

## **University System of Maryland Technology Consortium History & Purpose**

The Council of Deans and Directors of Teacher Education's Partnerships for Teacher Education: Report of the University System of Maryland Teacher Education Task Force (1998) was approved by the Education Policy Committee of the USM Board of Regents on March 10, 1998. The Partnerships document laid out a plan to strengthen teacher education addressing the recommendations of the Maryland Higher Education Commission Task Force Report on Teacher Education 9 (the Redesign) (1995), the Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning (K-16) initiative, and the recommendations of the National Commission on Teaching for America's Future. (1997)

The Partnerships document endorsed a radical change in preparing educators that would emphasize outcomes over process, provide for simultaneous and continuous renewal of K-16, and assure the citizens of Maryland that all candidates for certification would be caring, competent, and inspiring teachers.

Shortly after this acceptance by Regents, the Deans and Directors developed a Work Plan that delegated lead and supporting responsibility to the USM colleges and universities to develop outcomes and performance assessments in the following areas: Mathematics, science, technology, diversity, professional development experiences, reading, inclusion, and communication skills.

The Deans and Directors were asked to create task forces composed of USM colleges and universities, independent colleges and universities, school systems, and representatives from other constituencies. Pursuant to this request, in April 1998, a Technology Task Force was developed, with Frostburg State University as the lead partner.

Technology expectation have been defined and delineated as high school graduation requirements for students in the Maryland School Performance Program, but they have not been clearly defined and required for their teachers or for the future teachers of these students. Strategies in the State long-range technology plan, State of Innovation: the Maryland Plan for Technology in Education 1999-2003 focus on building the infrastructure in public schools and on building the knowledge and skills of both current teachers and teacher candidates. The State and local school systems are aggressively trying to upgrade the skills of current teachers. However, the focus on preservice teachers is crucial given that Maryland has an increasing need for new teachers, with approximately 22,000 new hires anticipated over the next three years. These new teachers must be adequately prepared to use the technology they will encounter as they enter their profession.

The Technology Task Force examined the national standards established by the International Society for Technology (ISTE), which were adopted by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the standards in other states such as North Carolina, and those established by Maryland institutions of higher education and local school systems. Based on these, the Task Force defined Technology Outcomes to be recommended for all Maryland teacher candidates. These are now in the process of being reviewed by state and national colleagues. Using this feedback, the Technology Task Force will revise them as necessary.

Recently, the Task Force was reconstituted as a Consortium with an expanded membership to work together on the curriculum and field experiences necessary for teacher candidates to achieve the outcomes, the performance standards and assessments, and the portfolios that will serve as a basis for employment decision-making on the regional level. The Consortium will develop a model that can be used by other Task Forces in developing their own credible, reliable assessments and supporting resources.