TechKnowNews

Governor Would Give Every Student a Laptop

Gov. Angus King of Maine, USA announced a plan today to give every seventh grader in the state a laptop with Internet service beginning the Fall of 2002. The $65 million plan was immediately met with skepticism from members of the Legislature. The Governor suggests that $50 million from the state's unallocated budget surplus be put in a permanent endowment, along with $15 million in matching funds from federal and private sources, to pay for the computers. According to Senator Mark W. Lawrence, "essentially taking a chunk of money, setting up a foundation -- that's very different and I think that's going to be debated in the Legislature."

http://www.nytimes.com/library/national/030300maine-compute-edu.html
Source: The Benton Foundation

A Virtual Revolution In Teaching

Educators are struggling to find their place in an increasingly online world. Internet-based education programs, which are attracting growing numbers of supporters, offer convenience and relieve overcrowding in classrooms. Hoping to attract everyone from teenagers getting an early start on their college careers to older workers balancing education with jobs and families, many schools are beginning to offer online courses. One in three U.S. colleges now offer an accredited degree online, more than twice the rate last year. Yet the flurry of activity in online education has raised many issues, such as whether prestigious universities will maintain their elite reputations--and offer the same challenging coursework--as they join the hordes of schools mass-marketing their courses online. Similarly, critics are debating whether an online degree will have the same value as its traditional counterpart. Furthermore, many public universities are partnering with Internet startups to market their courses, raising a debate over the ethical implications of mixing education with business. Universities say that they are still trying to find the right system for offering online education, including prices and enrollment limits. Source: Educause.

First 'Digital Divide' Bill Passes Senate

The US Senate overwhelmingly passed a bill that would award tax credits to companies that donate their used computers to schools The New Millennium Classrooms Act, passed with a 96-2 vote, is seen as a way to help bridge the digital divide in computer usage among Americans. The lead sponsor of the legislation, Sen. Spencer Abraham (R-Mich.), says companies have been telling Congress that tax incentives would allow them to provide schools with more computers. The bill will give companies a 50 percent "fair-market value" tax credit for computers donated to schools located in "empowerment zones," poorer areas in need of assistance. The bill will give a 30 percent tax credit for computers donated outside of empowerment zones. A report released last summer by the Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration found that the disparity in computer ownership between blacks and whites has increased by 6 percent since 1997.

http://www.newsbytes.com/pubNews/00/144921.html

Presentation Of World View Information System (WVIS) For Basic Education Ngos In Africa And South Asia.

A user-friendly information system for local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in basic education in Africa and South Asia has been developed by World View Literacy Information Research (WVLIR). WVLIR's broad objectives are to reinforce evaluations and research among NGOs. Its founding members come from the market and opinion research industry. During the Annual Conference of European Society for Opinion and Market Research (ESOMAR) at Davos in September 1994, WVLIR's constituting meeting focused on providing information systems to basic education NGOs to initially share existing research. WVLIR is poised to connect all

individuals and organizations, involved in spreading literacy in the form of basic education and/or primary education.

World View Information System (WVIS) is a process based around Databases which integrates details about Organizations, Materials, Projects & Individuals on most aspects about literacy and basic education. World View announces WVIS Edition 1 for MS Access 97. You can download it from the Internet on http://www.wvlir.com/wvis1.html or ask for its distributable CD-ROM version, available at a token price. wvbo@del2.vsnl.net.in

A Bilingual Descriptive Database Of 850 Education Projects In Africa, Now Accessible Online!

The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), in collaboration with Bellanet, has published a descriptive database of 850 African education projects on the web. The PRISME database is up-to-date, bilingual (English and French) and fully searchable by region, subject area, funding institution, and keyword.

There are 850 projects described in the PRISME database, contributed by 27 external aid organizations. PRISME is, first of all, a directory of information on projects primarily financed by bilateral or multilateral funding agencies (including development banks, foundations and other non-governmental organizations). PRISME also contains information on projects by executing agencies (e.g. UNESCO, IIEP). The contents are updated annually. http://prisme.adeanet.org

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Technology Critic Takes on Computers in Schools

Clifford Stoll, an astronomer, computer expert and technology gadfly, warns against classroom computing in his new book, *High Tech Heretic: Why Computers Don't Belong in the Classroom and Other Reflections by a Computer Contrarian*. "Here's a policy being put into place without any hearings or public debate," Stoll said. "No one is asking, 'What problem does this solve? What problem does this cause?'" Stoll believes the computer skills kids need can be

learned in a couple of weeks by high school students and that the prominent place of technology in the classroom could end up doing a lot of real harm to students: time on the computer inevitably means time taken away from real interaction with teachers and other students and means reduced time for things that children do master more easily than grown-ups, like foreign languages and musical instruments. Source: The Benton Foundation
http://www.nytimes.com/library/tech/00/04/cyber/education/05education.html

Internet Improves Kids' Attitude to School

The Internet is a positive force in children's education, according to the findings of a new survey from the US National School Boards Foundation and Children's Television Workshop. Over 40 percent of 9-17 year old school-goers say the Internet has improved their attitude to attending school. Almost half of children in households that are connected to the Internet go online primarily for schoolwork and 53 percent of adults in these households go online for the same reason. Parents say that using the Internet has not significantly affected their children's other activities. Almost all report that their kids spend the same amount of time reading, playing outdoors and spending time with their families. Source: Nua Ltd.
http://www.nsbf.org/safe-smart/br-overview.htm

Children Tutoring Seniors at Internet Skills: An Experiment Conducted at One Israeli Elementary School.

The internet which connects about 200 million people and millions of pages, voice, sound, image and video files has become a most powerful tool in the hands of those who know how to navigate it. The gap is widening between youngsters, the primary internet user population, and adults and mostly seniors, who are not skilled at using a computer or the Internet. In the new Hi-Tech world, where children speak the new language of the Internet as their mother tongue, it would be most fitting to put their mastery to good use and train them to teach this new language to Senior Citizens. An experiment was conducted in one elementary school in Israel, the Alon School in 1999, where ten Seniors were tutored by ten children aged 11-14.

For documentation of the process as well as an evaluation of the project, please write to Prof. Edna Aphek:
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