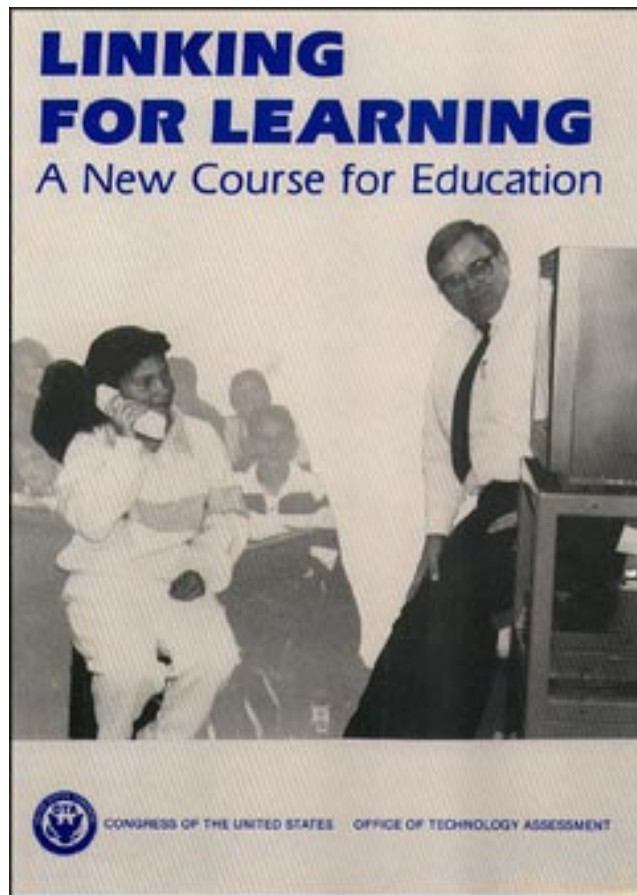


*Linking for Learning: A New Course for  
Education*

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# Foreword

Neighbors share resources and come together to create community, enhancing the special qualities of individuals while enriching the well-being of all. Electronic links, used for learning, are creating new neighbors among schools, classrooms, teachers, students, and other members of the community.

Rapidly developing telecommunications technologies, becoming cheaper even as they become more powerful, are changing American life. Enlisted over the past 5 years to meet the needs of geographically isolated schools, these technologies, united with trained and enthusiastic teachers, are beginning to enrich all our school environments. Another fascinating aspect of distance learning is that the private sector is an active participant, joining hands with educators, higher education, and government.

This study of distance learning was requested by the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources and endorsed by the House Committee on Education and Labor. OTA was asked to analyze various technological options, examine current development, and identify how Federal, State and local policies could encourage more efficient and effective use. This report complements OTA's assessment of use of computers in elementary and secondary education, *Power On! New Tools for Teaching and Learning*.

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



JOHN H. GIBBONS  
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NOTE: OTA appreciates and is grateful for the valuable assistance and thoughtful critiques provided by the advisory group members. The advisory group 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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