

*Teachers and Technology: Making the  
Connection*

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# Foreword

**I**n the United States, the public school system is designed—ideally—to produce effective, thoughtful citizens who will become valuable contributors to society. In the race to make sure our students are well prepared to handle the world they walk into when they walk out of schools, the nation has tried to enlist as teaching resources the most relevant technological innovations of our time—whether television or telecommunications, calculators or computers. But in the process of equipping our students to learn with technology, a valuable—perhaps the *most* valuable—part of the education equation has been virtually overlooked: the teachers.

Despite over a decade of investment in educational hardware and software, relatively few of the nation's 2.8 million teachers use technology in their teaching. What are some of the reasons teachers do not use technology? What happens when they do use technology? What factors influence technology integration in schools? What roles do schools, districts, states, the private sector, and the federal government play in helping teachers with new technologies? OTA's in-depth examination of these questions was initiated at the request of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, and endorsed by the House Committee on Education and Labor (now the House Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities) and a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. As this report will show, helping schools to make the connection between teachers and technology may be one of the most important steps to making the most of past, present, and future investments in educational technology and in our children's future.

Throughout this study, the advisory panel, workshop participants, and many others played key roles in defining major issues, providing information, and contributing a broad range of perspectives that helped shape this report. OTA thanks them for their substantial commitment of time and energy. Their participation does not necessarily represent an endorsement of the contents of the report, for which OTA bears sole responsibility.



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OTA appreciates and is grateful for the valuable assistance and thoughtful critiques provided by the advisory panel members. The panel does not, however, necessarily approve, disapprove, or endorse this report. OTA assumes full responsibility for the report and the accuracy of its contents.

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