

Electronic Education Report



Business Intelligence on Opportunities in the Educational Software Industry

Vol. 15, Number 20 | Oct. 20, 2008

NAEP Will Include Technology Literacy in 2012

Technology literacy will become part of the nation's report card when a tech assessment is added to the National Assessment of Educational Progress in 2012. This month, the education research and development organization WestEd (San Francisco) was awarded a \$1.86 million contract to develop that assessment.

In undertaking an 18-month project to determine how to define and measure students' technology knowledge and skills, WestEd will draw on the expertise of the Council of Chief State School Officers, the International Society for Technology in Education, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and the State Educational Technology Directors Association. Two committees of technology experts, engineers, teachers, policymakers and business representatives will be convened. Prior to approval of the framework in 2009, reviews and hearings will be held.

Learning.com CEO Bill Kelly told EER that the assessment should focus on cognitive and strategic abilities, as opposed to certifying students' use of current technologies. Learning.com markets [TechLiteracy Assessment](#) which measures and reports technology literacy for elementary and middle school students.

Students experience a wide range of technology in their schools and homes, Kelly said. Questions to be answered include whether students understand how to deploy technology for problem solving, whether they know how to select the right tool for the job they are doing, and whether they can differentiate good information from bad.

There are some good state models, such as the program in Arizona, that WestEd will be able to draw on as it works on technology literacy, Kelly said. Learning.com has several years of data from its work in the field that it would like to share, he added.

Kelly said there is a mistaken assumption that students are technology literate and only teachers need training. Students come to school with a willingness to engage technology and experience in game-playing and messaging, but need formalized instruction on strategies for learning with technology, he said.

NAEP adding technology literacy raises visibility of the idea that technology literacy is a worthy goal and a critical issue for 21st century learning, according to Kelly. He sees increasing interest in integrating technology learning into the core curriculum.

As an example, he cited the Florida 2009 K-5 computer education adoption, which stipulates that submissions must integrate the digital content and instruction of at least one core subject area with the delivery of education technology content.

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