Mapping Early Literacy Initiatives Assisted by New Technologies
A project of New America and the Joan Ganz Cooney Center

This FAQ accompanies our survey to be distributed from February through March 15, 2015.

Why are you asking for information about early literacy initiatives and technology?

This map is part of a broader effort called Map, Link, and Rethink Early Learning in a Digital Age, which aims to identify and categorize what initiatives are underway across the country. The project is also intended to help policymakers and educators share information on the challenges and benefits of using new technologies. The project was born in an early childhood working group meeting at CGI America in Denver in 2014 and was announced during presentations at the White House event on “Bridging the Word Gap” and was highlighted as an upcoming project at the White House Summit on Early Learning later that year.

Who is undertaking this project?

This project is part of the work of the Learning Technologies Project in the Education Policy Program at New America, a public policy institute in Washington, D.C., and by the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop in New York City. If you have questions, please contact Lisa Guernsey, director of the Learning Technologies Project and the Early Education Initiative at New America.

Who is funding this project?

The Alliance for Early Success, a catalyst for bringing state, national, and funding partners together to improve state policies for children, starting at birth and continuing through age eight.

How do you define an "early literacy initiative"?

We take a broad view of "early literacy." Any program that is focused on building children’s language skills, emergent literacy skills, basic reading skills, or reading comprehension skills could be included. Some science-focused programs, for example, emphasize vocabulary and other aspects of language development and would therefore qualify in our survey as an early literacy initiative.

Do you want information from schools or school districts?

Yes, if your school district is involved in a project or initiative that is assisted in a new way by technological tools, and if that project is designed to serve families, educators, or young children (at any age from 0 to 8 years old), we would like to hear about it.

Do you want information from early childhood programs, libraries, or tutoring programs?
Yes, yes, and yes. And from any other institution, whether research centers or volunteer groups, that are experimenting with the use of new media or interactive technology to promote early literacy.

**Do you want to hear from companies developing products?**

We are not looking for examples of apps, websites, or subscription-based products. However if your company is genuinely engaged with a community-based organization or school that is using your product as part of a broader effort to engage with educators or parents, we would welcome hearing from that organization or school about how they are using your product.

**How will you use this information?**

We intend to plot initiatives on a digital map that can be manipulated to show various projects of various sizes across the country. We see this map as a first step toward “seeing” the diversity and similarities in tech-assisted projects that are bubbling up around the country. People using the map will be able to drill down to find out more about the projects and, where possible, link to evidence of the projects’ impact. We may also use the information to analyze where we see pockets of innovation around the country and to highlight those projects on our blog EdCentral.org or through other blogs, newspapers, or magazines.

**Will our program be able to see or have access to the map that you create?**

Yes. We will contact every initiative that completes a survey to inform them of the publication date for the interactive map. The map will be freely available to anyone who wants to see it.