



# Student Views on Technology for Learning

*Students Speak Up to the President*

# **Student Views on Technology and Learning**

## ***Students Speak Up to the President***

**This report is dedicated to all of the students who shared their amazing voices and views on technology and learning as part of NetDay's Speak Up Day for Students 2004. Your voices were heard loud and clear!**

**We also applaud all of the educators who provided the opportunity for their students to participate in this landmark event.**

**NetDay**

**NetDay is a non-profit education technology organization.**

**[www.NetDay.org](http://www.NetDay.org)**

**August 23, 2005**

**Table of Contents**

Speak Up to the President – Introduction.....4

Speak Up to the President – Main Themes.....4

Speak Up to the President – Conclusion .....15

Highlights from Speak Up Day for Students 2004.....16

Acknowledgements.....17

## **Introduction**

NetDay is dedicated to helping the educational community promote and support the use of technology and science as key tools in the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. We believe that today's tech-savvy students are prepared to take on a new role in their education and in their careers as life-long learners. As opportunities arise to consider the impact of technology and student experiences on school policy and planning, we aim to build a national and local awareness of the importance of student voices in decisions that impact their education.

As a result of our annual Speak Up events we have surveyed 377,000 students about their technology use and views about technology and their education. Schools and school districts have used their local results to inform their technology plans, purchasing decisions, and professional development. The aggregated national results have also been received by national organizations and government agencies including influencing the U.S. Department of Education's *National Education Technology Plan* and the Department of Commerce's Visions 2020.2 report: *Student Views on Transforming Education and Training Through Advanced Technologies*. (See both the plan and the report at [www.nationaletechplan.org](http://www.nationaletechplan.org).)

During the 2004 Speak Up Event *Speak Up Day for Students*, timed during the 2004 presidential campaign, students responded to a questionnaire which concluded with the following open-ended question: *What is the one thing you would like to tell the next president about how you use technology for learning?* This report summarizes over 67,000 student responses to this question with an aim to inform decision-makers at local levels as well as state and national levels about student's priorities related to technology and their educations

The respondents to the Speak Up survey included a self-selected sampling of students who responded to an online call for participation. While no statistical sampling was conducted, participation consisted of over 167,000 students from urban and rural, public and private schools from all 50 states and Department of Defense schools world-wide. Of these schools, 38 percent of these students were in grades K-6 and 62 percent were students in grades 6-12. In about one-fifth of participating schools, underrepresented groups constituted the majority of the student population. This paper explores major themes and ideas represented in the responses of the participants.

## **Main Themes**

NetDay's Speak Up events are designed with a belief in encouraging students to share their voices and opinions about their experiences with technology and learning. At the time of the 2004 Student Speak Up survey, students along with adults in their communities were energized by the 2004 presidential campaign – encouraged by the media, bloggers, and community events to share their opinions and take action in the election. It was timely to involve students in this energy by encouraging them to share their best ideas with the incoming leader of their nation.

*What is the one thing you would like to tell the next president about how you use technology for learning?* Students responded to this call for action thoughtfully, seriously, and mostly pragmatically. Out of 55,000 responses, less than 5 percent were off-topic, e.g., "My parents voted for you!" or non-serious, e.g., "Give me a horse or pony." This paper explores nine main themes that emerged from their responses that will be of interest to all who have student's interests in mind. The following pages summarize each of the themes and offer representative excerpts from the students' responses. (Spelling errors have been corrected for ease of reading in this report.)

### **Main Themes**

- *Technology is important in my life.*
- *Technology is a big part of my learning.*
- *We use technology for learning in many ways.*
- *Technology improves grades and test scores.*
- *We use technology to communicate.*
- *We also learn outside of the classroom.*
- *We want to learn OUR way.*
- *Technology is important for our careers and our futures.*
- *Please listen to our recommendations.*

### **Commonly Used Words in Student Responses**

More – 10,996  
 Fun – 2,874  
 Very – 6,787  
 Fast/Efficient/Quick – 5,111  
 Better – 4,990  
 Easy/Easier – 1,772  
 Important – 5,884  
 Accurate – 414

Knowledge – 347  
 Information – 4,527  
 Research – 2,093  
 Answers – 273  
 Homework – 4,027  
 Assignments – 1,549  
 Please – 2,314  
 Thank you – 1,749

IM – 1,934  
 Internet 9,314  
 Money – 1,789  
 Music – 746  
 Filter/Firewall/Block – 1,887  
 Phone – 2,237  
 Future – 1,213  
 Career/Job – 1,373

## **Technology Is Important in My Life**

With a limit of 500 characters, student responses showed an eagerness to explain the overall importance and pervasiveness of technology in their lives. Their responses commonly reference "every day" use, and the variety of ways technology is used. Many responses highlighted that computers are important for students' social lives and their family lives as well as for their education. The word "important" was used in students' responses almost 5,900 times.

*Dear Mr. President:*

*Technology is very important to us these days. Technology helps us with our homework, it helps us to keep in touch with friends, to know more about sports and hobbies. Technology is very important to us and I think every body should have access to computer and technology in general to learn more and become a more intelligent and better person in life, school, sports and every thing in between. Thanks for listening!*

*-- 7<sup>th</sup> grade girl from Lawrence, Kansas*

### **Other representative excerpts:**

- *Technology is very important in our everyday lives. You wouldn't imagine how technology helps you each and everyday.*
- *Technology is a big part of my life.*
- *I use technology in almost everything I do for school and in my free time.*
- *I think technology is very important because I use it every day and love it so much.*
- *Technology helps power my life.*
- *Technology makes my life easier in a lot of different ways*
- *I use technology for learning in so many ways. Computers are the tools that students need to keep on track and up to date in such a rapidly-moving world.*
- *Technology is the way of my generation.*

## **Technology Is a Big Part of My Learning**

Students feel very strongly about the impact of technology on their experiences at school for learning. They assert the positive role technology plays in the learning process and they emphasize their daily reliance on technology as a learning tool. Many students expressed favor for classes and teachers that make use of technology, citing that technology makes learning more fun, interesting, exciting, or easier. It is noteworthy that students praise technology as a tool for research, for problem solving, for presentation, and for communication. The following excerpts are representative of the enthusiasm in students' responses; they want it to be known that they are serious about learning and technology is a significant tool for their education.

*Dear Mr. President:*

*I would like to share with you how I use technology for learning. In 7th grade we study HARD. I mean really hard and sometimes our teacher lets us use technology to do just that. Mostly our social studies teacher. (She's the best.) Anyways, sometimes I will IM my friends and we will quiz each other back and forth on the upcoming quiz. It's so fun to study with technology. I love it. Anyways I have to finish my survey. Bye and good luck with America.*

*-- 7<sup>th</sup> grade girl from Beaufort, South Carolina*

### **Other representative excerpts:**

- *I use technology for learning every day of my life.*
- *I use technology for learning in so many ways.*
- *Personally, I use computers for almost everything school related! Whether it's writing a report for English, researching for science, or checking my math homework with a friend, technology plays an important role.*
- *I feel that I can grasp a topic better when I am able to go on to a computer and research it to its full meaning.*
- *I find that technology really does help a lot in that it encourages us to read and use our imaginations.*
- *I use technology for learning in so many ways. Computers are the tools that students need to keep on track and up to date in such a rapidly-moving world... I use the internet for my homework, social connection, amusement, and my practice on organizational skills. I think there should be more emphasis on expanding students' knowledge about technology. It is very beneficial.*
- *School is very important to me and I like to do the very best I can. Using technology like computers and the Internet makes that a possibility.*
- *I use technology for learning by using online sources on websites that will help me with my school work and homework. I don't use it just so I can get good grades I use it to study and do good.*
- *I love to use technology to learn. Everything is fast and clear to me. Technology makes learning fun!*
- *Technology is one of the most important sources for information and help with schoolwork or things that catch our attention. It helps us to find information without having to take up valuable time when we could be doing other work that we could get done. It also allows us to have more sources for one subject and better knowledge on one subject. Technology is also very fun. It feels good to be able to do your school work and have fun at the same time.*

## **We Use Technology for Learning in Many Ways**

Students are eager to share the variety of ways they use technology for learning in school. They most frequently describe how they use the Internet for homework assignments and research. Respondents also mention technology use related to using websites for science facts, online flashcards and games for math, Internet research for social studies reports,

typing for writing essays, and digital equipment for art and music. Students commonly use words like *efficient, fast, quick, and accurate* and discuss finding *information* and gaining *knowledge*.

*Dear Mr. President,*

*Well Mr. President we use the spreadsheet for putting down our mad minute scores. We make graphs that show our improvements in our scores. We also use a blog by telling us what we our going to do in class. Our class right now is doing power points on our favorite foods. Also during the beginning of the school year, we took a test on 25 tech. terms. At home I do a typing program. I do that to have better typing. Those are some ways of using technology to learn.*

*-- 6<sup>th</sup> grade girl from Lewisburg, Pennsylvania*

### **Other representative excerpts:**

- *I use technology for learning to do presentations and writing assignments. It's great to do presentations on a computer because you can get creative and add sound to make it interesting. I also like to do writing assignments on the computer because I can practice my typing.*
- *I use technology to write papers, research assignments and find pictures. I also use my computer to write stories. This helps me with my spelling, grammar, punctuation and typing abilities.*
- *One thing that I would like to tell you about how I use technology for learning is that I always go onto the Internet to help me with my homework. It helps me by going to websites that are exactly like the books we have in school.*
- *At my high school, technology has a major influence on school work. Many of our teachers use a website that shows our grades, assignments, and lets us email the teacher...Teachers use Smartboards, projectors, power point presentations, and demos to present our class notes. It makes it easier for us to learn through the use of technology with which are we comfortable.*
- *I use technology for learning, by checking out educational sites and typing essays. I am very happy my school has Internet access! My school allows students to come in in the morning and use the computers if they do not have Internet access.*
- *My school uses a lot of technology to learn. We have online textbooks that help a lot, especially if you forget to bring your textbook home. They also have links for us to visit when we are at our home or for us to do at the local library that include important information about the subject we are learning about in school.*
- *I think technology is great, it helps me with many things. Right now I am making a website for social studies all about the Egyptians. I learned a lot from all of it.*

## **Technology Improves Grades and Test Scores**

While many organizations around the country continue to do scientific studies to determine how technology impacts student achievement, today's students clearly believe that the availability and application of technology directly impacts their success in



school, their grades, and scores on standardized tests. They believe that more access to better technology would result in higher student achievement.

*Dear Mr. President:*

*I think every single student deserves to have access to computer technology and the Internet. I am sure that scores will increase if there is better and more technology in our schools, which in the end will lead to a better future.*

*-- 7<sup>th</sup> grade boy from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

### **Other representative excerpts:**

- *It would be a lot harder to get good grades without Internet access.*
- *I always check my grades online so I know what I need to work harder at before report card time.*
- *I think that if teachers would allow us to use more technology in school students' grades would increase and so would their enthusiasm about school.*
- *Everything is going ok but for technology we need to be able to do class work (like research) in the computer lab. It will help us out and let us get better grades.*
- *I like to use technology for learning because it helps a lot on my homework. Now I'm getting better grades. It helps because I can get faster help at home then coming to school the next day and not having my homework done.*
- *Using technology for school work has helped me get better grades.*
- *I just wanted to say that technology is very important to my learning. Without all of the available technology resources at school I know my grades would have a drastic change.*
- *Technology is essential. Technology is imperative to better grades in school; it is a wonderful resource for writing papers and essays. Assignments are completed quicker and more thoroughly when using technology.*
- *Technology will help every student succeed in school.*
- *Technology helps me learn as much as possible on a subject and it helps me get better grades.*
- *I use technology for learning in school in many ways. We are concentrating on improving our state test scores and all of our teachers are trying to integrate technology into all of our other subjects. I like this.*

## **We Use Technology to Communicate**

Students want the president to know how they use technology not only to work independently but also to collaborate, share ideas, and receive help from peers, family members and other adults in their communities. Students regularly communicate via email and instant messenger (IM) after school to get help with homework, to collaborate on projects, to verify assignments, and to communicate with their teachers. And, they have ideas for using this technology to collaborate with each other AT school – ideas they think should be considered when re-thinking the rules and regulations around technology use in the traditional school environment.

*Dear Mr. President,*

*Technology is a vital component to the learning process. Internet access not only allows students to quickly and efficiently gather information, but it also enables the free exchange of ideas, enhancing everybody's work. If more students in all schools were given the same capacity with which to access the internet, the quality of education as a whole could be vastly improved.*

*-- 12<sup>th</sup> grade boy from Florida Virtual School*

**Other representative excerpts:**

- *I think we should have IM at school so we can talk to family for help.*
- *I use the email for learning because if I don't get what I'm working on I can always count on my friends to help me.*
- *Technology opens up lines of communication that were once unavailable between teachers and students.*
- *I think we should be able to use instant messenger (IM) in school, because teachers are always telling us not to talk but help each other out, so we can help each other by talking online. Also use our e-mail accounts like hotmail and such, so that we can send ourselves homework or other stuff.*
- *Technology allows me to learn fast, efficiently, and independently. Technology helps me share ideas and collaborate with others. Technology is vital in learning about ideas and places remote from me.*
- *I think that we should be able to IM and email on the internet because my internet friends help me with my homework.*
- *I use my technology for simple thing. I like to write stories for others to enjoy. I also use it to communicate with my far away friends and family. I don't believe in the bad stuff others do online.*

**We Also Learn Outside of the Classroom**

Many of students' learning experiences with technology take place outside of the classroom. Students' comments show that technology plays an important role in independent exploration and learning. Students are using computers and the Internet to find resources to support hobbies and extra-curricular activities, follow current events, investigate future careers, and research topics that interest them. We also heard from students taking online courses in addition to a public school or home school curriculum.

*Dear Mr. President,*

*I love my computer and I have only two reasons why. My computer is currently holding my novel in progress and my computer allows me to talk to other military teen delegates for friendly and job related discussions.*

*-- 9<sup>th</sup> grade girl from Cheyenne, Wyoming*

**Other representative excerpts:**

- *Using technology is so fun! I go on my computer almost every day! I mean there are so many interesting things you can do with the Internet/computer. You can look up new things you haven't even heard about before, and in about an hour, be an expert on it!*
- *I use technology to find out about the war in Iraq. I try to find out as much as I can about the war since my brother is a marine.*
- *Mr. President I use technology to look up information on your campaign trails and what you think about different topics such as health care, national security, the environment, and other major issues in our society.*
- *I use technology for a different purpose than most people. I like to do work on cryptozoology. Just in case you don't know, that is the study of hidden animals, such as the Loch Ness Monster, Bigfoot, and aliens. It is a very interesting career. Online I have applied to at least 3 different colleges.*
- *I am a sophomore and we very much need to have more online classes to help our learning process, not only are we learning how technology works but we are actually taking classes that we do not have in our schools or not enough teachers to teach the classes.*
- *I'm a home school student, and I use technology for online classes. These classes are on subjects my mom doesn't teach, and I'd like to know more about. I'm learning a Foreign Language this year, along with how to make web pages, and about Global Issues.*

**We Want to Learn OUR Way**

Today's students have been referred to as "native users" of technology. They have grown up learning with technology and using technology to solve problems. Just as many adults, these students have come to rely on technology as a tool to serve their research and organizational needs. Their comments show a desire for more freedom in schools to use technology "their way." Their requests include variations on placement and access to technology, listening to music while they work, and having more control over Internet filters.

*Dear Mr. President:*

*In school, I think that we do not use technology enough in the learning process. We seldom go in to the computer labs to find information or do work, and even when we do, it is so rigidly controlled and planned out by the teacher that it hinders the creativity potential of our work. We need more freedom. I am not suggesting technological anarchy, just a little room to move on our own, make our own discoveries, and personalize our work through the utilization of technology.*

*-- 8<sup>th</sup> grade boy from Douglas, Massachusetts*

### **Other representative excerpts:**

- *I think the teachers should let us work how we want to work. We shouldn't have to do what they want us to do if it's not going to help us.*
- *I think that using technology is very important in learning. Not only does it make things easier for student but it allows the students to be more interested in the topic because we are not just listening to someone read things to us but we are able to do it our own way and find out many different things about the topic.*
- *The problem is all the "Internet security." Many of the sites we NEED for class work etc. are being blocked b/c apparently the ones blocking sites are not aware of the material the sites contain. Also music is a important part of my life. I am able to focus more and think clearer when I am able to listen to music during an assignment. I wish we could have iPods or other materials at all times while online during the school hours.*
- *Technology is useful for completing assignments, however there is a contradictory policy surrounding its usage. School computers are saturated with filters and firewalls, but they miss some websites that definitely should be blocked and may prohibit legitimate use of others.*
- *I am a Florida High School Senior and a devoted Thespian. One of the main ways I get the scripts and information for scenes and competition pieces is the internet. There are times when I need to look at the original script, and I need to print up a new one before practice. I can't, because the sites are off-limits. I would greatly appreciate it, if you would consider loosening the grip the schools have.*

## **Technology Is Important for Our Careers and Our Futures**

Today's students believe that having access to technology for learning in schools is crucial for their future success in college and in their careers. Some students highlight that general computer skills are required for today's job market. Other students have already identified careers in fields that depend on technology. Students see a role for technology in a successful future for themselves and a successful economy.

*Dear Mr. President:*

*I am so grateful that I get to learn about technology at school, because I know that I will take my technology skills with me in life -- to college, during my career and more.*

*-- 8<sup>th</sup> grade girl from Greensboro, North Carolina*

### **Other representative excerpts:**

- *The use of technology in school is very important to the youth of America. The better technology we have the better chance our youth have of being successful in their future.*
- *Technology is our future, technology is my future.*
- *I am a graphic artist. I've been using graphic software since I was 8. Now, I'm 18 and ready to go off to college for graphic arts, all thanks to 10 years of experience*

- with a computer and graphic software.*
- I think that technology is a key part of today's economy. With how much we all depend on technology, it is good to have younger kids and kids our age to grow with it, so that in the future, we can stay up-to-date.*
  - I use technology a lot for learning because some day I would like to be a person who fixes computers and works with them.*
  - Technology is a magnificent and ever-growing organism. It is needed in schools so that kids can learn how to use them. In today's job markets computer skills are becoming more important everyday. If kids do not know how to use these new technologies our country will not be able to advance itself to our full potential.*
  - Generation X is a versatile generation that will be your next workforce. You can't imagine the potential this generation has for advancing the human race forward into the technological future. You must encourage more research on things like space, and anything you find futuristic.*
  - Technology is very important to us. When we use computers we think about what we could do that would be better.*
  - Technology is what the world revolves around. Someone lacking the use of technology is at a great disadvantage in the world today. Everyone should have the opportunity to be able to use technology to further their education and chance of success in the world.*
  - Technology makes learning better by preparing students, not only for high school but for college and life experiences as well. Technology makes learning possible in modern society today and students should have access to the proper tools to have success.*
  - I think computers are very important to learning. Since the technology industry is on the rise, I think technology education is important. Technology creates many jobs in the United States, and jobs are good for the economy.*
  - The computer helps us to figure out what we will do in our lives. Not every kid goes on the computer to check their e-mail or to play games. Some kids like me go to different colleges online and figure out which one is best for us. I have already decided which collage I might want to go to by looking online. Thank you and I hope what I say will make a difference.*
  - I think technology is very important to our lives and will help us get better jobs when we are older. I think technology also helps with our social lives and makes us happier.*

### **Please Listen to Our Recommendations**

Finally, many students offered suggestions and recommendations to the president about technology spending, access, and teacher training. Their comments show both an understanding of school funding limitations, as well as a strong desire for some concrete changes in the availability of technology resources across locations and changes in professional development opportunities for teachers. As one student wrote, "There is much room for improvement in the technology used in our school."

Students were not shy in asking for more money, more equipment, better equipment, faster Internet connections, and more freedom in the use of technology at school. While some students acknowledged that they understood that the power of these spending decisions do not rest with the President of the United States, their earnestness in asking and the urgency of their requests should be noted by all who are tasked with decisions related to technology in our nation's schools.

*Dear Mr. President:*

*Please help out our schools! Some schools are really lacking technology, simply because they don't have the money to handle it.*

*-- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade girl from Florida Virtual School*

- *I appreciate being able to access the Internet and using computer technology for my schooling. I live in a remote area and our Internet access is less than desirable. I would like to see high-speed Internet access available for everyone throughout the United States.*
- *Although most students have computers and technology at home, not all can afford it. I believe all schools should supply computers and technology to their students. I believe it enhances their academic growth.*
- *To help us learn more, I think we should give schools more money for better technology. All schools should have fairly new computers. The computers should be fast too. Some kids don't have computers at home and need to look things up.*
- *The technology level at our high school is bordering on stone age. It would be nice if there were funds for new computer labs, and other electronic equipment.*
- *Dear Mr. President: I am wondering if you could have more computers in school for the education of children. It would really help students more than you think. Well thank you for reading this. :)*
- *I believe all schools should have technology programs to teach people the various uses of computers. Technology is not really an option anymore -- it is the way to live.*
- *Equipment really needs to be updated. At our school the keyboards stick and the mice don't work. We also have outdated software and computers, we were supposed to get new ones but the money ran out and we still don't have any new computers.*
- *The government has always tried to make schools the most technologically up-to-date, but it is not enough for schools to update once every ten years, when it is slow and outdated within three years of their purchase. If the technology is not kept up to date and functional, then the learning process is severely inhibited. Make the school system a model of the best technology, and see how that changes standardized test scores.*
- *There is only way to ensure that students are learning to the best of their ability. That is to provide them with updated technology. We need wireless internet and new computers for our classrooms. We need computer access after school and on the weekends.*
- *Provide more training for teachers. Education has not caught up to the business world in terms of its use of integration of technology to make schools and classrooms*

*more efficient places to learn and work.*

- *I think that you should have more technology for students and we should have updated things and also more access to technology. I think that this should happen so that the kids in America's test scores and smartness will go up again.*
- *I feel that if you are to put computers in each school around the states and or create a fund for money with schools and technology you would not only help the students but ease the pain of teachers who use computers in their class.*
- *Our schools need major technological improvements. I am a member of the yearbook club at my school, and we have only two working computers that have been hobbled together from several broken computers. Much of our vital technology (scanners, printers, etc) does not work all the time. Many teachers in our school have slow, unreliable computers with which to work. There is much room for improvement in the technology used in our school. Please help us to get new equipment.*
- *I have heard that in places such as Virginia students have been assigned a lap top. Shouldn't it be country wise to give every student their own lap top for a year?*
- *I'm J.P. and I'm on the newspaper staff at my school, technology is a huge part of our paper. We were not able to print an Aug. or Sept. edition because of the old technology we are stuck with. It's REALLY embarrassing that a school of the arts can't even produce their newspaper. We have computers that are older than the school, literally, intricate layout and design can't be done on computers like these. Please help public education technology deficiency. Thank You.*
- *I use technology in many aspects of my life both for pleasure and learning. At school I am constantly hindered by either teachers or rules that forbid certain technological opportunities. Furthermore the equipment is so outdated and scarce that using modern technologies for learning such as I do at home is simply impossible.*
- *Dear Mr. President: I believe that some changes in the technology of education would have a big impact in success. I think you should incorporate the latest technologies, should have network space available for each student that could be accessible from home. Better technology oriented teachers who would be able to use projectors, smart boards, etc. And open computer labs 24/7 so that it would be accessible after school and after jobs.*
- *Schools should be more computer savvy and allow more use of the tools available in technology. Make teachers more open to the idea of technology and allow us to use it more often. I think teachers are afraid of technology because they didn't have it when they were younger and it scares them. I know all teachers aren't like this, I even think teachers in my school have to use technology in their job description. Please make technology more available at schools.*

### **Conclusion**

In the Fall of 2004, students did not know which candidate would win the election. The focus of the Speak Up survey's final open-ended question invited students to share one single quick idea with the incoming president about how they use technology for learning. The responses were overwhelmingly strongly-stated, urging our nation's leaders to consider the importance of technology to our students' learning experiences. We heard

students share ideas about using technology as a tool, not only for research, but for communication, presentation, and organization. We heard students' ideas about their futures and the importance of technology for their futures in college and in the workforce. And we heard student's ideas about how technology could be made more accessible and useful in their daily lives as students who care about learning. NetDay's goal in sharing this report with a national audience is that the voices of today's students will be heard not only by our national leaders, but also by decision-makers at local levels.

NetDay is once again hosting it's 2005 Speak Up Event, this year inviting both students AND teachers to participate in an online survey about technology and learning. This Fall's survey follows up on many of the technology issues addressed in the 2003 and 2004 student and teacher surveys. In addition, new questions cover hot topics in education including those brought up by students in their open-ended responses. Our new questions focus on topics such as **online learning, one-to-one computer initiatives, professional development, science and innovation, science and innovation, and 21st century workforce skills**. Learn more about NetDay's Speak Up events at [www.NetDay.org](http://www.NetDay.org)

### **Acknowledgements**

This report is dedicated to all of the students who shared their amazing voices and views on technology and learning as part of NetDay's Speak Up Day for Students 2004. Your voices were heard loud and clear! We also applaud all of the educators who provided the opportunity for their students to participate in this landmark event.

The Speak Up Day 2004 Survey was made possible by the generous support of the Bell South Foundation and the Bell South Corporation.



© NetDay 2005

**NetDay retains all legal rights to the data gathered as part of NetDay Speak Up Day for Students 2004 and prohibits the use of the data for commercial or unauthorized purposes by any entity. For more information about appropriate use, please contact NetDay (info@NetDay.org).**





## Highlights from NetDay's Speak Up Day for Students 2004

### Participation Overview

167,000 students from 1,782 schools participated in the online surveys from October 11 through November 12, 2004. Over the past two years, over 377,000 K-12 students have shared their ideas on education and technology with NetDay through Speak Up Day.

Profile of 2004 Speak Up Day students:

- Grade distribution: K-6 (Elementary) – 38% Gr 6-12 (Middle + High School) – 62%
- Gender distribution: Female (49%) Male (51%)
- Participated in Speak Up Day 2003: 7%
- Geography: All 50 states + District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and American military bases throughout the world
- Top 5 states for participation: Texas, North Carolina, Alabama, California, Georgia

Profile of 2004 Speak Up Day schools (based upon US Department of Education data identifiers):

- Type of school: Public (89%) Private (11%)
- Type of community: Urban (56%) Rural (22%)
- % of Title 1 eligible: 30%
- % of schools with a majority non-white student population: 21%

### Sampling of Emerging Themes from National Findings

*Today's students are creating a new norm for technology use that seamlessly combines learning (both in school and out of school), entertainment and communications into their daily activities.*

*Students' use of new technologies such as instant messaging, music downloads and cell phones have little or not gender differentiation. The greatest gender split continues to be in online and video gaming.*

*Younger students' access and usage of technology, particularly communications technology, is expanding dramatically and these students are now pushing the expectations for greater tech use in elementary school.*

(Note: The Speak Up Day surveys are a convenience sampling and we have not done any statistical significance testing on the data.)

© NetDay 2005

NetDay retains all legal rights to the data gathered as part of NetDay Speak Up Day for Students 2004 and prohibits the use of the data for commercial or unauthorized purposes by any entity.  
For more information about appropriate use, please contact NetDay (info@NetDay.org).

## **A sampling of highlights from the national findings:**

### **Communications is #1 with today's students**

- Access
  - 81% of students in grades 6-12 have at least one email account. 14% have 4+ email accounts.
  - Three-quarters of these students have at least one IM screen name and one-quarter of those students say that they have 4 or more IM screen names. 33% of students in grades 3-5 have an IM screen name.
  - 58% have their own cell phone and 68% of those gr 6-12 students bring it to school, whether the school allows cell phones or not. 1 in 5 of those school-bound cell phones has text and photo/video capabilities.
  
- Usage
  - Email and instant messaging is the #1 technology activity for students in grades 6-12 outside of school.
  - 40% of students say that they use email and instant messaging on a weekly basis.
  - Two-thirds of students email or IM with others besides friends on a weekly basis – 69% email parents & family members, 25% email with adults involved in their education and 4% email with a religious leader.
  - While girls are more likely to use email than boys, there is little gender split on instant messaging – both boys and girls IM with the same frequency.
  - Students cite instant messaging as one of the top 3 ways they use technology for schoolwork – to IM a classmate about a school project.
  - 1 out 3 students say that they know someone who has been bullied or harassed online by another student using email or IM.
  
- Aspirations
  - If students could change one thing about tech use at middle or high school their #1 change would be to allow email and IM access from school. For elementary students, it would be “use their cell phone.”

### **Technology is more than just fun & games for today's students – but that's important too!**

- Access
  - Desktop computer is #1 device used by students weekly followed by cell phones & video game players.
  - But the #1 obstacle to using technology more at school is time – students say that they don't have enough time in their school day to use their school's technology. Same thing students said in 2003.
  
- Usage
  - Students like to use technology for schoolwork because it gets their assignments done more quickly and they get better information online. “Technology is fun” is only the 3<sup>rd</sup> most popular reason today for middle and high school students.
  - Two-thirds of students say that their teachers have talked to them about online plagiarism. 27% say that they know someone who has cheated using online materials.
  - While boys are more likely to play online or video games, there is no gender differentiation with who is downloading and listening to music online. Like IM, both girls and boys are using technology for music without a gender bias.
  - Amongst the 94% of kids who play online and video games, what they like most about playing is figuring out the strategy of the game. The thrill of winning takes second place with these kids.
  
- Aspirations
  - Don't take away my Internet! 83% of students say losing Internet would negatively impact schoolwork.
  - Let me use more technology! 94% of students said that technology access is important to their education and future jobs and careers.
  - What if . . . students designed a new school? They would want fast, wireless Internet access throughout the school, computers labs that were open after school and on weekends, and lots of new computers.

© NetDay 2005

**NetDay retains all legal rights to the data gathered as part of NetDay Speak Up Day for Students 2004 and prohibits the use of the data for commercial or unauthorized purposes by any entity.**

**For more information about appropriate use, please contact NetDay (info@NetDay.org).**



**NetDay**

15707 Rockfield Boulevard, Suite 330

Irvine CA 92618

949-609-4660 (voice)

949-609-4665 (fax)

[www.NetDay.org](http://www.NetDay.org)