



# Office of Performance Evaluations Idaho Legislature

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**Rakesh Mohan**  
Director

**Joint Legislative  
Oversight Committee**

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**MEMORANDUM**  
February 23, 2009

**To:** Members, Joint Legislative Oversight Committee

**From:** Rakesh Mohan 

**Subject:** Public Education Technology Initiatives  
Third Follow-up Report, 09-08F

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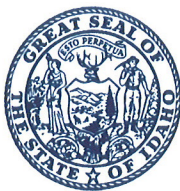
In 2005, we released an evaluation report on public education technology Initiatives. The report outlined recommendations to improve the ability of the Board of Education and the Idaho Council for Technology in Learning (ICTL) to comply with statute and fulfill their responsibilities of providing technological assessment and guidance.

Our second follow-up review in July 2007 showed little progress in implementing our recommendations. In this third follow-up review, we learn that legislation (Senate Bill 1019) has been introduced to amend and repeal existing ICTL law. The legislation, which has cleared the Senate and is in the House (3<sup>rd</sup> reading), establishes the public school technology grant program within the Department of Education. Letters from the Board of Education and the Department of Education explaining the change are attached.

In light of the proposed legislative change, I recommend that we no longer follow up on our Public Education Technology Initiatives report and consider the report closed. I do, however, believe the rationale behind our recommendations would still be very relevant to the future technology grant program. The department should use the recommendations to guide its future program efforts.

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## IDAHO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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February 20, 2009

Mr. Rakesh Mohan  
Director, Office of Performance Evaluation  
700 West State Street  
Lower Level, Suite 10  
PO Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0055

Re: Public Education Technology Initiatives

Dear Mr. Mohan:

Following is the rationale for terminating the Idaho Council for Technology in Learning (ICTL) and transferring the functions to the Department of Education. Also, the final recommendation from OPE regarding its 2005 report *Public Education Technology Initiatives*, is considered.

When the Idaho Council for Technology in Learning was created by the Legislature in 1994 it was just what this state needed. The Council jump started Idaho's use of technology in the public schools and created teacher education programs in the use of instructional technology. It helped to get schools connected to the World Wide Web and created the physical and intellectual infrastructure for future innovation.

During that time the results justified the additional administrative overhead required by the Council. However, the Council has done its job and now the promotion and enhancement of technology in Idaho's public schools has moved beyond the current Council structure. Technology programs have grown within the Department of Education and in the schools. It has become increasingly obvious that the administrative overhead that was going to the Council, now looking for items to put on their agenda, could be better spent providing direct technical assistance to the classroom.

The time has come to replace the ICTL with other methods of input for guiding technology implementation such as targeted advisory committees, improved local plans and better collaboration with higher education. When the Council was formed, implementation of technology required a special, technical assistance focus. Today technology is part and parcel of curriculum development and education delivery. Specialists in the Department of Education are well equipped and able to provide the technical assistance and policy leadership that our schools need.

In considering the final recommendation from the 2005 report *Public Education Technology Initiatives* it is my opinion that it is still relevant. . However, with the pending legislation, that recommendation

Mr. Rakesh Mohan

February 20, 2009

Page 2

would become the responsibility of the Department of Education and should be left to their determination regarding its relevancy, and implementation. The recommendation is:

*...should ensure the statewide education technology plan has the following elements:*

- a) Assessment of current goals and realignment (if necessary) with statute*
- b) Timelines for achieving goals and objectives*
- c) Standards or benchmarks for performance measures*
- d) Standards and planning guidance for adequate district staffing for technical support*
- e) Guidance on finance, budgeting and cost-effective technology acquisition*

Please let me know if you would like any additional information.

Sincerely,



Mike Rush

Executive Director

Idaho State Board of Education



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**STATE OF IDAHO**  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION  
**Mr. Tom Luna**

Phone (208) 332-6815  
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February 23, 2009

Rakesh Mohan, Director  
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Dear Rakesh:

In response to the 2005 Public Education Technology Initiative Report, I believe a follow up report would be unnecessary.

The Senate has passed Senate Bill 1019 and the House of Representatives is expected to vote on the measure soon.

The Department will be creating a different process to evaluate technology plans and how they align with current Department initiatives such as longitudinal data. I believe focusing on the Department's current initiatives, versus focusing on findings for a counsel that will no longer exist, is a better use of state resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Luna", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Luna  
Superintendent of Public Instruction



## Office of Performance Evaluations Reports, 2007–Present

Publication numbers ending with "F" are follow-up reports of previous evaluations. Publication numbers ending with three letters are federal mandate reviews—the letters indicate the legislative committee that requested the report.

<u>Pub. #</u>	<u>Report Title</u>	<u>Date Released</u>
07-01	Use of Average Daily Attendance in Public Education Funding	February 2007
07-02	Virtual School Operations	March 2007
07-03F	Higher Education Residency Requirements	July 2007
07-04F	State Substance Abuse Treatment Efforts	July 2007
07-05F	Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind	July 2007
07-06F	Public Education Technology Initiatives	July 2007
07-07	Health Insurance Coverage in Idaho: A Profile of the Uninsured and Those with Coverage	July 2007
07-08	Options for Expanding Access to Health Care for the Uninsured	July 2007
07-09F	Child Welfare Caseload Management	December 2007
07-10F	Management in the Department of Health and Welfare	December 2007
07-11F	School District Administration and Oversight	December 2007
07-12	Cataloging Public Health Expenditures in Idaho	December 2007
07-13	Estimating Private Health Expenditures in Idaho	December 2007
07-14	Trends in and Drivers of Health Expenditures in Idaho	December 2007
08-01	Governance of Information Technology and Public Safety Communications	March 2008
08-02F	State Substance Abuse Treatment Efforts	March 2008
08-03F	Virtual School Operations	March 2008
09-01	Public Education Funding in Idaho	January 2009
09-02F	Higher Education Residency Requirements	January 2009
09-03	Idaho Transportation Department Performance Audit	January 2009
09-04	Feasibility of School District Services Consolidation	February 2009
09-05F	School District Administration and Oversight	February 2009
09-06F	Use of Average Daily Attendance in Public Education Funding	February 2009
09-07F	Child Welfare Caseload Management	February 2009
09-08F	Public Education Technology Initiatives	February 2009

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