"Information and Communications Technologies can provide a powerful platform to help transform and strengthen education to meet the workforce needs of the 21st century.

U.S. Department of Education Secretary Margaret Spellings

The Office of Educational Technology developed School 2.0 to assist School Districts in thinking comprehensively about using technology

http://www.school2-o.org/

Technology and No Child Left Behind

Online learning is becoming an important facet of K12 education in meeting the requirements for highly qualified teachers in every classroom, in providing professional development for teachers and school choice and in tutoring options to students and parents.

o   There were an estimated 328,000 K12 students enrolled in distance education courses during the 2001-02 school year.

o   Thirty-six percent of school districts and 9% of all schools have students enrolled in distance education courses.

o   A greater proportion of districts located in rural areas (46%) had students enrolled in distance education courses than in suburban (28%) or urban areas (23%).

o   Forty-two percent of districts that have students enrolled in distance education courses are high poverty districts.

o   In 2005-06, 22 States had established virtual schools and 16 States had established at least one cyber charter school.

USED Initiatives

o   The Department provided a $5 million grant to Catapult Learning, LLC to develop a pilot program to deliver online supplemental education services to students in rural and remote areas.

o   The Department supports online professional development for teachers, through the Ready-to-Teach grant, which funds the PBS Teacherline, and the Teacher-to-Teacher program.

o   The Office of Educational Technology is exploring ways to evaluate and document promising practices in online learning.

Comprehensive data systems are essential for States to track individual student achievement and prescribe improvement strategies to schools.

o   It is imperative that States, districts and schools use data to drive instruction, professional development, fiscal decisions, to maximize student achievement, ensuring all students reach proficiency in reading and math by 2014.

USED Initiatives

o   The Institute for Education Sciences administers the State Grant for Longitudinal Data Systems, which provides funding for States to develop comprehensive technologies to track individual student achievement.

o   The Office of Educational Technology produced *Helping Practitioners Meet the Goals of No Child Left Behind*, a guide for educators considering using technologies to meet various requirements of the law.

Ensuring Academic Competitiveness

Providing access to rigorous coursework in high schools with limited resources helps to improve the competitiveness of American students – distance learning is helping to reach that goal.

o   Eighty percent of districts offering online courses said that offering courses not available at their schools is one of the most important reasons for having distance education.

o   The proportion of all distance education enrollments that are in Advanced Placement (AP) or college-level distance education courses is greater in small districts (24%) compared to medium (10%) or large districts (7%).

o Half of the districts offering online courses cited distance learning as very important in making AP or college-level courses available to all students.

o Fourteen percent of enrollments in distance education were AP or college-level courses.

o Nearly 70% of distance courses are in high school classrooms.

USED Initiatives

o In 2005, the Secretary published a national long-range technology plan, based on an assessment of the continuing and future needs of the nation's schools in effectively using technology to provide all students the opportunity to meet challenging State academic standards. The plan highlights seven action steps that States, districts and schools can take to evaluate their use of technology to improve student achievement. To access the plan, please visit **http://www.nationaledtechplan.org/**

Technology in Higher Education

Online learning continues to be a valuable instructional tool in higher education.

o In 2000-01, 56% of all 2-year and 4-year Title IV-eligible, degree-granting institutions offered distance education courses for any level or audience.

o An estimated 127,400 online courses were offered in 2000-01.

o There were an estimated 3,077,000 enrollments in all distance education courses offered by 2-year and 4-year institutions.

Technology Statistics

Percentage of public schools with Internet access:
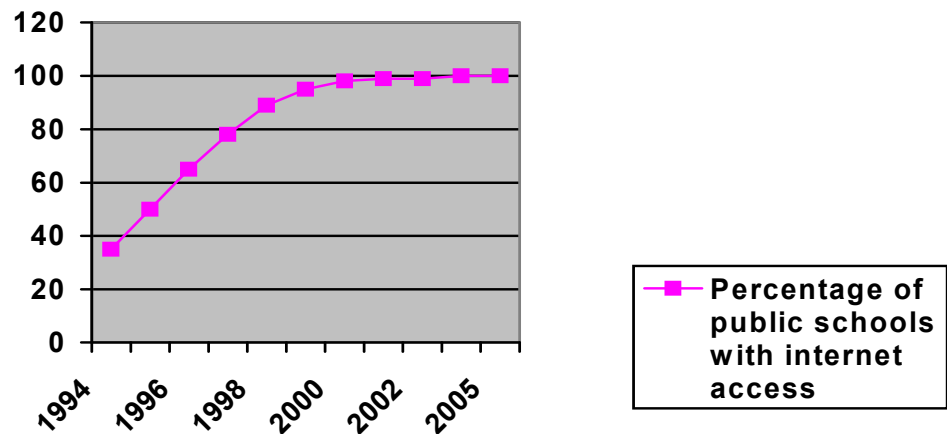
*No data were collected in 2004. Data from 2003 and 2005 are rounded to 100 percent.
Source: Internet Access in U.S. Public Schools and Classrooms: 1994-2005. National Center for Education Statistics.

o In 2003, 10 percent of all public schools provided a handheld computer to students or teachers.

o The gender divide in computer use has been essentially eliminated, as there is no overall difference between boys and girls in overall use of computers. However, girls are slightly more likely than boys to use home computers for e-mail, word processing and completing school assignments than playing games.

Sources: *Distance Education Courses for Public Elementary and Secondary School Students: 2002-03*

Dual Credit and Exam-Based Courses in U.S. Public High Schools: 2002-03

Internet Access in U.S. Public Schools and Classrooms: 1993-2005