The Case for Online Professional Development

eLearning Spending Strategies and ROI for School Districts and State Departments of Education

August 2009

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Executive Overview

The persistent tightening of statewide education budgets and an increased downturn of an already troubled U.S. economy have both contributed to the implementation of intense cost-saving measures by state departments of education and school districts nationwide. One area almost certain to be affected is faculty and staff professional development.

At the same time, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 significantly increases federal funding for education, representing a huge opportunity for administrators to spend strategically today for long-term results. These include increasing teacher effectiveness, fostering continuous improvement, and improving student outcomes.

This whitepaper identifies some of the current challenges faced by school districts and state departments of education and makes the case for online professional development as a valid method of providing 21st Century tools to support 21st Century learning. Additionally, the paper outlines the value proposition of using a web conferencing solution, like the Elluminate Learning Suite™, to provide consistent, effective, and sustainable professional development and facilitate statewide communication and collaboration. What’s more, LearnCentral™, the new social learning network for education, which Elluminate sponsors, provides added opportunity to further faculty professional development by integrating Elluminate technology into an online learning community.

Finally, because demonstrating return on investment for web conferencing technology expenditures is an ongoing requirement, this whitepaper provides a detailed look at the hard financial savings and additional soft benefits realized by implementing a system-wide Elluminate live eLearning and web collaboration solution.
Reduced Budgets for Funding Technology

According to a recent national economic impact survey, 34% of school administrators have reported that their districts have implemented deferring technology purchases as a direct result of the downturned economy (American Association of School Administrators (AASA); 2008). This survey indicates the sagging economy could threaten student achievement gains and teacher quality improvement that schools have so diligently pursued and have so importantly realized. Additionally, the capacity for states, districts, and schools to deliver robust professional development (PD) that supports improved student learning, high-quality teaching, and effective administrator oversight is in danger of being diminished. In fact, some recently released 2008-2009 state budgets contain fiscal cuts that reduce PD funding (Gaines, 2008).

Despite difficult economic times, the AASA survey favorably reports that 66% of school administrators have delayed, rejected, or never considered the decision to stop technology purchases. This indicates that educators are acting thoughtfully and assertively to address the serious monetary challenges facing their schools. More than ever, state departments of education must now ensure the effective and efficient use of public funds when deciding to purchase and implement statewide technologies, especially technologies used to promote and support educator PD. If school districts received additional technology funding, 66% of educators surveyed at a recent National School Boards Association conference said they would use it for staff PD (National School Boards Association, 2008).

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to the Rescue

Sponsored in part by Elluminate, the EdStimulus.org website (http://www.edstimulus.org/) provides information and access to events, information, and discussion areas relating to the educational portion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), with the specific goal of helping to facilitate a dialog that will promote the best long-term uses of the funds. In addition, the Edstimulus Blog (http://blog.edstimulus.org/) is a source of plain talk about what many see as a complex program

According to blogger Tammy Stephens of the Stephens Group LLC, an educational technology integration firm, the government wants to see schools apply innovative ideas to reform our education to prepare our students for the 21st Century. This funding is not meant to be reoccurring on a long term basis. District leaders need to be thinking strategically about how this money can be used for one time purchases that are likely to have long term effects in helping students prepare for the 21st Century. The time to be thinking about how we will reform and transform our school systems into 21st Century Learning Organizations is NOW! (EdStimulus Blog, 2009).

In a later blog entry, Stephens goes on to explain that an unprecedented $919 million dollars in federal funds for technology are being disbursed to states this summer. This substantial amount is made up of $269 million for the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) component of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act and $650 million through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). (EdStimulus Blog, 2009). Acronyms aside, it’s clear that a multitude of opportunities exist to advance key education reforms, including 21st Century classrooms and professional development.

A word of caution: one popular K-12 publication says that schools are continuing to suffer with budget cuts despite the stimulus package. While the nearly $100 billion for education is helping school districts staunch the bleeding as the recession gashes their operating budgets, many say it isn’t nearly enough to meet their needs. As Jim Foster, director of communications for North Carolina’s education department says, “The stimulus money will make a very bad situation only bad.” (eSchool News, 2009) All the more reason to focus on strategic spending that will have long-term impact, for initiatives like online professional development.
Making the Case for Online Professional Development

Once the new U.S. administration taking the reins in early 2009, legislators, policymakers, academics, and educators have strongly reignited their push for educational change and reform. PD in a climate of educational reform must take into account the need to implement new educational standards, meet the needs of varied student populations, and confront new forms of student assessment, among other important issues (Cook, 1997).

21st century educators will certainly “need more time to work with colleagues, to critically examine the new standards being proposed, and to revise curriculum. They need opportunities to develop, master, and reflect on new approaches to working with children” (Corcoran, 1995). In the new educational climate, a spotlight will be cast upon the continued need for highly qualified and well-trained educators to meet the demands of educational change. While it is well documented that PD is a key factor in producing and maintaining high-quality administrators, teachers, and staff (Kleiman, 2004; SEDTA, 2005), it is also becoming well recognized that PD is empowered when it is delivered in a sustained and consistent manner.

Heeding this evidence, The State Educational Technology Directors Association’s “Class of 2020 Action Plan” calls for action steps to “make ongoing, sustainable professional development available to all teachers” (SEDTA, 2008, p. 6); while the U.S. Department of Education recognizes that PD is most effective when it is sustained, intensive, and collaborative (Kleiman, 2004). Along these lines, there is a national recognition that the need exists to reframe PD from a self-encapsulating “continuing education credits and stand alone courses and workshops process” where educators’ interactions can be minimal or perfunctory to a much more comprehensive and interactive approach to professional learning (Hirsch, Koppich, and Knapp, 2001; National Staff Development Council, 2001; SEDTA, 2008).

Due to the potent ability web collaboration has in providing PD, it is not surprising that its use is supported by a host of national institutions. For example, SEDTA has mandated that states, districts, and schools “utilize virtual learning opportunities for teachers to further their PD, such as online communities and education portals” and “ensure that technology tools and resources are used continuously and seamlessly for instruction, collaboration and assessment” (SEDTA, 2008).

More broadly, The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) urges “school and state leaders to advocate online professional development for teachers, administrators, school boards, and community leaders” (SREB, 2004, p. 2). Similar proposals have been made by influential organizations, associations, and the U.S. Department of Education (Harris-John and Ritter, 2007; Kleiman, 2004; National Research Council, 2007; National Staff Development Council, 2001). Legislation is now being proposed under the The Achievement Through Technology and Innovation Act of 2007 “to increase on-going, meaningful professional development around technology that leads to changes in teaching and curriculum, and which improves student academic achievement and technology literacy.”(S.1996)

The Value Proposition for Web Conferencing

As a whole, the market for web conferencing, teaming and social software will grow at a compound annual growth rate of more than 20% through 2011 (Gartner, 2009). Specifically, many organizations have turned to web conferencing as an enterprise-wide management solution supported by total expected revenue in this market of approximately $1.7 billion in 2008, 2.3 billion in 2009, and $2.8 billion in 2010, a projected growth rate of 23% per year (Gartner, 2007).

The value proposition for using web collaboration software is that it is not only cost effective and yields a high financial return on investment (ROI), but that it also provides a myriad of other benefits. Thus, ROI is both a “hard” measure of cost reduction and a measure of "soft" returns: a combination of cost savings and other valuable benefits (Frost and Sullivan, 2005; IBM, 2008; Skillsoft, 2005).
The proposition that web collaboration offers an excellent investment value is an argument that also applies to and has been supported by the K-12 education community (Consortium of School Networking, 2008). According to a review of state-level policy and practice, K-12 online learning continued to grow in late 2007 and the first half of 2008 as evidenced by new program development and the growth of current initiatives (Watson, Gemin, and Ryan, 2008). As of fall 2008, 44 states offer significant online learning opportunities for students. With reduced budgets for technology spending, state K-12 leaders are under increasing pressure to justify current and proposed expenditures on web collaboration software.

Fortunately, a state department of education (DOE) or school district can realize major cost savings as well as a host of other benefits by choosing a web collaboration solution, like the Elluminate Learning Suite, that enables them to deliver system-wide PD in real time, replicating the interaction of a physical classroom. Web collaboration tools also provide educators with the opportunity to share resources and collaborate with peers in an “anytime, anywhere” environment via asynchronous capabilities. The benefits of using web conferencing to deliver PD are significant.

Cost Reduction
A web collaboration solution eliminates or reduces the need for travel-related expenses for teachers, administrators, and staff; as well as facility-related costs, mass production of paper-based material, recruitment of lost teachers, and use of substitute teachers. Savings may also be generated by decreasing cost per person by training more teachers at a given time and reducing the use of teleconferencing, video conferencing, and satellite systems.

Versatility
Web conferencing can be used for workshops, seminars, institutes, meetings, mentoring, and peer-coaching sessions, study groups, and more, which meet the PD needs of teachers, administrators, and other professional staff. Additionally, richly interactive web-delivered coursework can be offered to satisfy continuing education units, professional development units, or advanced degree requirements. Using web conferencing, educators can collaborate for PD activities at regularly scheduled times or as needed.

Flexibility
Online PD conducted using web collaboration software can be both synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous web collaboration offers real-time capability to meet and interact on a scheduled or ad hoc basis. Once content is developed, it can be recorded and used again and again. Asynchronous online content can be accessed anytime, anywhere with portable learning content, such as podcasts, and integration with popular learning and course management systems that allow PD resources to be stored in learning object repositories. Additionally, the virtual classroom can be directly integrated into an existing LMS/CMS for easy access.

Productivity
Web collaboration offers a variety of ways to improve PD productivity. Reduced travel time by shifting PD activities online means more time spent teaching. Higher productivity may result from increased number of ideas and viewpoints and a variety of creative and best-practice approaches to teaching and learning shared between participants during trainings and meetings. Web collaboration break-out rooms can be used to productively place participants into specific workgroups based upon need and task.

Accountability
Web collaboration can be used to deliver knowledge of and practices for meeting the demands of the 21st century teacher and learner. These include the increasing challenges of NCLB teacher and student requirements, as well as other possible educational mandates (National Assessment of Educational Progress participation) and recommended professional standards adherence (National Educational Technology Standards, National Staff Development Council, Southern Regional Education Board). Teachers can collaborate on developing and refining curricula that align with state and district standards.
Online teacher development programs should develop 21st century skills and strive to increase the number of highly qualified teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals (Watson, Gemin, and Ryan, 2008). Similarly, SETDA (2004) strongly recommends that all current and prospective school leaders participate in technology-infused professional learning experiences designed to produce leaders of high-quality teaching and learning, while Kleiman (2004) makes the case that eLearning solutions can tackle national, state, district, and school teacher quality challenges.

**Student Achievement**
Using web collaboration to develop and support better teaching can affect student learning outcomes. Teacher effectiveness is a strong determiner of differences in students’ learning (Darling-Hammond, 1999); and teachers can contribute as much to student learning as the students themselves (Wenglinsky, 2002).

Teachers who receive substantial PD can boost their students’ achievement by about 21 percentile points (Yoon, et al., 2007), while measures of teacher preparation and certification have strong relationships with student achievement in reading and mathematics (Kleiman, 2004). PD that focuses on high-quality subject-matter content is crucial to student achievement. Using web collaboration can offer greater opportunities for teachers to better understand student learning, curriculum materials, and instruction and subject-matter content, which can then bolster the performance of both teachers and students (Holland, 2005).

**Teacher Retention**
Web collaboration supports ongoing teacher PD, which promotes career-long teacher growth and helps develop and retain highly qualified and highly satisfied teachers. Retaining qualified teachers is a serious and substantial national problem. Approximately 45% percent of all beginning teachers leave their careers after five years, with teachers stating a lack of professional support as a main reason for their exiting the occupation (Alliance for Excellence in Education, 2005; Ingersoll, 2003). From a cost savings perspective, U.S. teacher turnover at public schools alone is estimated to be more than $7.3 billion per year (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2007).

**Online Learning Communities**
Web collaboration enables the dissemination and sharing of PD best practices, supporting the concept of “No Educator Left Behind.” Online learning communities facilitate inter and intra-school communication and collaboration. Communities not only help teachers attain professional competency, but also support maintenance of this competency. Collaboration empowers teachers, administrators, and staff to understand the needs for, to commit to, and to gain ongoing skill development from a comprehensive PD process.

To further facilitate PD and accelerate learner communication, collaboration, and education, web conferencing technology can integrated with an online social networking environment. Sponsored by Elluminate, LearnCentral (www.learncentral.org) is a free social learning network for education where members can connect with peers, share content, build portfolios, access resources, and hold and attend online events. In addition, members, can collaborate in real time with a free Elluminate vRoom™, a free single-room version of Elluminate Live! for up to three participants or locations. In addition, LearnCentral Private Edition is available for those who want a custom-branded community for cross-pollination and communication for teachers in a specific state, for example, no matter how vast the distance between schools/teachers.
Calculating Return on Investment

As mentioned, one component of return on investment (ROI) is the cost savings gained from an investment in web collaboration technology. Some basic, immediate cost savings a DOE or district can derive in implementing a state, enterprise-wide web collaboration solution from Elluminate can be illustrated using an ROI example as shown below.

Note also that ARRA funding comes with stringent accountability and reporting requirements. While spending these dollars on web conferencing technology is a necessity because of the strong correlation to learner outcomes, it is also a wise and responsible use of ARRA funds as evidenced by the ROI shown.

This example is based upon a state with 50,000 teachers, somewhat below the U.S. average of 61,508 (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2008). Teacher PD is the focus of this example since most states offer the bulk of their professional training time to teachers in comparison to that allotted to administrators and other school staff.

Table 1: ROI Example: Cost Savings Gained from a Statewide Elluminate Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Professional Development Activities</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many activities are held each year?</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the average number of attendees per activity?</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the percentage of attendees that travel?</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Teleconferences</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many teleconferences are held each year?</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the average length of each teleconference (in minutes)?</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the average number of attendees per teleconference?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What percentage would be replaced by a voice over IP solution?</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Current Costs</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the average travel related expense for each traveling participant?</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the average facility costs per professional development activity?</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimate the teleconference costs per person per minute.</td>
<td>$0.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Current Costs</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel Costs</td>
<td>$1,250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Costs</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teleconferencing Costs</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Current Costs</td>
<td>$1,411,000</td>
</tr>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Elluminate Costs (ASP Enterprise-Wide Solution)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total 1st Year Cost for Elluminate Learning Suite Solution</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Costs</td>
<td>$1,411,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elluminate Costs (Open Access Pricing)</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Savings</td>
<td>$1,061,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROI</td>
<td>303%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly cost of delaying a decision</td>
<td>$88,417</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current Professional Development Activities
A recent national survey of K-12 teachers captured their participation rates in ongoing PD activities (Choy, Chen, and Bugarin, 2006). Findings have indicated the most common activities to be workshops, annual conferences, and other training such as seminars and institutes (95%); regularly scheduled collaborative meetings with other teachers on issues of instruction (74%); coursework for recertification purposes (32%); and coursework to address identified teaching needs (23%).

PD activities require varied amounts of travel. In this example, 50% of activities held each year require no travel, indicating that these activities involve teachers at individual schools or minimal travel within a district. The remaining 125 PD activities involve teacher travel and reflect the fact that teachers participate in activities at sites within their own and at other districts, at regional education service centers (ESC) (an agency that serves multiple districts within a county), and at events such as statewide conferences that occur at a single site and require most participants to travel long distances within a state.

Current Teleconferencing Costs
State DOEs and districts conduct a considerable amount of time making phone calls for various purposes. In this ROI example, the organization holds 2000 teleconferences a year which average an hour in duration and involve an average of 10 participants. Based upon a $0.06 teleconference cost per minute, this example teleconferencing can total $72,000 per year (2000 teleconferences x an average 60 minutes per teleconference x an average 10 participants per teleconference x $0.06 phone charge per minute per participant).

Current Travel and Facility Costs
An organization can incur significant costs when teachers need to travel to various locations to participate in a host of PD activities. In the ROI example provided here, it is estimated that a state can spend $1,250,000 a year on teacher travel (125 PD activities requiring travel x an average 20 teachers per PD activity x $500 average travel costs per teacher). In addition, travel activities may be accompanied by a portion of the $125,000 facility costs spent each year (250 PD activities x $500 average facility costs per activity). Finally, there may be some activities that include facility costs without travel costs.

Some example teacher PD activities their estimated travel and/or facility costs are listed below. In each of these examples, the use of Elluminate would eliminate the need for travel and facility costs.

- A district-wide one-day middle school teachers’ curricular planning meeting held at a district school classroom involving 50 teachers. Travel costs from driving (estimated to be $0.585 per mile car expense x 50 mile average round trip travel per teacher x 50 teacher participants) = $925. The use of Elluminate by participants would eliminate the need for travel costs. **Savings:** $1,462

- A course on classroom behavior management to fulfill recertification requirements. The course is held for 20 elementary school teachers with 6 after-school 2-hour sessions held at the teachers' school and taught by a school principal who has years of experience managing students. There are no travel costs. Facility costs include printed materials at $200 per teacher x 20 teachers = $4,000. Using Elluminate to participate in the course sessions from home, teacher and the principals could substitute the use of paper documents with those in electronic form, thereby saving printing costs. **Savings:** $4,000

- A district-wide, two-day workshop for 100 Pre-K to grade 6 teachers on differentiated instruction for reading held in a district school gymnasium. The workshop is facilitated by expert, district teachers. Travel costs from driving (estimated to be $0.585 per mile car expense x 80 mile average round trip travel per teacher each day x 100 teacher participants x 2 days) = $9,360. A per diem for lunch costs ($10 per teacher x 100 teachers x 2 days) = $2000. The use of Elluminate by participants would eliminate the need for travel costs. **Savings:** $11,920
• An ESC all-day seminar for 200 high school math teachers facilitated by a panel of expert teachers from schools within the ESC. Travel costs from driving (estimated to be $0.585 per mile car expense x 120 mile average round trip travel per teacher x 200 teacher participants) = $14,040. Facility costs include breakfast and lunch (200 teachers x $10 per teacher) = $4,000; a full-day ESC seminar single room cost with fixed seating for 200 teachers and equipment costs including LCD projector, lapel & podium microphone, VCR, DVD, windows computer w/internet connectivity, podium, sound system, ELMO document camera, dry erase board = $2,000; and seminar reading materials costs = $500. Total facility costs = $6,500. The use of Elluminate by participants would eliminate the need for travel and facility costs. **Savings: $20,540**

• A four-week course for a school district to meet a state mandate to have all of its 200 K-6 teachers qualified in terms of integrating technology into curriculum and instruction led by district technology staff. The course is held at a local hotel on weekends for three hours each session. Travel costs from driving (estimated at $0.585 per mile car expense x 40 mile average round-trip travel per teacher each day x 4 days x 200 teacher participants) = $18,720. Facility costs include renting a hotel conference room to break up the participants into two groups, K-3 and grades 4-6 teachers. Room rental includes: cable modem and high-speed, wireless internet access, flip chart and markers, LCD projector, microphones and sound systems, overhead projector, and screen TV with VCR and DVD player. Cost of a two room rental ($800 per session x 4 sessions) = $3,200. Course handouts costs (at $50 per teacher) = $1,000. Total facility costs = $4,200. The use of Elluminate by participants would eliminate the need for travel and facility costs. **Savings: $22,920**

• A 5-day summer institute training in elementary school science instruction held at a state college campus for 40 teachers from surrounding districts. Estimating that the campus is an average 300 miles from teachers' homes, participants would be housed in a campus dormitory for the week. Travel costs from driving (estimated at $0.585 per mile car expense x 600 mile average round trip travel per teacher x 40 teacher participants) = $14,040. Dormitory costs including meals ($75 per night x 5 nights x 40 teachers) = $15,000. Total travel costs = $29,040. Tuition is the only facility cost incurred and includes expert state university instructors funded by the state education system, classroom and laboratory facility use, and printed materials. Tuition for each of the 40 teachers is $300 per participant = $12,000. The use of Elluminate by participants would eliminate the need for travel and facility costs. **Savings: $41,040**

• A statewide two-day NCLB conference sponsored by the DOE involving 500 teachers from all state districts. The conference includes keynote addresses, workshops, sessions and panels. The conference is centrally located in the state so that all teachers can reach the event by driving. Driving costs (teachers drive an average 400 miles round trip x $0.585 per mile car expense x 500 teachers) = $117,000. Special rate hotel costs ($75 per night x 2 nights x 500 teachers) = $75,000; with food costs ($40 per day x 2 days x 500 teachers) = $40,000. Registration costs for each teacher are fully subsidized by private organizations and corporate sponsors. No facility costs are involved. The use of Elluminate by participants would eliminate the need for travel costs. **Savings: $232,000**

**Total Current Costs**

As shown in Table 1, this example organization spends $1,250,000 in teacher travel, $125,000 on facility costs, and a possible $72,000 per year on teleconferencing. Using an Elluminate solution can eliminate the need for travel as teachers can hold professional activities online. As well, facility costs including room rental fees, equipment charges, and printed material costs can be saved when Elluminate is implemented as a PD tool.

Finally, teleconferencing costs can be significantly reduced when Elluminate is used as a voice over IP (VoIP) solution to replace teleconference call charges incurred each year. If Elluminate is used as a VoIP solution to replace 50% of teleconferencing, then the $72,000 a year costs are reduced to $36,000 per year. When all three of these current costs are added together they result in total expenditure of $1,411,000 a year.
Elluminate Costs and Return on Investment

The total first-year cost for Elluminate solution is $350,000. This cost is based upon Elluminate Open Access Licensing, a flat-fee, volume-licensing plan designed to encourage use by eliminating restricted software licenses, changing usage predictions, large up-front expenditure buying challenges, and overage charges for exceeding seat limits. The $350,000 Elluminate cost given in Table 1 is a single, fixed annual fee for 1 to 3 years based upon a state with 50,000 teachers. For any DOE or district, a custom price based on the number of PD staff, degree of web conferencing use, and anticipated demand can be generated. As well, the organization can receive a discount for multi-year commitment with an additional discount for payment up front for multi-year deals.

When the organization forgoes its total costs of $1,411,000 a year on travel, facility costs, and teleconferencing in favor of a $350,000 ELS web conferencing solution for PD activities, it will immediately put into action annual cost savings of $1,061,000 a year. This represents a significant yearly ROI of 303%. Importantly, every month the decision to implement Elluminate is delayed represents a monthly cost of $88,417. Based upon this monthly expense, a $350,000 annual Elluminate purchase can be recouped in less than 4 months.

Conclusion

In spite of reduced statewide education budgets and a troubled national economy, school districts and state DOEs must continue to deliver consistent, relevant, and sustainable PD and facilitate system-wide communication and collaboration. And with the ARRA, funding is now available to help drive those initiatives. However, since this new funding will not be available on a recurring basis, organizations must act quickly to make strategic purchases that will provide the most long-term benefit for education.

The way to prepare students to compete in a global economy is to first prepare our educators. Web collaboration robustly supports a variety of ongoing PD activities, providing 21st Century tools that support 21st Century learning. Additionally, ongoing collaboration, either by design or just in time, enhances teacher effectiveness and facilitates educational change and improvement in general. The ability to justify current and proposed investments in web collaboration technology is critical.

Elluminate provides proven, best-in-class audio, video, and web solutions for real-time online learning and collaboration that deliver exceptional outcomes, including enhanced learning experiences, increased retention and completion rates, and higher ROI. Thus, it is not surprising that state departments of education and school districts, including those in Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Delaware, Louisiana, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and elsewhere, depend on Elluminate to meet the demands of today’s students, connect teachers and staff statewide, and provide cost-effective professional development.

For more information about Elluminate and its products and to view a wide variety of customer case studies, visit http://www.elluminate.com.

To request more information, contact us at info@elluminate.com or visit http://tinyurl.com/ng9aab.

For a free 30-day Elluminate trial, visit, http://tinyurl.com/kmx4g9.
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