

## Ed Tech Advocates Get Trained, Speak Out



The 5<sup>th</sup> annual Advocacy Day was a definite success according to organizers—ISTE, CoSN, and this year's new partner, the Software & Information Industry Association. More than 150 educators and industry representatives from 40 states

attended meetings with U.S. senators and representatives to advocate for educational technology funding. Prior to the policy briefing and Hill visits on March 9, participants attended a Public Policy Boot Camp on March 8 to learn about current issues and advocacy tools and tips. (For more information on Advocacy Day and ISTE's other advocacy efforts, see *L&L*, February 2006, pp. 10–13.)

Public Policy Boot Camp is a professional development opportunity designed to provide fundamental strategies and tactics that educators can apply at all levels of advocacy efforts wherever there is an opportunity to communicate with those who have the power to influence change. According to Hilary Goldman, ISTE's Director of Government Affairs, *advocacy* is generally the practice of increasing public awareness about a particular issue, while *lobbying* refers to efforts that attempt to influence specific legislation. Boot Camp participants learn that within that general definition, every individual can serve as an Ed Tech advocate.

Advocates learn ways to research the political interests and aspirations of their intended audience, asking a variety of questions to guide their approach, such as:

- Who are the individuals or groups I need to move to action?

- What are the sensitive issues that will effectively move my audience to action?
- Are those in a decision-making role currently or consistently in the public eye?
- Is this an election year?

Advocates also learn that the best strategies to use to persuade policy makers to act are a clear appeal for desired change, data to support the need for change, a declaration of constituency support, and success stories associated with relevant legislation.

A unique feature of Advocacy Day is the opportunity for Boot Camp graduates to flex their newfound skills immediately and directly with policy makers through face-to-face meetings. Event organizers scheduled more than 100 meetings with advocates and members of Congress.

See the Resource list below for more information about advocacy efforts and sites to locate your legislators' addresses. If you missed Advocacy Day, it's not too late to join in the grassroots effort and send letters or e-mail encouraging congressional representatives to vote for increased funding of Ed Tech-related initiatives such as Enhancing Education Through Technology. And, you can become a member of the Ed Tech Action Network (ETAN) to stay apprised of these and other advocacy opportunities.

### Resources

Ed Tech Action Network (ETAN): <http://www.edtechactionnetwork.org/>  
Enhancing Education Through Technology: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/edtech>

ISTE's Advocacy Resources (includes Advocacy Toolkit): <http://www.iste.org/advocacy>

U.S. Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/writerep>

U.S. Senators: [http://www.senate.gov/general/contact\\_information/senators\\_cfm.cfm](http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm)

—Susan Hair, Program Director, Affiliate Membership Program, ISTE

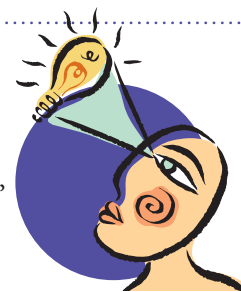
## Reaching New Heights for Digital Equity

Digital equity ensures that everyone in our society has equal access to technology tools, computers, and the Internet. ISTE is dedicated to sharing information, expertise, and resources to help individuals acquire the knowledge and skills to increase equity.

On Thursday, July 6, 2006, ISTE and the Special Interest Group for Digital Equity are hosting the Digital Equity Summit. Held in conjunction with NECC in San Diego,

California, and titled "The Digital Divide: Critical Dimensions and Solutions," the event will draw local, state, and international leaders in educational equity and technology.

This first of what is to become an annual event marks the beginning of a long-term initiative to bring leaders and policy makers together from education,



business, philanthropic organizations, human service agencies, and government to share promising and proven digital equity strategies so that more children will realize the educational, economic, and personal benefits of learning technology.

According to organizers, participants will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of critical dimensions of the digital divide in education, such as inequitable student access to hardware, software, connectivity, and academic and culturally responsive digital content, and how they affect our underserved students, their families, and communities.
- Learn about proven, scalable solutions for dramatically improving underserved students' access to vital learning technology resources.

- Develop concrete action plans by which, individually and jointly, we can take realistic steps following the symposium to support widespread adoption of digital equity solutions.

Following the summit, they will be able to participate in moderated on-line collaboration, sharing resources, challenges, and suggestions to support each other's efforts to fulfill our digital equity commitments.

After the summit, organizers plan to publish and disseminate a report highlighting current research on the nature and scope of the digital divide, the solutions showcased at the summit, and the commitments participants make to support implementing those solutions.

Attendance is free and open to all, but space is limited. Please RSVP to Mila Fuller, Director of Strategic Initiatives, ISTE, by e-mail at [mfuller@iste.org](mailto:mfuller@iste.org)

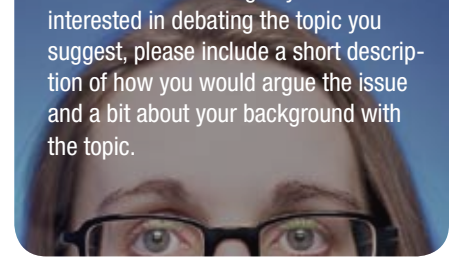
iste.org or phone at 1.866.654.4777 (U.S. and Canada) or 1.202.861.7777.

—Mila Fuller,  
Director of Strategic Initiatives, ISTE

## PARTICIPATE IN THE DEBATE

L&L is looking for Point/Counterpoint topics for volume 34. What hot topics are you debating in your school or district? What have you struggled to come to consensus about? What advances in technology will affect education in the future?

Send your ideas for debate topics to [submissions@iste.org](mailto:submissions@iste.org). If you are also interested in debating the topic you suggest, please include a short description of how you would argue the issue and a bit about your background with the topic.



**Saturday,  
July 8, 2006**

**San Diego, CA**

## REGISTER NOW

for the 7th annual Computer Science and Information Technology Symposium.

### IT and CS topics include:

- Flash Programming
- Web Programming with .NET
- Polymorphism
- Pair Programming
- Wiki Web sites
- Kinesthetic Learning
- Accessible AP
- And More!

Take advantage of this great professional development opportunity. View the agenda and register online at [www.iste.org/profdev/symposia/cs/2006](http://www.iste.org/profdev/symposia/cs/2006).

**Registration deadline is June 16, 2006!**

Pre-registration is required.

Co-hosted by:



Sponsored by:

**Microsoft®**

Co-hosted by:

