

## For Immediate Release

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### **CoSN Awarded MacArthur Grant for Project Exploring How to Overcome Organizational and Policy Barriers to Effective Use of Web 2.0 in Schools**

Washington, DC (October 9, 2009) – The Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) today announced that it received a renewal grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, as part of the foundation’s digital media and learning initiative, which is focused on understanding how young people are changing as a result of digital media use and what the implications are for libraries, museums and schools. The grant was awarded to CoSN for phase II of a project aimed at determining how to expand the use of Web 2.0 applications – blogs, wikis, social networking tools and digital media – to create participatory learning in U.S. schools.

CoSN’s project, titled *Schools and Participatory Culture: Overcoming Organizational and Policy Barriers*, includes two phases. The first phase included the release of a report in May, which found that school district administrators understand the significance of Web 2.0 for teaching and learning, but the actual use of Web 2.0 to improve the learning environment in U.S. schools is quite limited. The report was based on a survey of nearly 1,200 school administrators nationwide, conducted to gauge their thoughts on the role of digital media in the classroom.

“Our survey confirmed anecdotal evidence of school leaders having an overwhelmingly positive view of Web 2.0 tools and their potential impact on students’ lives and education, but we also found that school policies and other barriers stand in the way of realizing the full potential of these tools,” said James Bosco, CoSN’s Principal Investigator for the grant. “The next phase of our project will allow us to take what we learned and provide needed practical resources for administrators so that they are empowered to expand the use of Web 2.0 in schools.”

Phase II of CoSN’s project will be centered on disseminating information and providing resources to educators at the district level so Web 2.0 applications can be used to increase the vitality of the learning environment. The grant will begin this month, and over the next 14 months CoSN will focus on the following three objectives:

- Expanding the knowledge base of U.S. school administrators around Web 2.0 and participatory learning for three key school district level administrator roles (superintendents, curriculum directors, and technology directors).

- Creating and disseminating resources to address specific needs of school administrators identified in Phase I.
- Disseminating information about innovative use of Web 2.0 applications in schools, as well as in other countries, and assist in establishing linkages.

“The future of education is tied to participatory learning, and educators need the resources to help them better understand how Web 2.0 tools can be used to provide students with a rich, collaborative space in which to learn,” said CoSN CEO Keith Krueger. “It is our goal to determine the resources school leaders need and the most effective ways to deliver them.”

To learn more, visit [www.cosn.org](http://www.cosn.org) or [www.macfound.org](http://www.macfound.org).

### **About the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN)**

CoSN is the premier professional association for district technology leaders. The mission of CoSN is to empower K-12 district technology leaders to use technology strategically for the improvement of teaching and learning. CoSN provides leadership, community and advocacy essential for the success of these leaders.

CoSN leadership initiatives include:

Cyber Security for the Digital District ([www.securedistrict.org](http://www.securedistrict.org))

Data-Driven Decision-Making ([www.3d2know.org](http://www.3d2know.org))

Empowering the 21st Century Superintendent

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

Green Computing ([www.cosn.org/greencomputing](http://www.cosn.org/greencomputing))

IT Crisis Preparedness ([www.cosn.org/ITCrisisPrep](http://www.cosn.org/ITCrisisPrep))

K-12 Open Technologies ([www.k12opentech.org](http://www.k12opentech.org))

Small District Technology Leadership

([http://72.3.238.178/wiki/index.php?title=Main\\_Page](http://72.3.238.178/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page))

Taking Total Cost of Ownership to the Classroom ([www.classroomtco.org](http://www.classroomtco.org))

Value of Investment ([www.edtechvoi.org](http://www.edtechvoi.org))

Web2.0 Policy and Leadership (<http://www.cosn.org/web20/>).

CoSN’s membership is a unique blend of education and technology leaders, and decision makers from the public and private sectors. Visit [www.cosn.org](http://www.cosn.org) or phone 866/267-8747 to find out more about CoSN’s programs, events and resources supporting and promoting leadership development, advocacy and connections to ensure that technology is used strategically for the improvement of teaching and learning in elementary and secondary schools.

### **About the MacArthur Foundation**

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supports creative people and effective institutions committed to building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world. In addition to selecting the MacArthur Fellows, the Foundation works to defend human rights, advance global conservation and security, make cities better places, and understand how technology is affecting children and society. More information is available at [www.macfound.org](http://www.macfound.org).