



October 15, 2008

The Honorable David Long  
President Pro Tem  
Indiana State Senate

The Honorable B. Patrick Bauer  
Speaker of the House  
Indiana House of Representatives

Dear Senator Long and Representative Bauer:

In accordance with IC 20-10.1-25.1, this letter provides you with an annual update of progress on the Buddy System Project administered by the Corporation for Educational Technology (CET).

As business and governmental leaders of the State of Indiana work tirelessly to improve our positioning for the future of the state with economic development strategies, it is imperative that we recognize that the skills of the workforce, a major determinant of our success, are tied to the skills we are developing in today's K12 students. CET is committed to assuring that our students have ample opportunities to learn effectively and efficiently by engaging whenever possible with relevant technology to improve learning and develop lifelong skills.

The attached report portrays an exceptional year for the project now in our 21<sup>st</sup> year of existence. Highlights include:

- We operate four websites that have attracted over 100,000 total visitors per month last year, providing expertise, best practices and classroom ideas to Indiana youth and teachers.
- More than 1,000 educators participated in our training programs last year in one to five day programs.
- Through our partnership with the Indiana Surplus organization, we have placed 3,017 re-purposed computers into Indiana classrooms through the first nine and a half months of this year, saving our schools over \$1.5 million in technology investment. This number already triples our demand from previous years' efforts.
- We now produce three monthly or quarterly e-publications with subscribership among educators totaling 3,500 readers for this year.

In addition to these items, we have participated in collaborative partnerships with other agencies and organizations, most notably with the Center for Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) in the planning requirements for the New Tech High Schools. Our role has been to plan for the technology requirements and suggest policy initiatives for the six New Tech schools now operating in Indiana as well as market this important school reform model to interested school districts.

At the request of the State Superintendent, we are developing web-based tools for schools to better prepare for the NCLB requirement for 8th grade technology literacy. We are teaming with DOE experts and representatives from local schools to design and build appropriate standards and curriculum integration suggestions for each of the Core Indiana Academic standards for each grade level K-8.

CET performs its work in alignment with and in support of the Indiana Department of Education, focusing its activities on facilitating student academic achievement and growing our professional development capacity to provide training and resources to teachers across the state of Indiana. All of our new and continued activities align with PL 221 and the *No Child Left Behind* legislation to better serve the needs of education in our state.

During the past year, the late Senator David Ford, Senator Ed Charbonneau, Senator Lindel Hume and Representatives Cindy Noe and Greg Porter have capably represented your respective chambers. These individuals in concert with our other board members continue to set directions for us and are excited by our achievements. Additionally, as specified in the Indiana Code, we operate at the direction of the State Superintendent to provide services and support to projects that that office deems necessary. Through this relationship, we provide quality support systems and services for effective technology integration that are consistent with, not redundant with the department's mission and goals.

We are a small organization, operating with a limited annual funding budget of \$825,000. However, we never lose sight of our mission to promote and provide leadership to schools and students so that Indiana moves in the direction of a world-class education system. Through the years, Buddy has provided learning opportunities to over 60,000 Hoosier youngsters in one or more of our initiatives and provided training to more than 17,000 educators from all 92 counties.

We again thank you for the generous support your offices have always given the project and we look forward to serving the state with the exciting mission we have undertaken. If there are questions about the report or the project, please feel free to contact me at 417-908-8899 or [mbailey@indianacet.org/](mailto:mbailey@indianacet.org/).

Sincerely,

Marvin E. Bailey, President

Cc: Dr. Suellen Reed, CET Board of Directors

**Buddy Mission Statement**

*Buddy develops and facilitates leading edge learning projects in K-12 school communities to increase student achievement using technology in anytime, anywhere settings. Buddy initiatives aim to share best practices among educators, strengthen family involvement in education, and extend learning beyond the bounds of school time and place. Buddy values and supports equal access to learning technologies regardless of socioeconomic realities.*

The *Buddy System Project* began in 1988 as a partnership of several public and private institutions to “imagine the future” educational opportunity when computers were ubiquitous in homes of students and classrooms of schools. Buddy worked with five pilot schools, providing training for teachers and computers to be loaned to families to extend learning opportunities beyond the school day. The project’s vision, from the outset, was to be able to make the Buddy experience available to all Indiana teachers, students and their families. The Corporation for Educational Technology (CET), established in 1991, to administer the Buddy Project and support other Indiana Department of Education technology-based programs, has enjoyed the continued support of the Indiana General Assembly. Buddy has served more than 60,000 students in one or more Buddy initiatives over the years.

The advent of the world-wide web in the mid 1990’s helped Buddy achieve its vision by providing free access to learning resources through its main website, **www.buddyproject.org**. Economic hard times in Indiana at the first of this century resulted in drastic budget cuts,<sup>1</sup> but Buddy still managed to expand its influence and support through creation of web-based content and accompanying publications. Since its inception, Buddy has also provided training services to approximately 17,000 educators from all 92 Indiana counties through grants, our professional development center, outreach training programs and conferences. Buddy programs, projects, services and publications each express one or more of its original core values:

- Learning opportunities beyond classroom time and place;
- Technology as a tool to support learning goal achievement;
- Parent involvement in the education of their children;
- Equal access to technology resources for all students and teachers; and
- Reflective practice of teaching and learning for continuous improvement.

In 2007-2008, Buddy services were delivered through five program areas detailed below:

**1. Buddy’s four websites which attracted more than 100,000 total visitors<sup>2</sup> per month last year**



- a. Buddy’s award-winning **www.buddyproject.org**, with teacher, student and family learning resources helps extend and enhance learning through effective use of technology. This site will soon be launched with a new design and even more K-12 teaching and learning resources.
- b. **TheWritingSite.org** is focused on writing instruction and assessment across a K-12 grade range and in all content areas. At its core is an interactive tutorial where teachers and students can practice assessment of student writing using the ISTEP+ writing rubrics.
- c. The Buddy Teaching and Learning Center site, **www.btlc.org**, is the place to find and register for quality professional development and technology training opportunities offered by the team of Buddy facilitators, who are all experienced Indiana teachers and administrators.
- d. Buddy’s Moodle site, at **www.buddylearning.org**, is host to the courses taught at the Buddy Teaching and Learning Center, as well as a host site for Indiana teachers to practice building their own Moodle courses and resources.

<sup>1</sup> Since 2001, Buddy has received just \$825K per year, down from \$1.5M or more in annual funding during the 1990’s.

<sup>2</sup> Average monthly visitors from *WebTrends* for July 2007 through June 2008.

## 2. Buddy's three e-publications, with subscribership totaling 3,500 this year<sup>3</sup>

Computer Capers  
www.buddyproject.org/capers



et cetera  
education technology news...and more

- a. *Computer Capers* is published each month (since 1993) as a one-page newsletter featuring 3 or 4 technology integration ideas linked to Indiana Academic Standards for grades K-8.
- b. *Write Connections*, a quarterly publication launched in 2005, is published in three editions for primary, intermediate and secondary teachers and is focused on writing instruction and assessment issues and ideas across all curriculum areas.
- c. *Et Cetera*, the newest and most popular publication to date, launched October 2007, is a monthly html newsletter featuring Indiana innovative school technology initiatives, grant and training opportunities, software and hardware reviews, legislative news and more. The Indiana Department of Education, Hoosier Educational Computer Coordinators and Indiana Computer Educators are co-sponsors of this publication.

## 3. Quality professional development and technology training services



- a. More than 1,000 Indiana educators participated in Buddy Teaching and Learning Center (BTLC) programs over the past year.
- b. The service was provided in one-day to five-day programs offered at the BTLC lab (hosted by MSD Decatur Township), at state conferences, as regional sessions at Education Service Centers, or as Outreach programs that are delivered directly at local school venues.
- c. Moodle™ implementation, Office Suite applications, project-based learning and integration of interactive whiteboards and other classroom technologies were the most popular topics this year.

## 4. CET's repurposed surplus computer program for Indiana schools, students and families

- a. CET works with Indiana Surplus (IDoA) to repurpose state-owned computers, as they are replaced in state agencies, for use in Indiana classrooms and school communities.
- b. Renewed efforts to market and administer this program resulted in a sensational increase in this year's deliveries. More than 3,000 computers were placed in 30 needy schools in the first nine months and a half months of 2008, tripling the results of previous years' demand. Buddy expects to deliver more than 3,500 units by January.
- c. CET partners with another not-for-profit organization, NET Literacy, that works with central Indiana schools and who serves as a Microsoft reseller to provide Windows™ and Office™ software for \$25 per license.
- d. The estimated market value of these placements into our schools is currently at \$1.75 million, a huge savings for schools strapped for capital projects technology funding.

## 5. CET's special technology-related project development and support

- a. At the direction of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Buddy facilitated state level committees to identify and discuss student technology skill benchmarks. Committee reports were presented to a steering committee at the Indiana Department of Education in June 2008. The report included recommended basic skill benchmarks for grades K-8, as well as a cross-item analysis of technology skills with four main Indiana Academic Standards performance indicators and the National Educational Technology Skills for Students (ISTE, 2007).
- b. CET is taking an active role, in partnership with University of Indianapolis' CELL project, to provide guidance and support in the startup and expansion of New Tech High Schools in Indiana. CET representatives sit on policy and professional development committees at CELL.

CET and the Buddy Project personnel will continue to provide much needed services in the investigation, development and implementation of leading edge educational technology projects in 2008-2009. The Corporation for Educational Technology aims all program efforts toward making the vision of effective use and integration of technology for improved achievement a reality for all Indiana students and teachers.

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<sup>3</sup> CET's e-publication subscriptions data are managed by Constant Contact® service.