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Education Leaders Identify Top 10 Components of Personalized Learning

Outline Roadmap for Systemic Redesign of PreK-12 Education to a Student-Centered Model

Washington, D.C. (Nov. 11, 2010) – The Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA), in collaboration with ASCD and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), today released ***Innovate to Educate: System [Re]Design for Personalized Learning***. This report of findings is based upon the insights and recommendations of some 150 visionary education leaders convened at an August 4-6, 2010 Symposium in Boston, Mass. The report is available at www.sii.net/pli and provides a roadmap to accelerate the redesign of the current, mass production education model to a student-centered, customized learning model that will better engage, motivate, and prepare our students to be career and college ready.

“The industrial-age, assembly-line educational model – based on fixed time, place, curriculum and pace – is insufficient in today’s society and knowledge-based economy,” said Gene Wilhoit, executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). “Improving student outcomes for all students requires transforming the learning experience to leverage technology, engagement, and the supports each learner needs to ensure they are ready for college, career, and citizenship.”

The Symposium uniquely brought together three key groups – local and state practitioners, national thought leaders, and senior technology executives. They jointly identified the following top essential elements and policy enablers of personalized learning:

Essential Elements

1. Flexible, Anytime, Everywhere Learning
2. Redefine Teacher Role and Expand "Teacher"
3. Project-Based, Authentic Learning
4. Student-Driven Learning Path
5. Mastery/Competency-Based Progression/Pace

Policy Enablers

1. Redefine Use of Time (Carnegie Unit/Calendar)
2. Performance-Based, Time-Flexible Assessment
3. Equity in Access to Technology Infrastructure
4. Funding Models that Incentivize Completion
5. P-20 Continuum & Non-Age/Grade Band System

“The intent is to meet all children where they are and help them reach their fullest potential through a wide range of resources and strategies appropriate for their learning style, abilities, and interests,” said Gene Carter, CEO and executive director of ASCD. “Educational equity is not simply about equal access and inputs, but as importantly requires that a student’s educational path, curriculum, instruction and schedule be personalized to meet each child’s unique needs.”

Ninety-one percent of education leaders at the Symposium very strongly or strongly agreed that “we cannot meet the personalized learning needs of students within our traditional system – tweaking the teacher/classroom-centered model is not enough, and systemic redesign is needed.”

“Personalized learning requires not only a shift in the design of schooling, but also a better leveraging of modern technologies that have transformed our economy and daily lives,” said Ken Wasch, president of the Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA). “Personalized learning is enabled by smart e-learning systems, which help dynamically track learning needs, and provide a platform to access myriad engaging learning resources and interventions needed to meet each student’s needs, but which are not otherwise available within the four walls of the traditional classroom.”

Ninety-six percent of Symposium attendees identified access to technology and e-learning as a critical or significant cross-cutting platform to implement personalized learning and bring it to scale.

SIIA, ASCD, CCSSO and Symposium attendees agree with the need for collective and individual actions moving forward. Those recommended next steps, along with details on the Personalized Learning initiative, are available at <http://www.siiia.net/PLI/presentations.asp>, including an archive of Symposium session summaries, presentations and videos. The Symposium Report is available at www.siiia.net/pli. These resources provide a shared vision and definition, examples of successful implementations, and descriptions of key policies, systems, technologies, educator roles and supports, and national next steps required to bring personalized learning to scale.

About ASCD. Founded in 1943, ASCD is a nonprofit educational leadership association that develops programs, products, and services essential to the way educators learn, teach, and lead. ASCD provides expert and innovative solutions in professional development, capacity building, and educational leadership. ASCD's membership comprises more than 160,000 principals, teachers, superintendents, professors of education, and other educators from 148 countries.

About CCSSO. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public.

About SIIA. The Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) is the principal trade association for the software and digital content industries. SIIA provides global services in government relations, business development, corporate education and intellectual property protection to more than 500 leading software and information companies. For further information, visit www.siiia.net. **SIIA's Education Division** serves and represents more than 150 member companies that provide software, digital content and other technologies that address educational needs. The division shapes and supports the industry by providing leadership, advocacy, business development opportunities and critical market information.

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