



Governor Gregoire and the Higher Education Coordinating Board set a clear goal for our state: educate more people to higher levels of skill and knowledge. Our state's community and technical colleges are determined to do all we can to help meet that goal and to foster the P-20 collaboration that will be required to create a world class education system. Technology is a substantial component of this pursuit, so two-year college leaders wrote a fresh Strategic Technology Plan to guide our efforts.

Implementing this Strategic Technology Plan will be a major contribution to educating more people to higher levels of achievement. It creates a clear vision and roadmap for the development of consistent, user-friendly and effective tools for teaching and learning, student services, administration, and data that will drive improvements and accountability.

We are ahead of many other states in online learning, in that our colleges' online enrollments grew by 715 percent between 1999 and 2007. Nonetheless, we are late to recognize the educational impact and potential of the internet; late to take advantage of the shift to open, student-centered, web-based applications; and late to react to what our students and faculty are telling us about what they need to thrive in this new era.

This plan represents a dramatic departure from past practices. Today's patchwork of online learning, library resources, and student support services constricts our ability to serve students and perpetuates barriers of time, distance, and costly textbooks. This plan's strategies will enable learners at every level to find, enroll in, and succeed in classes personalized to their needs. The barriers will recede.

This plan also proposes that we treat information technology as a centrally funded, baseline service—like electricity in college buildings—rather than as a special, add-on, fee-based feature. This alone will stimulate even more rapid growth in the statewide availability of online courses and enrollment.

Our system's faculty and administrators have been working on this plan for 18 months. It is very important work. We hope you will share our excitement about the potential of this plan to create an education system truly suited to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Strategic Technology Plan and related resources are online: <http://techplan.sbctc.edu>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles N. Earl". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charles N. Earl  
Executive Director  
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

Enclosures