

Technology Improvement Plan

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I conducted a standards-based investigation of instructional technologies and their potential to improve teaching practice, professional productivity, and student performance. The standards that were utilized were the five standards from ISTE NETS-A for Administrators. These standards are put into place to guided educational leaders in improving teaching practices, professional productivity, and student performance at their school. Leadership and Vision, Digital Age Learning Culture, Excellence in Professional Practice, Systemic Improvement, and Digital Citizenship make up the researched standards. Each standard has a set of indicators that acts as checklist item for educational leaders. For each standard I did an investigation to see how the indicators are being applied in my base school. This investigation was done through personal interviews (two instructional coaches and assistant principal), readings from E. Zimmerman, C. Zook, Principal Connections, and a website titled International Society for Technology in Education. I was able to identity four overarching areas of concern through my research. These areas are:

- Ensuring grade levels are varying their integration strategies so that students receive different (not redundant) experiences with technology
- Using feedback from teachers, students, and parents
- Using technology to reach a global service
- Soliciting input on equity issues from external groups.

With each issue I have devised a plan in order to improve the issue. With this plan I will be able to use these areas as a platform to devise a plan to improve my base school organization with technology.

Ensuring grade levels are varying their integration strategies so that students receive different (not redundant) experiences with technology is vital. When students are exposed to the same technology they become burnt out or even bored. Junkins (2019) states this has been something we have seen firsthand...our students have been having access to many of the same programs from grades 3-12. He continues “we” as a school do not have the ability (permission) to purchase programs or resources on our own. These are district made decisions. Redundancy leads to classroom behavior issues and a sense of lack of importance in the student’s minds. To curb this issue a new technology integration initiative would need to be initiated. With this initiative each grade level would be responsible for one or two specified technology applications that they would be utilized for most of the school year. Each technology application would need to have content for each core subject. For examples, USA TEST PREP, is an application that has mathematics, science, social studies, and ELA content. Grade levels can use technology applications assigned to other grade levels but only occasionally (twice a month at most). The Digital Integration Specialist (DIS) or Technology Director would need to collaborate more with other districts and attend out of state conferences to discover more applications that can be used so that there is great variety to ensure each grade level would be able to have their own specific technology tools. At the beginning of the school year for one session of staff development the DIS or Technology director would discuss the new policy with staff. Administrators would need to devise a plan to ensure that teachers are following policy, therefore resulting in less redundancy for students and more focus and engaged learning.

The next overarching issue is using feedback from students, parents, and community members. Along with parents, students, teachers, and staff, members of the community are part of the “stakeholders”. Stakeholders is anyone who is devoted to the success of a school and its

students. The saying is “it takes a village to raise a child”. Everyone needs to be involved and kept in the loop about issues or changes that are happening in the school. Educational leaders have a duty to make sure they are communicating effectively with all stakeholders. In terms of including students and parents when soliciting feedback, Howard (2019) explains we host regular student led conferences with students that include data conferences, goal setting, and students’ feedback. Students do give feedback, but we lack feedback or a process for feedback from parents and other stakeholders. Feedback is crucial. To rectify this issue the technology department or Technology Director could create a google doc survey or paper survey to gain feedback. Instructional Coaches would send parents emails and all calls to notify them of the survey. The email and all call would explain the reasoning behind the survey. To spread the word to other stakeholders (community members) Instructional Coaches would add reminds and links to the school social media page and display a reminder message on the marquee outside the school. The amount of feedback and the quality of responses would determine success.

In terms of using technology to reach a global service, educational leaders must support and encourage the use of technology to authentically learn about the learns/scholars in other cultures. Students are not allowed to use any form of web camera applications that allow them to communicate with others. This is a district policy and is safeguarded through restricted wireless internet software. Telecommunication applications that specialize in video chat and voice calls like Skype, Oovoo, and Whats App are blocked. Students need to be aware of the world around them. We are doing students a disservice if we keep them close minded and not expose them to other cultures and global issues. To remedy this issue, I would propose a plan to have a “Global Connections Day” each month. The technology director or DIS would need to find a way to partner with out of state district and other schools in other countries (different cultures) and

allow students to interact (video calls), interview each other, have cultural exploration activities, and virtual field trips. This could be accomplished through Skype, Oovoo, Whats App, or any other telecommunication application. This could happen once a month during first period or during a certain block of time determined by the school principal. This would unquestionably encourage the use of technology to authentically learn about the learners/scholars in other cultures.

The last overarching issue that we will address is soliciting input in equity issues from external groups. The word equity is used meaning leveling the playing field for all students. Junkins (2019) exclaims equity, not be confused with equality, doesn't mean that education is a one size fits all process where each student receives the same opportunities, services, but it's more about providing the right (and necessary) solutions to best meet each students unique needs as students and learners. Educational administrators must find a way so that each child has an opportunity and tools to grasp the concepts being taught. Outside resources, such as keynote speakers, out of state poverty or equity conferences, and even equity life like simulations are needed to help manage and somewhat close the gap with equity. During staff development sessions at the commencement of the new school year teachers and staff should have to sit through a presentation or equity like simulation to see firsthand how it feels and effects students and would be able to collaborate/create ideas and solutions to solve this issue. Also, the school district could bring accessibility through online learning programs. District technology specialist could create an online network where students can access classroom materials. Leveraging data to create better improvement initiatives would help schools and school district to understand what they are lacking. All in all, each school should have a meaningful idea or solution to curb equity in their schoolhouse.

Through my research I have investigated all five standards of ISTE NETS-A and found four overarching issues that needed to be addressed. These issues have been identified as areas of concern and improvement. My improvement plan consists of ways to improve each overarching issue along with details, models, people involved, and an overview of the training that would be necessary. This plan has a main goal of helping educational leaders in improving teaching practices, professional productivity, and student performance at their school. I firmly believe this plan would benefit my school individually and help our school district to provide more support

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