

Our society has changed from an industrial based economy to one driven by information — often rapidly changing information, obtained and maintained by rapidly changing technology. The old educational model of learning by rote and the memorization of facts does not prepare students well for this new dynamic reality. Today's students need higher-order-thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as a familiarity with an array of technologies. Our educational system must provide these skills and experiences, which are necessary for students to flourish in the new work environment.

The EAST® model integrates professional-level technology into the classroom, where students gain real-world experience by identifying conditions that need improvement in their own communities and collaborating with civic groups and others to solve those problems.

In EAST, students learn *how to learn*.



Research

Initial research has shown that the EAST model works! Additional funding will make it possible to expand in-depth research, further proving the positive effects of EAST, and increasing eligibility for operational grants and other funding.



Support for EAST is Support for the Community

The work of the EAST Initiative contributes to student growth and facilitator expertise; but it also results in community improvement (especially in rural areas, where often EAST classrooms provide services that are otherwise unavailable), while at the same time preparing capable and responsible citizens who are prepared to deal with today's work world and to solve tomorrow's problems.

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EAST[®]initiative

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Environmental and Spatial Technology

team work



The EAST Initiative

A nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, the EAST Initiative works with schools and institutions across the country to implement local EAST programs. Since 1996 it has been helping schools, EAST program facilitators and students implement service-learning projects, technology education and individualized education goals. The EAST method of education has been named a model program by the United States Department of Education and the United States Department of Labor.

The Initiative works with schools to equip classrooms, train facilitators and provide technical training for students at local and regional training centers, as well as online. Participating schools must sign a set of assurances, promising to follow the prescribed EAST methods and participate in periodic required facilitator and student training sessions.

Funding is provided by the Arkansas Department of Education, as well as public and private grants and individual and corporate donations. Additional funding will allow us to expand our assistance in the following areas:

service

technology

Technical Training for Students

Training sessions are held year-round at training centers in Little Rock and Fayetteville, Arkansas, as well as periodically at regional locations. EAST programs from around the country send student representatives to receive seed training. Those students then relay the new information to their classmates.

Professional Development for Facilitators

The EAST model of education is very different than the traditional approach used by most educators. In EAST, instructors are called facilitators and are specifically trained to guide and encourage students as the students identify community problems and seek to solve them. The facilitator does not impart information for the students to memorize. He or she is not expected to know all the answers, or to have mastered all the forms of technology. The facilitator acts as a resource guide and a sounding board.

Program Development

As the number of schools with EAST programs grows, so does the need for funding. The Initiative provides site support to help schools effectively implement and manage EAST programs, as well as training for students and facilitators, Vision Building workshops for

schools interested in starting an EAST program and orientation workshops for school administrators. It also sponsors events such as the annual EAST Conference, a Summer Seminar for facilitators and EAST Night Out, a night of open house events in EAST schools across the nation. Initial funding is in place for an EAST After Hours program, to expand the EAST experience beyond the confines of the school building.

Annual EAST Conference

An important part of the EAST experience is the annual EAST Conference, where hundreds of schools from around the country send EAST student representatives to present the work they have produced over the last year. The trade show-like environment includes exhibits, break-out training sessions and a gala awards banquet. Sponsors and exhibitors have access to over 2000 students, facilitators and industry professionals with whom they can share their message.

Conference sponsorship pays off for the organization advertising, and helps underwrite the cost of this worthwhile and horizon-expanding experience for students.

self- direction

