

CHAPTER 129

AN ACT establishing an Educational Technology Teacher Training Program in the Department of Education and supplementing chapter 6 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

C.18A:6-103 Short title.

1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Educational Technology Teacher Training Act."

C.18A:6-104 Findings, declarations relative to Educational Technology Teacher Training.

2. The Legislature finds and declares that:

a. In order for all of New Jersey's students to acquire the critical thinking and problem solving skills necessary to become productive citizens in the next century, they will require access to the opportunities provided by modern technology;

b. It is imperative that teachers understand the potential of technology within the classroom to support curriculum goals and that they become proficient and sophisticated users of those technologies critical to educating New Jersey's students;

c. Many of this State's teachers ended their training before technology was pervasive within teacher education programs and as a result the most frequently mentioned issue in educational technology has been the need for staff training;

d. The Education Technology Task Force, formed by the Commission on Business Efficiency in the Public Schools to assist the Legislature and Executive branch in formulating a Statewide educational technology policy, noted in its March, 1996 report, Technology and New Jersey's Schools in the 21st Century, that some school districts have exemplary technology programs and also have developed exemplary staff training programs;

e. The task force also recommended that in order to provide access to technology to teachers in the most efficient manner possible, the State should build upon this expertise by providing grants to school districts with proven histories of success in applying technology to education so that these school districts may share that knowledge with other districts through training programs specifically developed for that purpose; and

f. The New Jersey Department of Education has repeatedly stressed the importance of technology training for educational personnel and in fact in its April, 1993 report, Educational Technology in New Jersey: A Plan for Action, emphasized the critical need for strategies that will provide and support effective staff development models in this regard.

C.18A:6-105 Educational Technology Teacher Training Program.

3. The Commissioner of Education shall develop and administer an Educational Technology Teacher Training Program. The purpose of the program shall be to provide grants to local school districts which have successfully integrated technology within their own educational programs to develop and offer educational technology training programs to the teachers and staff of other school districts and to the teachers and staff of non-public schools. The grants shall be allocated to school districts on a competitive basis and the commissioner may, if he deems appropriate, award grants to other appropriate applicants which he feels have the potential to develop and offer high quality educational technology training programs to school staff, including the staff of non-public schools.

C.18A:6-106 "Educational Technology Teacher Training Fund."

4. a. There is established within the Department of Education a fund to be known as the "Educational Technology Teacher Training Fund," hereinafter referred to as the "fund." The fund shall be used to provide grants to school districts or other applicants as approved by the commissioner to develop and administer educational technology training programs for school district staff. The grants shall be provided for a three-year period after which the technology training program shall be supported on a fee-for-service basis, through private sector-school district partnership funding, or both. During the initial three-year period, the grant funding shall be supplemented on a fee-for-service basis to offset costs which may exceed the grant amount.

b. The fund shall annually be credited with money appropriated by the Legislature, any moneys received from corporate donors or other private sector support, and any federal funds which may become available for teacher technology training.

c. Grants provided from the fund shall be used for the development of accessible training sites; costs associated with educational technology training personnel; the acquisition of equipment necessary for technological training including hardware and software; subscription fees for telecommunications and data base services; and any other purpose approved by the commissioner.

C.18A:6-107 Proposals for training programs; grants; training sites.

5. a. Within 90 days of the effective date of this act, the commissioner shall forward a request for proposals for the establishment of educational technology teacher training programs to local school districts and other appropriate applicants. A local school district or other applicant which wants to participate in the program shall submit a proposal to the commissioner which outlines the district's or applicant's plan to offer educational technology training to teachers and other school staff. The proposal shall include information which outlines the manner in which the technology training program shall become self-supporting at the end of the three-year grant period through a fee-for-service arrangement, private sector support, or some other mechanism as developed by the grant recipient. The proposal shall also include any other information which the commissioner may require.

b. The commissioner shall select grant recipients based on the quality of the proposed educational technology teacher training program. In selecting grant recipients, the commissioner shall consider the leadership and experience of the grant applicant in the effective use of educational technology within the classroom; the location of the proposed training site; and the potential for the training program to operate independently of grant funds at the end of the three-

year period.

c. The commissioner shall award grants to support at least 21 teacher training sites in the amount of \$200,000 per site. The commissioner shall provide for a phase-in of training sites over the three-year period with at least seven sites established in the first year of the program, seven sites in the second year, and seven sites in the third year. In establishing a schedule for the phase-in of training sites, the commissioner shall ensure that there is an equitable distribution of sites in terms of their geographic location providing at a minimum for the establishment of one training site per county.

d. Each training site shall include:

- (1) program offerings providing basic technology skills;
- (2) program offerings related to word processing, data bases, spreadsheets, and design;
- (3) a minimum of three educational multimedia program offerings;
- (4) a minimum of two telecommunications program offerings; and
- (5) program offerings which provide instruction on implementing teaching strategies that support the integration of technology in the classroom.

C.18A:6-108 Evaluation by permission.

6. The commissioner shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of the teacher training programs being operated by grant recipients. Three years following the effective date of this act, the commissioner shall report to the Governor and the Legislature on the progress of the Educational Technology Teacher Training Program.

C.18A:6-109 Rules, regulations.

7. The State Board of Education shall adopt, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), the rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this act.

8. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved November 20, 1996.