they remarked that the program had made a big push for them to incorporate technology into their classroom presentations, lesson plans, and internship experiences, but paradoxically they perceived a lack of emphasis on technology training outside the one required technology course." Lastly, the study offered support for the theory that "teachers in training need authentic learning experiences throughout their teacher education program and direct experiences of the connections between theory and practice." For all of these reasons, ISTE recommends that higher education institutions incorporate technology training throughout all aspects of pre-service programs and that Congress include within its HEA reauthorization a recognition that technology is a critical component of pre-service training programs.

ISTE fully supports and endorses the 4 principles for the use of educational technology in teacher preparation that arise from the most recent National Educational Technology Plan (NETP). In addition, our organization supports the recommendations made in the [Higher Education Supplement](#) to the National Education Technology Plan, which recognizes that "the availability of technology for teaching online or in person presents an opportunity to improve teaching practice and not merely broaden the reach of existing courses." Finally, we believe that ISTE's own Standards for Educators would prove helpful guides for any HEA reauthorization.

### Recommendations: Principles and Standards

ISTE's central recommendation for the reauthorization of HEA is that it incorporate the NETP principles in any parts of the law pertaining to in-service training for educators. These principles are:

1. Focus on the active use of technology to enable learning and teaching through creation, production, and problem solving.
2. Build sustainable, program-wide systems of professional learning for higher education instructors to strengthen and continually refresh their capacity to use technological tools to enable transformative learning and teaching.
3. Ensure pre-service teachers' experiences with educational technology are program-deep and program-wide rather than one-off courses separate from their methods courses.
4. Align efforts with research-based standards, frameworks, and credentials recognized across the field.

ISTE recommends further that Congress consider infusing within a reauthorized HEA ISTE's own [Standards for Educators](#) using technology in the classroom. The top-line concepts for the ISTE Standards for Educators are as follows:

1. **Learner:** Educators continually improve their practice by learning from and with others and exploring proven and promising practices that leverage technology to improve student learning.
2. **Leader:** Educators seek out opportunities for leadership to support student empowerment and success and to improve teaching and learning.
3. **Citizen:** Educators inspire students to positively contribute to and responsibly participate in the digital world.
4. **Collaborator:** Educators dedicate time to collaborate with both colleagues and students to improve practice, discover and share resources and ideas, and solve problems.
5. **Designer:** Educators design authentic, learner-driven activities and environments that recognize and accommodate learner variability.
6. **Facilitator:** Educators facilitate learning with technology to support student achievement of the ISTE Standards for Students.
7. **Analyst:** Educators understand and use data to drive their instruction and support students in achieving their learning goals.

In addition, ISTE also has the [Standards for Administrators](#), which help guide administrators in supporting digital age learning, creating technology-rich learning environments and leading the transformation of the educational landscape.

Specifically, we recommend that HEA reauthorization legislation infuse the ISTE standards into subsections of the law that pertain to preparing teacher candidates, such as the Enhancing Teacher Education Program under Title II, subpart B. This subpart authorizes several competitive grants for teacher training programs that meet specific needs, such as preparing graduate teacher candidates to use technology-rich teaching methods.