

## **Digital Learning**

(Adopted 1994; readopted 1997; amended 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2014, 2017)

WHEREAS, the ability to use digital devices and resources is essential to student success; and

WHEREAS, the state and local boards of education recognize advances in digital learning, including electronic devices, telecommunications, mobile technologies, and supporting resources, as effective adjuncts for student learning through access to information and enriched educational experiences; and

WHEREAS, the effective use of high quality virtual and blended teaching and learning provides viable options to traditional classroom instruction; and

WHEREAS, access to standards-aligned digital resources and virtual learning opportunities are being advanced through collaboration among local school systems and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE); and

WHEREAS, the Maryland Virtual Student Learning Opportunities (MVSLO) Program offers online high school credit-bearing courses; and includes courses and resources aligned to Maryland College and Career-Ready standards (MCCRS) and other adopted content standards; and

WHEREAS, Maryland adopted its first state education technology plan in 1995, and continues to update the plan, to ensure that students and educators realize the optimum benefits from the integration of digital devices and resources in the classroom; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 state plan contains the following primary interrelated Guiding Principles:

- Innovative leadership that promotes excellence and supports transformation throughout the organization by articulating and implementing a shared vision for teaching, leading, and learning in digital environments;
- Personalized student learning that is equitable, rigorous and innovative, guided by instruction based on Universal Design for Learning principles, and that empowers students to become responsible digital citizens;
- Relevant, ongoing, and personalized professional learning where staff engage in a cycle of inquiry, reflection, and sharing to improve teaching;
- The importance of data collection and analysis to determine areas of focus, inform progress, and measure success in order to support educator and student learning;
- The necessity that an agile and robust infrastructure supports innovative instructional environments, while maximizing learning opportunities and protecting student/educator privacy; and

WHEREAS, nearly all of Maryland's classrooms have the capability to take advantage of the Internet

with the state and local school systems continuing to make progress toward the goal of having 100 percent of classrooms connected; and

WHEREAS, the recommended student to computer ratio for Maryland's more than 870,000 students is based on the current and future instructional and assessment needs as determined by the local school system; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations based on the Maryland College and Career-Ready State Standards and other adopted content standards include expectations for how digital devices and resources may be used to support student learning, instruction, and assessments; and

WHEREAS, Maryland is administering statewide, uniform student assessments such as the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments and Maryland Integrated Science Assessments (MISA); and

WHEREAS, the state assessments are primarily computer-based and include constructed response items, performance-based tasks, and computer-enhanced and computer-scored items; and

WHEREAS, local school systems are investing millions of dollars in new digital hardware and applications that provide equity of access to all students and supports educational opportunities in accordance with locally-adopted priorities, and complies with standards for administering state assessments; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with 2014 legislation, MSDE has assessed and reported on broadband capabilities in public schools; and created a workgroup to assess the technological readiness and needs of public schools for the implementation of the PARCC and other state assessments, including what resources will be needed to teach students the necessary computer skills to take the assessments; and

WHEREAS, challenges remain in addressing the "digital divide" to provide and promote access inside and outside the school setting for all students to educational resources through information technology; and

WHEREAS, school systems are expanding data-driven decision-making to improve administrative systems, inform teaching, promote personalized learning, and meet all state and federal data analysis and reporting requirements;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports state and local efforts to pursue the effective use of blended and virtual learning initiatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MABE urges the Governor, General Assembly, and State Board to develop, implement and fund an initiative to ensure equitable investments in Maryland's 24 local school systems in the educational technology necessary to fully implement assessments and eliminate the digital divide in all Maryland schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MABE will advocate for sufficient state and federal funding to ensure that MSDE and local school systems can meet the state and federally mandated data analysis and reporting requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MABE will continue to support programs to:

- Prepare students for college and career readiness through access to online learning, personalized learning, digital devices, and high-quality digital content;
- Create a fully technology-proficient PreK-12 educator workforce; and
- Provide equitable access to current and emerging digital resources for all students and educators and expanded opportunities for parents and guardians, families and the community.