DESIGNING A TECHNOLOGY PLAN

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Writing a technology plan for a single school, a district or a community demands broad-based thinking. Too often one person is tasked with writing the plan. If YOU are the person responsible, these eight areas of focus will help you design a flexible, creative and forward-thinking plan. HOW you develop each of the areas is up to you.

1.   **Establish a broad-based committee:** Include teachers of core areas as well as technology instructors, parents, community members and students. Be sure that the program is driven from the top down. Does the administration support the development of a (new/revised) technology plan? Student participation is imperative – they are the ones who know what's new in the field of technology!

2.   **Align with current governing plans:** Review any existing technology plans already established by a body whose jurisdiction determines your actions (school district, state, archdiocese). Do you need to consider an existing Universal Design for Learning? You must be aligned with governing plans to get support or funding.

3.   **Create an overarching mission:** Establish both long and short term goals to help you fulfil the mission. What do you want to accomplish in the long run, and what do you need to do in the short run to accomplish that?

4.   **Write a plan that is realistic:** Although a plan might span a decade, its more practical scope is 3-5 years. Recognize and plan for obsolescence, not only in hardware and software, but also in teaching methodology. A plan must be a living document that can be adapted to changing times (and finances).

5.   **Start with the hardware, but don't stop there:** Consider your school's infrastructure. Do you have the wiring and electricity to create a functioning lab or support a WiFi system? Consider what hardware and software you already

have, how its usefulness can be stretched, and plan for future needs. Research what new and creative tools might be on the horizon. (Does your plan include using cell phones or e-books, Web 2.0 tools or distance learning?)

6.   **Develop a curriculum that supports vertical integration:** Find out what technology skills middle and high school students are expected to have. Provide the foundation leading to those skills. Implement at the lesson plan level. Adopt a reasonable Acceptable Use Policy (Responsible Use Policy) for both students and employees.

7.   **Provide the teachers with professional development:** The teachers need to be able to use technology to enhance their own teaching and to recognize student technology achievement. Be innovative in providing the professional development; establish a positive reward system.

8.   **Measure your success:** Along with goals, establish timelines, measurement and accountability. Ongoing evaluation is necessary for proactive change. Select a fair and respected leader to follow through on evaluating your success.

Above all, keep in mind that your school is only one in a global community of learners. A sound technology plan will not only provide the skills, but also the communication tools that your students will need for future success!

http://linkd.in/exuSew
http://www.eschoolnews.com/2011/02/28/aups-shape-web-20-use-guidelines/