



STATE OF NEW YORK | EXECUTIVE CHAMBER

ANDREW M. CUOMO | GOVERNOR

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GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES SMART SCHOOLS COMMISSION HOSTS SECOND PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM

Experts Convene in Buffalo to Present Best Practices in Connectivity and Technology-Enabled Education and Learning

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced that the Smart Schools Commission sponsored its second Public Symposium, in Buffalo, to convene technology and education experts who explored innovative, successful approaches to school and community connectivity and technology-enabled education practices. The Smart Schools Commission is responsible for advising the State on how to best invest the Governor's proposed \$2 billion Smart Schools Bond Act in order to enhance teaching and learning through technology. The Governor proposed the Smart Schools initiative during his 2014 State of the State in order to reimagine New York's public schools for the 21st Century.

"Technology is driving children to communicate, explore and learn differently, and we must do everything we can to ensure that our schools are prepared to meet this new reality," Governor Cuomo said. "Folding technology into our schools is crucial in advancing the achievement of New York State's students, and by actively engaging with education and technology experts, the Smart Schools Commission is helping to create 21st Century classrooms in our schools."

The Symposium was attended by Lieutenant Governor Robert J. Duffy and featured a panel of technology experts who responded to questions by the Smart Schools Commission, which is composed of Eric Schmidt, Executive Chairman and Former CEO of Google, Geoffrey Canada, President of Harlem Children's Zone and Constance Evelyn, Superintendent of the Auburn School District in Cayuga County. The community is encouraged to submit additional input on the Smart Schools Commission [website](#); its findings will be incorporated in a final report published later this year.

The [first public symposium](#) was held on July 21 in Albany. There, five panelists highlighted to the Commission and community members the need and ability to: enrich the in-classroom learning experience by incorporating the use of tablets, laptops and smartphones; extend preparation for student instruction by using web-based software accessible at home; increase communication between the instructor and student's guardian; provide more descriptive academic progress reporting; and to support these changes, build a robust network of high-speed broadband and wi-fi connectivity throughout New York's public schools and communities.

Today, the panel of five technology and education experts promoted the themes of the first symposium, with a strong focus on the need for better broadband access in public schools across New York State, especially in rural communities, and how national research can assist in removing roadblocks to promoting digital learning. The panel also agreed that accessible connectivity is crucial to delivering high-quality STEM education, which ultimately supports the State's burgeoning nanotechnology, biotechnology and energy industries.

Evan Marwell, CEO of EducationSuperHighway, said, "It is critical that we provide all students across America equal access to the high-speed connectivity they need for a world-class, 21st Century education. We are thrilled that Governor Cuomo, the Smart Schools Commission and many other partners across the state are taking steps to provide the broadband necessary for all New York students to benefit from a rich digital education."

John Windhausen, Jr., Executive Director of the Schools, Health and Libraries Broadband Coalition, said, "High-capacity broadband is an absolute necessity for every school and school classroom. Students need to develop the skills to use technology for social good and innovation and not just for entertainment. Providing high-speed Internet connections will enable personalized learning, digital skills instruction and technology-savvy students ready for college and the 21st Century economy."

Today's symposium speakers were selected based diverse geographical, technological, disciplinary and experiential backgrounds, and included:

- **David Salway**, Director of the New York State Broadband Program Office, serves as broadband advisor to the Governor's office. In his position, he has expanded the scope of the Broadband Program Office to include additional functions such as public outreach and support of Regional Economic Development Councils Broadband Strategies. As the State's single point of contact on all matters related to broadband, he oversees all broadband grant programs, including the Governor's \$25 million Connect NY Broadband Grant Program, as well as meets with Federal and State policy makers to advance and promote broadband issues, including infrastructure build-out and digital literacy efforts and Chairs the Broadband Availability and Broadband Adoption Task Force Committees.
- **Tiffany Zhou**, Strategic Analysis Manager at EducationSuperHighway, leads research and analysis projects focused on Federal policy and state strategies for broadband. Zhou was the primary author of "Connecting America's Students: Opportunities for Action," an in-depth report of the FCC's E-rate program and broadband pricing trends which has critically shaped the dialogue on E-rate reform. Currently, she is leading the analysis of state network solutions in EducationSuperHighway's engagements with Virginia and Arkansas.
- **John Windhausen, Jr.** is Executive Director of the Schools, Health and Libraries Broadband Coalition, a diverse group of community anchor institutions, broadband companies, foundations and public interest groups that advocate for open, affordable, high-capacity broadband for anchor institutions and their communities around the country. Windhausen additionally heads Telepoly Consulting, which represents a variety of non-profit and commercial organizations and previously served as President of the Association for

Local Telecommunications Services, senior counsel to the United States Senate Commerce Committee and staff attorney at the Federal Communications Commission.

- **Brenda Lehman**, Technology Coordinator for Gananda Central and Marcus Whitman Central School Districts, supports technology across two school districts in Ontario and Wayne Counties. Lehman leads an initiative to improve infrastructure to support modern teaching and learning aimed at leveling the school districts to 21st Century standards, while also mapping the progress so that it may be scaled across other school districts.
- **Dr. Peter Turner**, Dean of Arts & Sciences at Clarkson University, has been a leading figure in STEM education and in educational outreach activities at Clarkson University for more than a decade. Turner has been especially influential in developing partnerships with school districts and BOCES in the North Country, which are increasingly dependent on broadband connectivity between the classroom and home. The latter is especially true for the college readiness summer preparation program offered free to all incoming Clarkson University students. On a broader level, Turner is deeply involved in several national initiatives on STEM college readiness, curricular development and transition to college.

A full video of the second symposium, files of the speakers' presentations, a tool to see what funds each school district would receive and a place for the community to submit suggestions can be found on the Smart Schools Commission website [HERE](#).

About the Smart Schools Commission

The Smart Schools Commission is charged with advising the State on how to best enhance teaching and learning through technology. The Governor instated the Commission in spring 2014 in order to reimagine New York's public schools for the 21st Century. Access to advanced technology fosters a more interactive and personalized classroom experience while facilitating increased communication between parents, students, and teachers. Embracing innovation in education is an important step towards helping New York's students gain the skills they need to succeed in the 21st Century economy.

Members of the Smart Schools Commission include:

Eric Schmidt, Executive Chairman and Former CEO of Google: Mr. Schmidt joined Google in 2001 and helped grow the company from a Silicon Valley startup to a global leader in technology. He served as Google's Chief Executive Officer from 2001-2011, overseeing the company's technical and business strategy alongside founders Sergey Brin and Larry Page. Under his leadership Google dramatically scaled its infrastructure and diversified its product offerings while maintaining a strong culture of innovation.

Geoffrey Canada, President of Harlem Children's Zone: In his 30 years with Harlem Children's Zone, Inc., Mr. Canada has become nationally recognized for his pioneering work helping children and families in Harlem and as a passionate advocate for education reform. The New York Times Magazine called Harlem Children's Zone "one of the most ambitious social policy experiments of our time." In October 2005, Mr. Canada was named one of "America's Best Leaders" by U.S. News and World Report, and Fortune recently named him one of the "World's Greatest 50 Leaders."

Constance Evelyn, Superintendent of the Auburn School District in Cayuga County: Ms. Evelyn has served as the Superintendent of Schools for the Auburn Enlarged City School District since August 2012. Prior to serving as Superintendent she has held a variety of leadership positions in Upstate schools, including the Ithaca City School District, Oswego City Schools, Rome City Schools, and Bedford Central School District.

To find out more about the Smart Schools Commission and submit comments and suggestions, please visit <http://www.governor.ny.gov/smart-schools-ny>.

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