

CTAP: Working Collaboratively to Improve Teaching and Learning with Technology

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The California Technology Assistance Project (CTAP) is a statewide educational technology leadership initiative, providing regional assistance to schools and districts in integrating technology into teaching and learning. CTAP has evolved from earlier education technology projects such as the Technology Centers and the California Technology Project in order to place control at local and regional levels.

Funded by the Education Technology Local Assistance Program, CTAP focuses on promoting the effective use of educational technology to improve teaching and learning. Through regional coordination of educational support services based on local needs, each of the 11 county

superintendents' regions in the state has developed and is implementing a plan to provide technology assistance in four key component areas:

1. Professional development and learning resources related to the integration of technology.
2. Hardware and telecommunications infrastructure.
3. Professional development and learning resources related to school management.
4. Coordination and funding.

The goal in each CTAP region is to work collaboratively to support the use of technology in the districts and schools. Each CTAP office determines specific

regional needs and provides assistance or workshops. Typical offerings include such things as:

- Online professional development resources.
- Free or discounted access to an online library of resources.
- Training of site coaches and mentors in the area of improving teaching and learning with technology.
- Regional networking for site administrators and mentors.
- Training for administrators through the California School Leadership Academy, Principals' Academies (AB75), and the Private School Principals' Academies.
- Teacher technology workshops.

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- Development and dissemination of adoption-specific strategies and activities focusing on integration of technology into existing adopted textbooks.
- Library management, information literacy, database evaluation and professional library development workshops.
- Videoconference systems for regional and statewide needs.
- Assistance to districts in obtaining approximately \$80 million in funding through technical assistance in writing plans and applications.
- Assistance to the California Department of Education in collecting necessary data related to the use of technology in schools, such as the number and age of computers available to students and the overall proficiency level of teachers statewide.

CTAP coordinates its regional efforts on a statewide basis through the CTAP Coordinating Council. Meeting four times per year, the Coordinating Council's role is to ensure that all regions are kept abreast of initiatives being developed and implemented across the state. CTAP's Grants Management Committee (GMC) collaborates with the Education Technology Office of the California Department of Education to inform districts and schools about grant and funding opportunities available to them. All state-funded initiatives are coordinated with the GMC as well as some privately funded opportunities.

Realizing that some education technology efforts are best served at the statewide level, CTAP and the California Department of Education created three Statewide Education Technology (SETS) projects. The three SETS projects are the Technology Information Center for Administrative Leadership (TICAL), the California Learning Resource Network (CLRN), and the Professional Development and Resources for Technology Support Staff (TechSETS).

CLRN provides a searchable online database of electronic learning resources that are aligned to California Content Standards. TICAL provides resources for administrators looking for research and information regarding best practices in education technology. And, TechSETS gives technology support staff an online source for information related to their special needs. Together, these three projects provide a wealth of information for California educators.

In addition to these projects, CTAP will play a major role in the continued development of California's high-speed network. This network has the goal of bringing high-speed Internet access to every classroom in the state and providing high-quality digital content such as

full-motion video directly to teachers and students.

CTAP's model of regional support for local district efforts, with statewide collaboration between regions, has proven very successful over the years. This model provides an efficient way to promote and improve the use of technology in teaching and learning and is being replicated in other projects as well. CTAP enjoys a well-deserved reputation for providing the necessary assistance to schools trying to implement technology. ■