

State, Microsoft launch virtual technology academy

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SEATTLE - Washington state education officials and Microsoft are teaming up to launch a new virtual academy to teach high school students computer and web-development skills.

The IT Academy will allow all Washington high school students to get free training online and Microsoft technical certification. The training will also be available to teachers and school staff.

The agreement was announced Wednesday by Superintendent of Public Instruction Randy Dorn with officials from Microsoft Corp.

Training and certification will be available for Microsoft software products plus computer programming, Web development and database development.

Dorn says the struggling economy plus increasing demand for technology skills are changing education in Washington state. He says the state needs to make sure students are trained in the skills that get them jobs.