

FEDERAL NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



information infrastructure, end-user training requirements, and related issues.

- Developing a business plan involves defining: project goals, specific problems or needs, potential partners and roles, staffing, marketing, detailed budget and timeline, and a plan for financially sustaining the project.

- Developing an evaluation plan identifies project goals and provides a means of measuring the extent to which goals are met. Such a plan provides important feedback during development of the project.

- Identifying potential sources of funding, including: corporate and foundation funding, third party in-kind donations of goods or services, fees for services rendered, other federal grants, or state, tribal, local and/or non-federal grants.

- Soliciting potential partners who can play a critical role in providing advice, leveraging financial support, and serving as powerful community advocates is vital.

- Planning for sustainability must begin at an early stage.

- Determining which technologies to use is complicated by the current pace of technological change. In general, project directors should follow technology trends, remain flexible, and be prepared to adapt to unplanned contingencies.

- Replicating models that can be adopted in other locales is a feature of TIAP programs.

Moving Forward

TIAP projects offer valuable lessons about implementing new information infrastructure projects and transforming a plan into a working project. Among the steps necessary to set a plan in motion are:

- Hiring and managing staff requires a clear organizational structure in mind, defining staff roles, and knowing what qualities are desirable in new employees.

- Developing and maintaining strong relationships with project partners requires time and effort, but such partnerships can be mutually beneficial when expectations and responsibilities are understood by each group.

- Marketing the project means non-profit organizations must think like businesses, which involves researching potential markets, targeting services and products to clearly defined groups, and following-up with strong customer service.

- Working with equipment vendors and technical consultants requires careful research, knowledge of the equipment and services needed, a realistic budget, and clear expectations regarding timelines and delivery schedules.

- Managing some project costs can be anticipated and built into a budget, but hidden costs can quickly escalate.

- Working with end-users is challenging, because they often have limited experience with new technologies. Overcoming this obstacle requires training and time.

Next Steps

Lessons learned to date suggest that TIAP is serving important needs in the community. First, the projects are helping cities, schools, libraries, economic development groups, police and other public safety departments, and social service organizations become anchor tenants on the National Information Infrastructure (NII), thereby attracting others to use the NII. Second, the role of many government agencies, libraries, schools, and other information agencies is changing from information repositories to customer-driven service providers. Third, it is raising the level of information technology skills in the community as TIAP projects train people, who in turn become trainers of others.

—U.S. DEPT. OF COMMERCE
11/14/96

EDUCATION

NATIONAL EDUCATION INITIATIVES

■ (WASHINGTON) Tennessee became the 28th state to receive 3rd-year funding under Goals 2000. During the second year, 115 grants supporting professional development for teachers and local education reform went to schools working with community and parent organizations, other schools, colleges and

universities, and business and industry.

School To Work

Last month, Labor Secretary Reich and Education Secretary Riley announced Mentor/Peer grants for five exemplary school-to-work (STW) partnerships, to share their successful methods with other STW partnerships around the country.

- Lane Community College (Eugene, OR) will help educators learn to use "best practices" through workshops, a "how to" manual, and technical assistance.

- The Napa County Office of Education (Napa, CA) will offer workshops in each of 15 states where community teams will develop plans for action.

- Rochester City School District (Rochester, NY) will provide teleconferences, workshops and site visits.

- Southern Alleghenies Tech Prep Consortium and Great Johnstown Career and Technology Center STW Partnership will share its manual for training school-based mentors, work-based mentors and students involved in job shadowing or other workplace experiences.

- Green River Community College (Auburn, WA) will organize teams of teachers to interview employers about future skills needed, sponsoring work-based learning, retraining needs and employee job assignments.

Safe and Drug-Free Schools

Last month, Secretary Riley announced grants to 28 two-year projects to: research efforts to prevent youth from using drugs; remove firearms from schools; prevent truancy and address the needs of youth out of the education mainstream; and prevent violent, aggressive, intimidating or other disruptive behavior.

Field-Initiated Research Grants

Grants to 47 research projects were announced recently under the 1996 program. Grant recipients will generate topics and methods. National Institute Grantees and projects include:

- Student Achievement, Curriculum and Assessment awarded 13 grants for projects on school violence prevention, educational technology, school organization and instruction in core content areas.

- Education of At-Risk Students awarded 15 grants in the areas of improved learning for Native American Students, for children with limited English proficiency and in

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"Nations have recently been led to borrow billions for war; no nation has ever borrowed largely for education. Probably, no nation is rich enough to pay for both war and civilization. We must make our choice; we cannot have both."

Abraham Flexner
Universities
1930