

ISTE NETS-A Standard- 1 Investigation: Visionary Leadership

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Leadership and Vision is promoted through the first of the 5 standards from ISTE NETS-A. According to International Society for Technology in Education, educational administrators inspire and lead development and implementation of a shared vision for comprehensive integration of technology to promote excellence and support transformation throughout the organization. As an administrator one must effectively lead all stakeholders to the shared vision. With Standard 1 comes 5 indicators that can aid administrators in accomplishing a “Visionary Leadership”. Leadership is a vital component of management. In order to come about a shared vision, the leadership role must manage and maximize efficiency to reach the common goal. I will analyze how these indications are being applied in my base school, Whittemore Park Middle School, and determine if I have any levels of concern.

From Standard 1 of the ISTE NETS-A the first indicator states educational leaders facilitate the shared development by all stakeholders of a vision for technology use and widely communicate that vision. I was able to interview the instructional coach at Whittemore Park Middle School, Sean Junkins, and he informed me that the school district provides their schools with the technology plan/use. Horry County School District does not have Technology Director, but they have a technology team that all work together for the district. From working in this school district, I have seen them experiment with blended learning. Blended learning is education through electronic, online, and face to face instruction. With blending learning the district has set goals. With blended learning the district stressed that teachers not just have students learning digitally, but also incorporating the face to face direct instruction. In communicating this vision with teachers (Junkins, 2019) stated the administration team acts as an intermediary with what the district expectations are and they make it happen in the classroom. Horry County school district communicates its vision/mission statement for technology through

social media, news, and parents signature on the technology agreement at the commencement of each school year. Also, teachers are encouraged to place the statements in their syllabi. From my interview with Sean Junkins and my personal experience at Whittemore Park I believe the leadership team is compliant of first indicator in Standard 1.

The second indicator for this standard states educational leaders maintain and cohesive process to develop, implement, and monitor a dynamic, long range, and systemic technology plan to achieve the vision. To implement the vision of the technology plan a digital integration specialist is assigned to each school in the district. This specialist comes to the school approximately every 2 weeks to work closely with teachers and students with new technological innovations that can be used in the classroom. The leadership team ensures that every teacher meets with the specialist. If a teacher is absent when the digital integration specialist is present at school, that teacher will be caught up by a colleague when they return. This allows all new information to be received by everyone. Teachers are introduced to new PDL (personalized digital learning) technologies. The technology plan was developed by a technology team organized by the district. Plans are available online at the state department or district website. The plan is revamped and resubmitted to the state department every three years according to (Junkins,2019). Even though the technology plan is developed by a team at the school district, I believe the leaders at Whittemore Park are implementing and monitoring the technology plan in hopes to achieve the vision.

The third indicator in relation to Standard 1 asserts educational leaders foster and nurture a culture of responsible risk-taking and advocate policies promotion continuous innovation with technology. My school utilizes the integration specialist to show/ try out new technologies, apps, etc with teachers (Junkins,2019). I would call this risk taking for teachers. Teachers are

shown new technology ideas and they must use these ideas with their classes or at least try them out. At Whittemore Park there is a section in the bell schedule called “OT” or Overtime. This is flextime given to teachers each day with different blocks each week (extra time). The first week teachers may have overtime with their Block 1 class then the next week they would have overtime with their Block 2 class, etc. It is at this time when teachers can try their newly learned technology tools with their students. If it is successful then the teacher has a new tool to use, if it fails the teacher still has more time in the day (regular schedule) to move on. The culture at Whittemore encourages explorations with technology. Teachers and students are constantly trying/sharing new ideas. I would say the culture of this school does support risk taking and promotes continuous growth with technology.

Moving into indicator number 4, it states educational leaders use data in making leadership decision. (Junkins,2019) says data from digital content programs are used to determine if technology is being used appropriately. Digital content is when students use digital resources linked to academic standards that can be used to measure students competence on specific standards. Some examples of digital content are Aleks, USA Test Prep, Khan Academy, Edpuzzle, etc. Leadership is constantly making predictions and seeing trends in data. This data can be used to rank students, see where students are compared to other students in the district, and even evaluate teachers. In terms of making leadership decisions (Junkins,2019) declares NWEA Measures of Academic Progress, Surveys, Benchmark Testing, Statewide Assessments, Discipline Reporting, etc. are used. The data is not truly used to revise mission/vision statements itself. Data is mostly used with strategic planning. Administrators would notice any red flags from any of the data sources. These red flags can suggest that a student may not be in the correct class, decide what subject or grade teachers will teach, see how

well technology is being used, to see teacher performance, etc. The leadership team seems to be using data effectively to make leadership decisions.

The last indicator for Standard 1 is educational leaders advocate for research based effective practices in the use of technology. (Junkins,2019) stated district leaders and the digital integration specialist vet the research programs. He also explained how the district will sometimes get a group of similar content area teachers together and have them test a product. For examples a group of math teachers may do a trial of a new online math software. Technology in the classroom has become seamless exclaimed (Junkins,2019). We put ideas into our lesson plans knowing we have that resource available at our fingertip. Years ago, teachers had to plan to use technology. Teachers had to sign up to use computer labs in schools. Some schools only had one or two computer labs, but each teacher had to sign and get a certain time slot to use it. Today, technology is ubiquitous. Thusly making it effortless to incorporate technology into instructional plans.

My research consisted on a personal interview with the Instructional Coach at Whittemore, my personal experience being a teacher at Whittemore, and ISTE Standards for Education Leaders. In reference to the condition of each standard I found that most of the indicators are given by the school district (Horry County). Each school in the district oversees implementing and monitoring the technology plan. My level of concern is low for Whittemore Park Middle School. Through my investigation I can clearly see that the school adheres to Standard 1 from ISTE NETS-A. In terms of technology, Whittemore Park is where it needs to be in staying relevant with the most current technology. The idea of this school exploring risk taking with teachers and students to see what works and what doesn't makes them more apt to trying out new technology innovations.

References

International Society for Technology in Education. (2018). *ISTE Standards for Education*

*Leaders*. Retrieved from <http://iste.org>

S. Junkins, person communication, June 12, 2019