

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION; ESTABLISHING THE STATEWIDE EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM TO PROVIDE LOW-COST, STATE-OF-THE-ART COMPUTERS FOR NEW MEXICO'S CLASSROOMS; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. STATEWIDE EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM--FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.--

A. The legislature finds that:

(1) local school districts need increased access to information technologies, extensive professional development and sustained network support to use technology effectively;

(2) the technological needs of New Mexico's individual school children and classrooms are best defined by the teachers and principals who work with them on a day-to-day basis;

(3) New Mexico is fortunate to have high technology laboratories and corporations that have programs to supply low-cost, state-of-the-art central processing units for use in New Mexico classrooms; and

(4) there are large nonprofit programs in place to build and rehabilitate computers for New Mexico classrooms using a combination of donated, surplus and

purchased equipment.

B. The purpose of this act is to establish a statewide educational technology opportunity program for New Mexico's teachers and students by creating a partnership between private industry, state government and local school districts that will build, distribute and install low-cost, network-ready computers in New Mexico classrooms over the next three years.

Section 2. EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM--
-DUTIES OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION.--

A. The state department of public education shall contract with a nonprofit corporation to administer the statewide educational technology opportunity program. The department shall select a contractor that has a program in place to build and rehabilitate computers for New Mexico classrooms using a combination of donated, surplus and purchased equipment. In administering the statewide educational technology opportunity program, the contractor, in coordination with the department, shall:

(1) solicit and accept applications for computer assistance from local school teachers through the local school principals;

(2) establish criteria for evaluating applications for computer assistance. The criteria shall include requirements for an established technology plan and

an established network infrastructure;

(3) establish a review process involving public and private entities to evaluate each application, determine the amount of computer assistance needed and allocate the available computers to ensure that computer assistance is distributed equitably; and

(4) submit an annual report to the state board of education, the governor and the legislature on the progress of the program, showing the regional distribution of the program, the number of computers distributed and the cost of each computer.

B. Upon the approval of an application for computer assistance, the contractor shall distribute the allocated computers directly to the classroom and teacher. Pursuant to the contract and upon the receipt of an invoice, the state department of public education shall reimburse the contractor for the state portion of the cost of the computer assistance granted.

C. The state department of public education, after consulting with private industry, local school districts and other interested parties, shall promulgate such rules as are necessary to implement the statewide educational technology opportunity program.

Section 3. EMERGENCY.--It is necessary for the public peace, health and safety that this act take effect

immediately. _____