

## ***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

### **US Education System Must Step-Up High-Speed Broadband Efforts to Maximize the Potential of Technology for Student Achievement and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Global Economy**

*States, Districts, and Schools in Danger of Missing Assessment, Data, and Instructional Opportunities Due to Lack of Broadband Access*

(Arlington, VA) SETDA, representing all 50 states and DC, today released the “*High-Speed Broadband Access for All Kids: Breaking through the Barriers*” report to address the growing concern and critical need for high-speed Internet access among our districts and schools. Although national statistics boast almost 98% connectivity in US schools, the substance and bandwidth of the connection is often problematic and insufficient. High-speed broadband access and connectivity are vital for economic growth, global competitiveness, education, innovation, and creativity. Ensuring high-speed broadband access for all students has become a critical national issue especially when considering the necessity for the use of technology in assessment, accountability, engagement, and preparing our students for work and life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

SETDA worked with stakeholders from all 50 states, education, and industry in developing the recommendations. This report identifies the key issues facing the educational community relating to robust connectivity and recommends how states and districts can successfully implement high-speed broadband in their schools. The report also provides stakeholders and policymakers with strategies and models for bringing this critical issue to the national and state policy level. You can view the full report at <http://www.setda.org/web/guest/class2020actionplan>.

#### **Key recommendations include:**

In a technology-rich learning environment for the next 2-3 years, SETDA recommends:

- An external Internet connection to the Internet Service Provider of 10 Mbps per 1,000 students/staff
- Internal wide area network connections from the district to each school between schools of at least 100 Mbps per 1,000 students/staff

In a technology-rich learning environment for the next 5-7 years, SETDA recommends:

- An external Internet connection to the Internet Service Provider of 100 Mbps per 1,000 students/staff
- Internal wide area network connections from the district to each school between schools of at least 1 Gbps per 1,000 students/staff

“Planning and implementing for this growth is critical for our education system,” stated Mary Ann Wolf, PhD, SETDA’s Executive Director. “We now have data that shows how technology makes a significant impact on student achievement in all subject areas and grades – not to mention providing unprecedented opportunities for on-going and sustainable professional development that improves teacher practice within the classroom. High speed broadband is essential to making change happen.”

#### **Key issues include:**

- Teachers and students need high-speed broadband access in their schools to take advantage of a wide range of new and rich educational tools and resources available for learning anytime, anywhere
- Teachers need high-speed broadband access for professional development, and engaging in professional learning communities as well as accessing new educational resources such as curriculum cadres and education portals

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

- Administrators need high-speed broadband access to conduct online assessments and to access data for effective decision making
- Students need high-speed broadband access to overcome the digital divide in rural and low socio-economic areas

**About SETDA**

The State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA) is the principal association for state directors of technology and their staff members providing professional development and leadership around the effective use of technology in education to enhance competitiveness in the global workforce.

***CONTACT***

Mary Ann Wolf, Ph.D  
SETDA, Executive Director  
mwolf@setda.org  
410-647-6965