



Clouds improve education

IBM to provide U.S. high school with advanced education materials

United States primary education systems have been in the news recently for [budget cuts](#), declining graduation rates and [skills](#) gaps. As part of IBM's [smarter planet](#) initiative, we are working with school districts to make K-12 classrooms more [intelligent](#). One way to help our education systems refresh outdated infrastructures with new functionality is through [cloud computing](#).

New opportunities for North Carolina schools

Students at [Hillside New Tech High School](#) in Durham, North Carolina will be the latest beneficiaries of this effort. In partnership with North Carolina Central University ([NCCU](#)), IBM will offer free educational technology resources via the "cloud" for Hillside students. As a result, advanced educational materials and select software applications can be accessed through the Internet from both the high school's computer lab, as well as from any other device that is Internet-ready, whether at the public library, mobile phones or their private homes. This enables the learning environment to continue without any restrictions that may have been caused by limited technical support or lack of access.

"With the cloud computing technology our students are able to access educational software and computer programs that they otherwise would not have," said Dr. William Logan, principal of Hillside New Tech High School. "We are very grateful to NCCU and IBM for providing these resources."

This project builds on previous cloud initiatives in the state of North Carolina. In 2008, North Carolina State University ([NC State](#)) and IBM [announced plans](#) to provide every student in North Carolina access to advanced educational resources through NC State's Virtual Computing Lab. Through this cloud, students at K-12 schools, colleges around the state and the University of North Carolina system campuses themselves were given access to the most advanced educational materials, select software applications and computing and storage resources.

Private clouds for a public school

IBM has also helped other K-12 schools around the nation achieve breakthrough results with cloud platforms. IBM worked with Kentucky's [Pike County](#) school system to create a desktop cloud, making it faster for students to log onto workstations and increased instructional time in the classroom. Like many education systems, Pike County's schools were using older workstations that could not support newer applications. The school system did not have the budget to buy new workstations, so IBM recommended a [Smart Business Desktop Cloud](#) to create a desktop cloud that houses all the applications and data on the server instead of on each individual workstation.

"Five years ago, [school] district funding began dwindling, so we had to come up with some alternative to buying workstations," said Maritta Horne, CIO of the Pike County School System. "IBM's virtual infrastructure access solution was a must-have for us because we could replicate our work environment across 2,000 workstations." Now, all 27 Pike County schools have equal access to education content while reducing end-user support costs by 62 percent.