

Selected online resources

Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace: Taking the Lead on e-Learning Policy

October 2001. National Association of State Boards of Education. <http://www.nasbe.org/e-Learning.html>.

Produced by a study group convened by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), this report is designed to give education policy makers sufficient context to take the lead in developing sound e-learning policies. According to the report, opportunities for state education policy makers to have a positive influence on the growth and development of e-learning exist in three major areas: restructuring the public education system, ensuring

equity, and delivering high-quality instruction. The discussion incorporates guidelines, examples, and illustrations from research and practice.

Considerations for Planning a State Virtual School: Providing Web-based Courses for K-12 Students

William Thomas. March 2002. Southern Regional Education Board. <http://www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/pubs/PDF/StateVirtualSchool.asp>.

At the core of this brief document is a concise, six-step process states can use to guide planning and implementation of Web-based courses for K-12 state virtual school programs. Incorpor-

ated in the discussion are examples and data on virtual school activities within the 16 member states of the Southern Regional Education Board.

Technology Counts 2002: E-Defining Education

May 9, 2002. *Education Week*. <http://www.edweek.org/sreports/tc02>.

Education Week's annual 50-state report on education technology examines the benefits and shortcomings of electronic learning, as seen by state technology coordinators, virtual high school students, teachers, and higher education faculty. Charts and tables summarize state e-learning initiatives, student evaluation data, and patterns of technology access and use in the states. Topics include virtual teaching, professional development, Web-based course content, online testing, and growth of cyberschools.

New book on virtual schools

Virtual Realities: A School Leader's Guide to Online Education—the latest education technology guide from the National School Boards Association (NSBA)—gives school board members, superintendents and other district administrators, technology coordinators, staff developers, building administrators, teachers, higher education faculty, and researchers practical information about planning and operating online, or virtual, schools.

The book features profiles of virtual school programs operated by districts in NSBA's Technology Leadership Network; discusses and illustrates promising practices and successful models and approaches; provides planning and implementation

resources; presents costs and benefits of launching virtual schools; and offers preventive strategies that help districts anticipate and avoid common pitfalls. Find out how districts are handling academic credit, equity, attendance requirements, copyright and other legal issues, staff development, funding, accountability and evaluation, curriculum design, and standards alignment. (2002, ISBN 0-88364-257-3.)

To order, contact the NSBA Distribution Center, (800) 706-6722, or order online at <http://www.nsba.org/publications.htm>.

Order No. 03-152. Price: \$35, \$28 for Technology Leadership Network members and NSBA National Affiliates.

Virtual Schools Across America: Trends in K-12 Online Education, 2002

2002. Peak Group. <http://www.peak-group.net/educationoutlook/virtualschools.html>.

Although this comprehensive report is geared to the K-12 education industry, administrators and policy makers looking for facts about the range of structures and activities in the world of virtual schools will also find it useful. Profiles of 40 surveyed virtual schools are included, along with analysis and projections based on the survey data. Statistics are available on student enrollment, teachers, budgets, management and delivery platforms, content and course providers, and strategic partnerships.

Virtual Schools: Trends and Issues. A Study of Virtual Schools in the United States

Tom Clark. October 2001. WestEd, Distance Learning Resource Network.

http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/virtuelschools.pdf.

This study examines and analyzes virtual school activities and trends as revealed, in part, by a 2001 online survey of 33 virtual schools conducted by WestEd, one of 10 Regional Educational Laboratories supported by the U. S. Department of Education. Data are provided on general characteristics, such as enrollment, funding, technology-based delivery systems, and curriculum. The report includes brief descriptions of statewide virtual schools in 14 states and profiles of various categories of virtual schools (state-level, college-based, consortium- and region-based, local education agency-based, charter, and private). The development and growth of virtual schools are influenced by several context factors, which are discussed briefly. Recommendations and a list of virtual schools, organized by category, conclude the report.

White Paper on Cyber Schools

October 2001. Pennsylvania School Boards Association, Office of Governmental and Member Relations.

<http://www.psba.org/CyberSchs/CyberHome.htm>.

Since Pennsylvania's Charter School Law was enacted in 1997, charter school status has been granted to some Pennsylvania cyber schools, producing significant financial impact on the budgets of many districts, a number of legal challenges to the legality of cyber charter schools, and widespread concern about the adequacy of the existing accountability framework to deal with cyber charter schools. This report reviews the background to the issues raised by cyber charters, outlines the state of related legal and legislative ac-

tivity, and offers guidelines for crafting effective policy. Included in the report are findings from a survey, conducted by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, of 421 of the state's 501 dis-

tricts. The survey examines the impact of cyber schools on the districts.—
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virtual schools