

VITALNews

Virginia Initiative for Technology and Administrative Leadership



Volume 3, No. 4

www.virginiaedleaders.org

December 2004

EdWeek Tool Provides Surprising Data

I was exploring [an interactive tool from Education Week](#) that allows users to create customized tables related to education topics such as finance, standards, and student achievement. What it revealed about technology use surprised me.

While the percentage of teachers who use the computer for planning and/or teaching grew from 2000 to 2002, the average plummeted in 2003 in every state. In Virginia, the percentage of in 2002 was 96%. In 2003, the average dropped to 65%. Nationwide, the average went from 83% to 58%.

It is interesting to speculate about the cause. Maybe it's just a statistical anomaly. Or is something else going on? Is it due to the pressures of meeting adequate yearly progress

that are leading teachers back to more traditional, comfortable practices? Or perhaps it is because funding for technology has decreased by nearly 25% nationwide since 2002. There is some positive news: The percentage of teachers using the Internet for instruction has grown steadily from 63% in 2000 to 74% in 2003 so teachers are tapping the resources of the World Wide Web.

I am a little disturbed by these numbers. While I don't think technology is always the answer, I think it should at least be part of the decision making process. We need to offer teachers the time and support they need to effectively integrate technology in their classrooms. Sometimes this is as simple as helping them to locate resources. I recently published an updated list of [my top 20 websites for educators](#) that points teachers towards good quality sites. Be sure to share it with your teachers!

*Happy Holidays,
Karen*

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Editor:
Karen Work Richardson
Regional Director
karen@ivyrun.com

Nine Virginia Educators Honored for Technology Leadership

The Virginia Department of Education honored nine outstanding educators on Dec. 2 with the Education Technology Leadership Award for their advocacy and use of educational technology in the commonwealth's public schools. The awards were presented during the department's December 1-3 Educational Technology Leadership Conference in Roanoke.

"The Education Technology Leadership Award recognizes individuals who demonstrate a shared vision with the school division for the effective use of technology to support teaching, learning, and school administration and management," said Assistant Superintendent for Technology Lan Neugent.

The Education Technology Leadership Award acknowledges outstanding school division leadership in education technology planning and implementation. Division superintendents in each of

the department's eight study regions select individuals for the award. Recipients are chosen because of their success in helping school divisions improve teaching and learning through the use of instructional media and technology. The 2004 winners are:

- Harvey Almarode, Augusta County public schools, Region Five
- Dale Baird, Brunswick County public schools, Region Eight
- Kathleen Beane, Colonial Beach City public schools, Region Three
- Janet Copenhaver, Henry County public schools, Region Six
- Larry Crum and Brian Callahan, WHRO's Public Telecommunications Center for Hampton Roads, Region Two
- Nolan Kilgore, Wise County public schools, Region Seven
- Joseph "Pete" O'Brien, Hanover County public schools, Region One
- Timothy Taylor, Shenandoah County public schools, Region Four

The Virginia Educational Technology Advisory Committee (VETAC), which advises the Virginia Board of

Education on educational technology, also presented an award during the Roanoke conference. The 2004 VETAC Leadership Award was also presented to Nolan Kilgore of Wise County public schools for his long time commitment and dedication to educational technology.

Free Books Available

The Literacy Empowerment Foundation provides free new or gently used books to schools. Users do pay shipping and administrative costs. Books are suitable for grades K-3 and can be ordered in sets of 100. To learn more, visit [the website](#).

Kidz Online Offers Video Training

Sponsored by Nortel Network, Kids Online is a nonprofit educational organization that provides hundreds of free streaming videos and lesson plans; free registration at the site allows users the ability to download these resources for use on their local computer systems and networks. In addition, the site includes lesson plans and users can save favorite videos and resources to their own webspace. Visit [the website](#) to learn more.

Leadership Academy To Be Held In Arizona

Superintendents, administrators, and school leaders are invited to participate in a professional development opportunity in Mesa, Arizona, March 24-25, 2005.

The Southwest Leadership Academy: Systemic School Improvement Through Technology Integration is a collaboration of the WestEd Regional Technology in Education Consortium serving Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah; and the International Society for Technology in Education, home of the National Educational Technology Standards and the National Educational Computing Conference, the world's premier Ed Tech event.

Academy participants will learn to

- * prioritize and plan for systemic school improvement and engage your team in deep technology integration across the curriculum;

- * develop a shared vision for education technology among school personnel, parents, and the community;

- * use data-driven decision-making and technology-rich curriculum

to significantly increase student engagement and help you meet local and national mandates; and

- * increase your personal productivity and administrative practice through emerging tools such as handhelds and blogs.

The Academy is designed for administrators, but participants are encouraged to come with technology coordinators or teacher leaders to extend the value and reach of this professional development opportunity.

Full details and registration now available at www.iste.org. For more information, call 1-541-434-8919 or write profdev@iste.org.

The Southwest Leadership Academy will be held at the Phoenix Marriot Mesa, close to spring training baseball, golf, and desert touring. The academy is sponsored by WestEd Regional Technology in Education Consortium and the International Society for Technology in Education.



Karen's InBox

A monthly feature in which we get a peek into Karen's InBox for items of interest to the VITAL community.

Online Discussions

The Family Center for Technology and Disability has a variety of online resources including an online conference center. The conferences feature experts who are eager to share their thoughts and experiences with you, and to respond to your questions and comments.

This month, the conversation is about the SETT framework, developed by educator Dr. Joy Zabala, which offers a methodology for assessment, implementation, and evaluation of AT. It gives educators and families more confidence as they negotiate the often confusing AT universe.

For the next month, Dr. Zabala will answer your questions about the SETT Framework and will share with you the experience that she and others have had with it. You can [join the online discussion](#) and ask your own questions.

VA Tech Standards

The Standards of Learning for Computer/Technology are due for revision in 2005. The Department of Education will be pulling together representatives from all eight regional study groups. School personnel and other interested individuals will be provided an opportunity to review and to respond to the existing K-12 computer technology standards and to make recommendations for the revised standards. The standards may be viewed on the Department of Education Web site at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Technology/OET/stds.shtml>. Comments on the existing standards may be submitted electronically at 95CTSOL@doe.virginia.gov or by surface mail to Charlie Makela, Office of Educational Technology, Department of Education, P. O. Box 2120, Richmond, VA 23218-2120.

VSTE in Norfolk

VSTE's 2005 Annual State Technology Conference! This year's conference will be held in Norfolk at the Waterside Marriott from March 13-15, 2005. This conference represents an excellent professional development experience for

Virginia teachers. For more information, [visit the conference website](#).

Quicktakes

Links to websites of interest to educators

This month, our Quicktakes have a distinct holiday feel!

[Make Your Own Snowflake](#)

Just what it says: use the online scissors and paper to create perfect six-sided snowflakes.

[Northpole](#)

From read aloud stories to disco dancing Santa, this website will really help you get in the holiday spirit.

[Holidays on the Net](#)

The first place to stop when you're looking for holiday information. Includes a calendar of major holidays as well as daily holidays and descriptions.

[Noel, Noel, Noel](#)

This website offers sheet music for popular holiday music selections. Includes big note editions as well as simple piano music

arrangements. Check out the sections on traditions and recipes, too.

[December Holidays Around the World](#)

Many cultures and ethnic groups celebrate holidays in December. Education World includes links and resources related to many of them. Start here if you want to take a multi-cultural approach to the holidays.

[The Wonders of Winter](#)

Created by a group of second graders, this website does winter. It includes creative writing, a jigsaw puzzle, experiments, artwork and even a winter spreadsheet.

[Winter Worksheets](#)

A quick and easy place for teachers to find winter-related classroom resources including coloring and writing sheets, bookmarks, songs and vocabulary lists.

