K-12 BLUEPRINT

The Next National Education Technology Plan

> "If the technology revolution only happens for families that already have money and education, then it's not really a revolution."
> — Arne Duncan, outgoing Secretary of Education

The 2016 National Education Technology Plan (NETP) is a 106-page document released by the U.S. Department of Education. It envisions what education could look like in coming years, describes how technology can play a role, and outlines steps that education leaders, entrepreneurs, teachers, researchers, policymakers and others can take.

Many of the high-level goals of this 2016 plan—such as Learning, Teaching, Assessment, and Infrastructure—are consistent with the 2010 NETP report, with "leadership" being one of the most notable changes. The 2016 NETP devotes an entire section to leadership and to *"creating a culture and conditions for innovation and change."*

The NETP recommends that leaders turn to openly licensed educational resources and focus on implementation efforts, as ed-tech tools are doomed to fail without an effective implementation plan. Poor implementation can undermine BYOD efforts by rendering such tools useless, confusing and unaligned with instructional needs.

Other noticeable additions and emphases in the 2016 National Education Technology Plan include:

Student-centered

According to the report, "learners should have the opportunity to make meaningful choices about their learning, and they need practice at doing so effectively . . . When they have access to their data, students can play a larger role in choosing their own pathways."

Privacy

This latest report—perhaps due to the scrutiny of the ed-tech industry in regard to student data—has brought privacy to the fore. The 2016 NETP explores how schools, companies and parents can raise and redress concerns.

Teacher expertise

The report offers case studies on how university teacher-prep programs in Illinois, Florida, Michigan and Rhode Island are shaking up the process. *"Effective use of technology is not an optional add-on or a skill we simply can expect teachers to pick up once they get into the classroom."*

Question BYOD

Device ownership "is distributed disproportionately to students whose families can afford the devices" and "can widen the very gaps that technology is capable of closing."

Assessing Assessments

The report digs into digital assessments, including: "graphic response" (drawing, moving, arranging or selecting regions) "hot text" (select and rearrange words within a passage) "equation response" (entering an equation) and "performance-based assessments" (a series of complex tasks). Badges are also discusses as digital micro-credentials that can track skills and competencies mastered by both students and teachers over time.