Resources

Digital Learning Environments website
www.guide2digitallearning.com

Digital Learning blog
www.guide2digitallearning.com/blog

Digital Learning newsletters
http://tinyurl.com/pemmvf7

Tech and Learning
www.techlearning.com

K12 Blueprint website
http://www.k12blueprint.com

Project RED
www.projectred.org

School CIO
www.schoolcio.com

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Welcome

Education today needs effective leaders who have the willingness to drive change. They inspire others in their organization and present them with opportunities, suggestions, ideas and models.

HP and Intel have been profiling strong leaders who inspire others while developing and implementing strategies for effective schools. What qualities do they have in common? How do they define the route to change, get buy in from leaders around them, instill collaboration, and build organizations to support their vision to achieve success in the future?

Leslie Wilson, in Project RED research, says, “Strong district leadership is essential for successful schools. All levels of leadership are important, individually and collectively, including school boards, superintendents, and assistant superintendents for curriculum, instruction, technology, finance, and operations.”

Here, based on interviews with leaders we profiled, are a dozen examples that show how the impossible is possible and that complex digital learning environments can be successfully implemented. You’ll find many more in the profiles on the following pages.

The common thread that you will find in these leaders is having a clear vision for the future and the ability to lead. Components are:

- Understanding that the status quo is not good enough;
- Being open to new methods to build success for all students to meet their academic and future career needs;
- Having the ability to bring people together to execute visionary plans;
- Being driven by outcomes and dedicated to excellence;
- Believing in a vision and knowing how to inspire others to believe in it;
- Having strong communication skills and recognizing when to listen and when to ask questions;
- Being skilled in building caring, service-oriented and trustful relationships and collaborating with others;
- Including multiple perspectives in decision-making so that everyone has an opportunity to develop and to share the vision;
- Becoming reflective in their own practice and providing guidance to help others develop the skill;
- Sharing best practices to guide change and to understand and respect that change is a process and not an event;
- Basing goals on solid research and understanding what is capable of being achieved in line with fundamental objectives of the district;
- Accepting full responsibility and accountability for all aspects of the organization.

A strategic leader looks beyond today’s challenges by planning for tomorrow and providing a vision and a roadmap for moving forward. We hope that these profiles will provide details of success and showcase the traits of leadership that can serve as models to empower teaching and learning with technology for the 21st century.

We hope that this collection of leadership profiles will help you find models that can work in your schools and districts.

Angela Smith, Hewlett-Packard Company
Paige Johnson, Intel
Gwen Solomon, Digital Learning Environments
Allison Knapp, Tech & Learning
Interview with Kyle Berger

What instructional technology accomplishments are you most proud of?
The program that I am most proud of is the 1:1 deployment that I conducted when I was with Alvarado ISD. We issued laptops to all students in grades 4-8 and learned a lot from that rollout and the program management. My hope is that my proudest instructional technology accomplishment is yet to come as we move forward with 1:1 and other innovations in CHISD.

What has been the greatest change you’ve seen as a result of teaching and learning with technology?
The biggest change is the attitude of the instructional staff towards technology in the classroom. Once the staff saw that “connected” students were engaged in learning and collaborated with one another on classwork, their attitude changed. Now teachers ask for more ways to incorporate either student personal devices or other types of technology into instruction. We truly are starting to bridge the gap in the way our students live and the way in which they learn. Moving into a BYOD environment - from banned to planned - is a big shift overall.

What results have you seen?
Within the 1:1 we have seen various results. One of the results we noticed was the drop in student behavior issues in the classroom. When students are engaged, they tend to stay focused on what they are learning. We also saw increase in test scores over all; however, while technology integration played a part in the improved results, technology itself is not a silver bullet. Everything has to work together.

How do you measure success?
While test scores play a factor, even more important is student engagement and the depth of instruction that takes place when new tools are in place. We survey staff and students to see what we can do to make a project better. Did the initiative open the door to more possibilities? Is it still going strong six months after it began?

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
With any type of technology rollout, communication with all stakeholders is key. There are several departments that are involved in any initiative and we had to be sure that everyone was at the table and shared the vision. And as with any new project, we had to be flexible and willing to adjust to change while at the same time keeping focus on the end goal.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
The future in Cedar Hill ISD is very exciting. We continue to shape our district with seamless integration for our students and transparency and access to all stakeholders throughout the community. Our goal is to become a world-class educational system.

What keeps you awake at night?
The one thing that keeps me awake at night is funding and worrying about future decreases of technology funds. I try to find business solutions to bring in revenue streams to help fund our technology initiatives.

Name: Kyle Berger
Title: Executive Director of Technology
School District: Cedar Hill ISD
City/State: Cedar Hill TX
District’s Web site: http://www.chisd.com/
What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
The key to being a successful ed tech leader is not letting things stop progress.
For example, even with the funding crisis we are facing, we cannot sit back
and just say the money is not there so we cannot do it. Forward thinking
beyond the classroom and partnership building into the community is also
important to success. Great leaders are able to juggle more than anyone can
imagine and make it all work.

How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?
Technology installations spark interesting conversations and that is what
I always intend it to do. To inspire the staff, you have to make them part
of the process from the beginning. Get their feedback early about the
initiative and listen to their concerns. Teachers know that today’s world
is very different from years ago and we need to work together to adapt
classrooms students’ needs. It is all about empowering teachers so that
students have endless possibilities.

Who or what inspires you?
My inspiration comes from the students when I see the look in their eyes as
they learn something new. This drives me to want to scale these initiatives
to reach all children in my district. I am driven by the knowledge that we must
give our students the best tools to prepare for their future. I am excited each
day to think about the challenges and the possibilities.

For More Information
WiFi for Sale
http://www.schoolcio.com/article/wifi-for-sale/52711
Interview with Camille Casteel

Our district and community recognizes the importance of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) for our future. New initiatives in STEM education are integral to delivering our shared vision, and we are in various stages of implementing the following STEM projects:

• A K-6 SteAm academy (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math with the ARTs). This student-centered academy integrates STEM with the Arts. The technology supports student interaction with STEM content designed in ways to promote deeper understanding of complex ideas, and students are engaged in project-based learning.
• The iAcademy- The Innovation Academy uses hybrid e-learning in Junior High School.
• Chandler’s Online Academy for junior high and high school students allows 24/7 instruction and differentiated pacing.
• Engineering, Medical and Biotech programs encourage critical and creative thinking in preparation for STEM careers.
• A high school pathway results in a STEM diploma.
• Assistive technology districtwide for our students with special needs.

Also, in an effort to better prepare students to live, learn, work and serve in a digital, global society, our teachers have many opportunities to collaborate with university and business partners in STEM grants/projects. Our Intel Innovation Award supports new and innovative STEM projects that not only improve content knowledge skills but also involves students, teachers and the community in a service-learning project outside the traditional classroom. In addition, more than 300 of our teachers have participated in Math-Science partnership grants in the last three years.

What has been the greatest change you have seen in your district as a result of teaching and learning with technology?
Certainly the fact that we have more than doubled in size in the last 15 years accounts for a significant amount of change. We have successfully transitioned from a rural farming community to a high tech progressive suburban area.

Advances in knowledge and technology are changing K-12 education and transforming the way we learn, work, socialize and communicate. Technology has placed information at our fingertips, providing students and staff with exciting opportunities to explore information, pursue their interests, experiment and demonstrate what they have learned.

Our largest enterprise to date is the continuous development of a well-planned system wide infrastructure for 21st Century Learning. Our metrics of success are redefined as we embrace new technology and innovation, diversify our schools’ environments, refocus our learning outcomes, and invest in building the capacity of our learning community. We continually reflect on our practice, consistently monitor our progress, and take responsibility for results.

What were the biggest lessons learned throughout the process?
We learned that change itself is a process. Our limited funding resources require that we move forward with caution, ensuring we have a well-designed and well thought out plan. We have learned that a strategic plan must have expected outcomes, and
we evaluate our plan regularly in order to understand the impact of our work. We provide evidence of success and are transparent in recognizing the limitations of our effort. It is essential that we continually reflect and are open to making change.

What keeps you awake at night?
I often think about the enormity of our investment in technology and the demands on staff to keep current. For example:
• Can we give the support needed to ensure that our teachers have the skills required to be successful in our changing environment?
• As we increase access to the Internet and with the plethora of choices, can we be sure our staff will be good consumers and recognize quality?

What accomplishments are most important?
Our success is due to dedicated people working toward a shared vision and leaders focused on learning as well as on building positive relationships. Our technical and instructional departments collaborate. We honor the common vision and understand that our teaching and learning goals drive our decisions on how we use technology.

We continually investigate and research new approaches to teaching and learning, and in all of our initiatives, a key factor in our success is a thoroughly developed implementation plan, which includes comprehensive, sustainable and ongoing staff development.

Everyone is expected to implement the best programs and practices for the school community and to leverage the power of technology to transform teaching and learning.

Our programs are continually monitored and evaluated and there must be evidence of increased effectiveness and successful outcomes. In addition, we must have a plan to sustain our successful programs and scale the impact.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
I hope the investment we have made in time, people and funding will continue to result in positive outcomes for our students.

How do you inspire your staff to embrace change?
I believe we have a collaborative team environment. Our staff has a sense of empowerment as they participate in key decisions. I listen, I have an open door and I am receptive to new ideas.

What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
Leaders must be driven by outcomes and dedicated to excellence. They must have a vision and know how to develop a plan with the community. Leaders today need strong communication skills; must recognize when to listen and when to ask questions, and should be skilled in building relationships.

Who or what inspires you?
The people I work with, the children I represent, and the community I serve inspire me.

For More Information
You will find our district strategic plan, Journey 2020, as well as our Metrics of Success.
http://www.chandler.k12.az.us/site/default.aspx
Interview with **Leona Collesano**

**Technology Refresh Program**

In 2007, we discovered that 40%+ of computers were outdated and each school had upwards of 40 different computer models. New computers replaced the oldest but middle-aged computers couldn’t run the same software as the new ones and distribution was inequitable. As the result, each refresh cycle left the schools with the same problem—a mix of incompatible, unreliable and unmaintainable equipment.

To create a consistent and equitable technology environment, every school needed all new computers of the same models and configurations. We had to re-engineer the refresh process by determining how many computers we really needed in each classroom and devising a PC Equity Model, a formula for assessment labs based on the time students needed to participate in online programs and assessments.

The goal was to standardize and manage all PCs centrally. But school budgets were down: we could replace only 20% of the PCs each year. We replaced equipment by school, starting with Title 1 schools and those with the oldest equipment so schools would get the full benefit in turn.

To prevent a logistical headache for IT, we outsourced services to our HP reseller for service desk, warranty repairs, spares, and pick up and returns. We did the project management and supervision. We have a 5-year lease to reduce cash flow; it was the short-term solution to avoid budget risk. As a result, schools now have 100% of their PCs as standardized models and images, joined to the network, and under centralized management and security controls.

**Classrooms of Tomorrow**

We wanted to help middle school students embrace and grow in Math and Science and meld technology and curriculum to create a creative, engaging and powerful learning environment. To achieve our classrooms of tomorrow, we had a wide range of stakeholders participating, including faculty, students, architects, and engineers.

Each classroom is a learning environment that encourages students to collaborate on problem solving and to think creatively out of the box. The teacher is in the middle facilitating and monitoring each student’s progress. Groups of four students are at semicircular lab tables where they use computers, digital microscopes, digital probes, wireless calculators and other devices to do research.

**What has been the greatest change you’ve seen as a result of teaching and learning with technology?**

The biggest change is in our children. In Classrooms of Tomorrow; they are engaged in learning activities and have learned to collaborate and work together in groups as they explore the STEM areas. Children are our future, and by affording them these opportunities now, we hope for a bright future for all of us.

**What results have you seen?**

We are providing adequate technology for online testing; have gotten positive responses from student, staff and parents; and children want to come to school. In addition:

- The Florida Department of Education named Sarasota as an “A” district. It is among 15% of U.S. school districts to receive the “What Parents Want” award.
- The district-wide technology strategic plan offers students interactive instruction to prepare them for the future.

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**What Ed Tech programs in the Sarasota County schools are you most proud of?**

There are two major initiatives in Sarasota County schools that I want to highlight. The first is our Technology Refresh Program to provide an equitable distribution of technology for instruction and assessment. The second is our STEM initiative: the Middle School Math and Science Classrooms of Tomorrow.
Standardization on three models of computers has full life cycle warranties and IT staff was freed up from the logistical headaches.

Leasing reduced cash flow requirements.

What was the key factor in making your program successful?
Collaboration was the critical factor in our success it took many, many internal and external partners to make this happen - physically and financially. Every person on the team took his or her responsibilities seriously. I can also credit effective project planning and extensive coordination.

How do you measure success?
For both of these projects, we measure success by technology use in the classrooms at every school. Our focus was on equitable access to technology for all. In addition, in the Classrooms of Tomorrow, one walk through these rooms demonstrates their success. Our students’ obvious engagement and willingness to discuss and share what they are doing says it all.

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
It takes a village to make change happen and thanks to our Superintendent’s support and the commitment and work of all stakeholders, our goals became a reality. We’ve learned that change cannot be accomplished alone; teamwork is critical.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
As technologies grow, our model for the classroom will change. It is my hope that now that the foundation is in place, we are on the right path and have the key players on board to continue moving forward now and in the future.

What keeps you awake at night?
My work keeps me up - not because of system problems – but because of how exciting my work is and the knowledge of what we are doing for our children! There have been times that I – and many others on the team - worked well into the wee hours just planning how we can make the right choices for our kids.

What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
• Be patient and understanding.
• Be willing to collaborate.
• Be a facilitator and listener.
• Be a strong organizer and planner.

How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?
Embracing change is difficult for any organization. However, the actually change itself is really not the problem. It is the transition from the old to the new that is hard to embrace. I often ask my staff to be a part of the change.

Who or what inspires you?
I choose to be in education for one key reason – our students. They inspire me every day and in every way. I wake up every morning excited for the day ahead and it’s all about our children.

For More Information
Sarasota County Schools’ Texcellence program puts refurbished computers in the hands and homes of students who need them.
http://www.edtechmagazine.com/k12/article/2010/10/personal-computing
In addition, we are particularly proud of our outreach program. We analyzed student exit data to identify students who had left the district and had not otherwise enrolled in another district. Focusing on Anaheim High School and the surrounding area, we developed an independent learning center, determined the potential demand for the new program, and found many excited families.

We initiated a program for more than one hundred returning students that involved using an online curriculum on HP computers. The result was that more than fifty students graduated. These students had left the educational system and would likely have been high school dropouts. It’s a real achievement for the students, their families, and for the program.

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
My biggest takeaway from the independent studies project was the tangible impact my team, and the other indirect administrative players, had on the overall project. Culling data, establishing a candidate list and our outreach and instructional colleagues turning that list into a group of students attending school again and tracking toward graduation is very rewarding.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
We hope to provide more opportunities for students to be able to complete their education at more sites. This program will be a springboard for the availability of more web-based curriculum resources for our students.

What accomplishments are most important?
It is refreshing to get an idea from an educator, translate that idea to a deliverable, and have that deliverable positively impact students. For example, we had an assistant principal ask if we could identify first period tardies and communicate them back to him in the form of a report. We ultimately implemented the program, incorporating our school-to-home communications system, and the end result was a marked improvement in the school’s tardy rate.

What has been the greatest change you’ve seen at your district as a result of teaching and learning with technology?
There isn’t necessarily one change, but rather, the rapid evolution of technology adoption as an integral part of instruction. Using technology appears to offer a converging effect on the classroom. It is an exciting time in educational technology.

How do you measure success?
Beyond the data measures, end user feedback is a good indicator of success. If we can implement a new system or technology and have minimal negative feedback, we can feel pretty good about the end product.

How do you inspire your staff to embrace change?
I try to give them the facts and have them participate in the selection and implementation processes. Obtaining buy-in, or at least establishing the “why” or purpose, makes for better adoption of change.
What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
I believe that effective leaders need to have integrity and be excellent communicators.

What keeps you awake at night?
Honestly, I have no problems sleeping at night; however, we are very cognizant that the infrastructure and systems that we implement have become increasingly critical to our stakeholders. More than 88% of our students used our student portal last school year.

Who or what inspires you?
God and my family inspire me. I have two young daughters and thinking about their futures, their opportunities, is a very compelling point of motivation.

Erik’s Advice: Key Factors for Success

• It is vitally important to have all of the key stakeholders in the room. We had the administrators, teachers and counselors working together with facilities, maintenance and technology to identify success factors and implement the program that entailed staff and program movement as well as a host of infrastructure projects.

• Listen to your end users. Listen to your team. A school district’s purpose is to provide a high quality education to our students. Our work in technology has either a direct or indirect impact on students. We need to remember that.

For More Information

Tracking Truancy with GPS
http://tinyurl.com/6r98moc

Ultimate Guide to Student and School Internet Safety: Part 2
http://tinyurl.com/823gzb

Anaheim Union High School District Secures Network and Mobile Device Access with Bradford Networks
http://tinyurl.com/7f77233
Interview with Paul Gross

Name: Paul Gross
Title: Principal, Academy of Information Technology & Engineering
School District: Stamford Public Schools
City/State: Stamford, CT
District’s Web site: www.aitestamford.org

What Ed Tech Programs at the Academy of Information Technology & Engineering are you most proud of?
The Academy of Information Technology & Engineering is an inter-district magnet public high school enrolling students from western Fairfield County, Connecticut. Our school is in its twelfth year and promotes a unique blend of educational goals. Primarily, AITE is a college preparatory high school that focuses on STEM courses and employs a one-to-one laptop approach. We started using HP tablet laptops in 2005 and since then our students have learned with and through technology. They develop research, publication and creative skills as well as an understanding of IT fundamentals in applications, networking, and programming.

What instructional technology accomplishments are most important?
ITE students have the opportunity to develop solid skills in technology beyond the traditional applications most teenagers employ. Our Program of Studies includes digital courses in art, music, pre-engineering, architecture, science and business-related classes. AITE students are skilled in animation, web development, game design and development, digital music, publication techniques, multimedia presentations, database development, robot building and programming, and numerous pre-engineering concepts.

What has been the greatest change you’ve seen as a result of teaching and learning with technology?
Student academic achievement and engagement in learning has grown. Our students perform well on standardized tests, and even more important, they demonstrate a significant awareness of their surroundings, not only in Stamford but also on a national and global scale.

Teachers have integrated technology into the design and delivery of lessons to provide student-centered learning. Communication with students, basically 24/7/52, is a reality.

Finally, there are no more excuses for missing work because of absence from school for students or teachers. A teacher who will be absent from school posts the day’s work for student completion and reviews, grades and/or provides comment the next class. A student who is absent from school goes to the class webpage to obtain the day’s work and completes the assignments.

What were the key factors in making your program successful?
Our program has been successful because of a number of factors, most important of which is the school’s faculty and staff. While the decision to consider a one-to-one computer program was top down, the research, planning and implementation were completed in a collaborative manner. The district provided careful consideration the educational benefits, construction of the student image, policies and practices, and the development of the Acceptable Use Policy. They also provided professional development prior to the rollout and maintain ongoing support. Finally, there is consistency within the district. The majority of our faculty has been with the school since the inception of the laptop program. Our relationship with HP has been beneficial and productive. Each year the faulty reviews and edits the student image to be responsive to changes in educational software and student skills.

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
Not surprisingly, we see that the classroom teacher is the heart of a successful learning environment and their effective integration of technology provides added value. In addition, teacher technology training and support has been key to this effort.

How do you measure success?
I measure success through a holistic measure of our students. Grades, graduation and college acceptance are not the only ways we judge. One of the many benefits of a small school is that the adult community has the opportunity to know its students well and can watch them grow, physically, emotionally, and academically.

What keeps you awake at night?
My concern for our students’ well being is primary. AITE has a diverse student population from 15 communities. As a result, our ability to keep track of what’s happening in these communities is critical for maintaining a positive school environment.
What do you hope for the future of your program?
My hope for the future is that AITE will continue to attract interested students, provide a meaningful and purposeful education, and adapt to the changes in our society.

How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?
I see my role as creating the environment in which teachers can create, collaborate, test and evaluate courses, programs and strategies to promote student achievement. We do this while maintaining a firm focus on district and state commencement goals. Over the years I have shared my vision of the changes taking place in the global economy, careers and the skills our students will need to be successful. I have been fortunate to be surrounded by educators who are thoughtful, smart, and attentive to the changes taking place and willing to explore my observations with equal attention. As a consequence, many of the changes that have been implemented at AITE in the past decade are teacher-driven.

Paul’s Advice: Key Factors for Success
My recommendation is to make certain you know why you are integrating technology.

• Have you done research to examine this move?

• How will greater integration of technology enhance the learning and teaching environment of your school and district?

• Have you examined the economic considerations to best meet the anticipated technology goals?

• Have teachers and staff collaborated to provide the vision, plans for professional development, and the calendar for rollout?

Who or what inspires you?
My students, current and past, inspire me. I want them to have every opportunity to achieve their goals. I recognize that my faculty and I are a small part in this equation, but we have the ability to provide guidance and inspiration. It is very rewarding to have alumni visit and detail their achievements at college, in the work place, and in their personal lives. Forget about all the clichés, AITE students are the future and we want to help them shape it in a positive manner.

What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
Leadership for today is a combination of qualities. I believe you must be a student of your profession, committed to success and possess a clear vision of your goals. Your goals must be based upon solid research and understanding, capable of being achieved, and in line with fundamental objectives of the district. It is essential to present these goals to your faculty and staff in a clear, consistent message. How the goals will be achieved must be developed in an open forum, through serious collaboration and discussion, with clear understanding of roles, deadlines, assessments, and requirements. A leader must be visible and accessible to all constituents. In the final analysis, a leader accepts full responsibility and accountability for all aspects of the organization.

For More Information
Academy of Information Technology & Engineering Profile
http://www.guide2digitallearning.com/leadership

AITE Press Release
http://www.guide2digitallearning.com/leadership/aite_press_release
What has been the greatest change you’ve seen as a result of teaching and learning with technology?

The greatest change has been that of transforming classrooms from teacher-centered to student-centered as students took advantage of the global resources that came with Internet access and the world of learning anytime anywhere. Our students, teachers and school leaders have also embraced an environment of change and accept the risk-taking that comes with the introduction of technology into our classrooms. The teaching and learning environment is more resilient and we see challenges as opportunities to exercise innovative problem solving.

What results have you seen?

Sunnyside’s one-to-one computing program produced immediate results. Student attendance, engagement and achievement improved, resulting in the ultimate goal of keeping students in school and on the path to graduation. Another unanticipated outcome of the technology initiatives at Sunnyside that we attribute to the one-to-one program is a noticeable increase in community involvement. Parent and family engagement has been a critical part of student academic achievement, and the Internet accessible laptop in their homes allows parents to take advantage of district online collaboration tools. Parents review student grades and attendance and have greater awareness of school activities as a result of Internet access and our new mobile app for parents and community.

What key factor led to your success?

Sunnyside developed an excellent strategic design for the introduction and continued growth of the one-to-one program. Since nearly all of the studies report that one-to-one programs depend largely on teachers for success, Sunnyside adopted the Project RED framework and partnered with Intel Corp. to build a framework of implementation factors including the Nine Key Indicators below as outlined by Project RED.

- Intervention classes: Technology is integrated into every intervention class period
- Change management leadership by principal: Leaders provide time for teacher professional learning and collaboration at least monthly.
- Online collaboration: Students use technology daily for online collaboration
- Core Subjects: Technology is integrated into the core curriculum weekly or more frequently
- Online formative assessments: Assessments are done at least weekly
- Student-computer ratio: Lower ratios improve outcomes
- Virtual field trips: With more frequent use, virtual trips are more powerful. The best schools do these at least monthly
- Search engine: Students use daily
- Principal training: Principals are trained in teacher buy-in, best practices, and technology-transformed learning.

How do you measure success?

We measure success in multiple layers of program evaluation. Increased student achievement, attendance and fewer behavioral issues are the most obvious measures, but education today is not just about academic achievement. It’s also
about innovation, creativity, collaboration, problem solving, and many of the other outcomes that result from having technology-infused classrooms. While we recognize these successes, we are still developing tools to document teacher and student success in achievements that are not solely academic in nature.

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
When we began the one-to-one program three years ago, we did not have the Project RED research to build our design framework upon. Three months into the initial implementation, the Project RED research was published and by the end of that first year, we developed our design based on their research results. As a part of this design framework, we developed a unique staffing model to support professional development and coaching. The district uses this model to foster multiple layers of teacher support in the school and to centralize training and mentoring. Peer mentoring and support has been a core aspect of school site leadership.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
We are planning to expand our one-to-one program throughout grades 3 through 12 in the next few years. We are implementing new teaching strategies that support the Common Core and believe that one-to-one is even more essential to teaching and learning. Other districts are now using our design framework so we anticipate seeing our program replicated in Arizona and across other states.

What keeps you awake at night?
My primary concern is lack of adequate funding. The State of Arizona is near the bottom of the nation in funding, and in addition, this district has an 83% poverty level. The greatest challenge in implementing one-to-one technology at Sunnyside was finding creative ways to secure and sustain funding. Some funding came through strategically targeted district budgeting, while other funds were secured through Federal ARRA and EdJobs funds or other local, state or national grant opportunities. I don’t believe one ever overcomes the challenge of funding for technology. It is a continual struggle as technology continues to change and needs to be refreshed.

How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?
I lead by example and my leadership team is committed to the vision in turning what was once a dropout factory into a tech-savvy district. When everyone has this same vision for the students, one can move with unusual speed to ramp up the one-to-one program in support of that vision. Our leadership teams are very hands-on in their day-to-day activities with staff, inspiring employees at all levels of the organization to be members of the team that provides success to students in their academics and personal college or career goals.

For More Information
Tech&Learning Leader of the year 2011

Intel Education: Leading the Way to Sustainable 1:1 eLearning – Sunnyside School District
http://tinyurl.com/ahnrfxn

Project RED
http://projectred.org

ISTE’s Revolutionizing Education through Technology (free for digital download)
2) One-to-One Tablet PC Program
More than 9,000 students have Tablet PC computers with learning, learning management system and classroom management tools plus a suite of productivity tools and access to online resources, including electronic textbooks and web 2.0 communication tools. The program is being implemented at one campus at a time.

Every teacher and student gets a Tablet PC using a three-step process:
1) Installation of a wireless infrastructure at each campus;
2) Teacher Tablet PC distribution and extensive professional development, starting one year prior to students’ receiving their Tablet PC computers;
3) Distribution of student Tablet PCs and progressive changes in instructional strategies. Includes onsite technical and instructional technology support at every campus.

Results
Student and teacher enthusiasm, energy level and excitement about what students are learning are palpable. Students demonstrate a high level of creativity through products they create that also reflect a greater understanding of the concepts being taught, usually with more depth and complexity than with traditional paper/pen products.

Teachers see an increase in the efficiency of classroom management that is a great help with overall productivity. They know instantly how well students are grasping the content and are better able to maximize their time to meet the multitude of tasks involved in teaching and learning.

Teachers and administrators use data – including classroom formative assessment, district benchmarks, state standardized tests, and more – to monitor instruction and student achievement. Technology affords access to multiple digital learning resources and tools as well as differentiated and personalized instruction.

Communication among all stakeholders – teachers, students, administrators, parents and the community at large – has improved and has built cohesiveness and strengthened support to the district as a learning community.

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
Collaboration in an atmosphere of mutual respect for all and working together as a professional learning community is what drove our success.

What keeps you awake at night?
I’m concerned that in the larger K-12 community, some may lose sight of the focus on learning because it is so easy to be enthralled with the “latest and greatest” product or trend.

What accomplishments are most important?
• The way our teachers have leveraged the technology in their classrooms to design learning environments and instructional strategies that meet student needs.
• The products our students create that show their learning process and demonstrate their mastery of the content.
• The fact that in a fairly large school district (46,000 students) we have been able
to provide technology tools - tied to effective professional development programs - across the district to all students and teachers and not just a select few.

**What do you hope for the future of your program?**

- That we continue to grow the one-to-one program and expand on our other technology initiatives in a fashion that is meaningful and builds on our current success.

- That we always function as a community of learners that includes administrators, teachers, students and parents, and keep growing in knowledge and expertise to meet the needs of our students.

**How do you inspire your staff to embrace change?**

I keep the focus on the students. Whenever someone wonders if the effort is worth it, I show them classrooms where technology is used effectively and point out student engagement, sheer joy in learning, and their achievement.

**What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?**

1) An understanding that the status quo is not good enough and a willingness to be open to new methods to build success for all students to meet their academic and future career needs.

2) Ability to bring people together to execute visionary plans.

3) Strong communication skills that include the spoken and written words as well as the ability to listen and reflect on other’s contributions.

**Who or what inspires you?**

The students inspire me. Their excitement about learning and the “joyful noise” that exists in a highly engaged classroom is what keeps me coming to work every day. The teachers and administrators I work with who are willing to take a risk, try something new and share what they learn with others are my other sources of inspiration.

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### Ann’s Advice: Key Factors for Success

- Keep sight of the fact that we are in the “learning” business, not the technology or consumer electronics business. Teaching and learning goals drive all decisions about technology.

- Have a common vision and clear understanding of the goals by all involved, including the community at large. Articulate and demonstrate the goals regularly.

- Assure that students have technology tools that allow them to be creators and producers of their own content, not simply consumers of content. Make sure they can show mastery and understanding of the learning objectives in their various subject areas to reinforce and retain knowledge.

- Applaud leadership from the board of trustees, the superintendent, district leaders, and most important, school principals. Principals set the expectations for teachers and staff and monitor and adjust to see that the technology investment is used appropriately and effectively.

- Reinforce that district curriculum leaders see technology as an integral component of instructional strategies and curriculum goals.

- Provide teacher and administrators with self-assessments and ongoing, targeted, job-embedded professional development that integrates learning how to use the technology tools with how to apply the hardware/software to target and support student success.

- Offer committed, responsive technical support to assure that “all systems are working” everyday.

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### For More Information

- POWER ON TEXAS
  http://www.powerontexas.com/?page_id=2406

- Digital Learning Environments Case Study
  http://www.guide2digitallearning.com/node/674

- Partnership for 21st Century Skills

- K-12 Blueprint Archived Webinar
  http://www.k12blueprint.com/k12/blueprint/ConvertibleTabletsWebinar.php

- Digital Learning Environments Leadership Section
  www.guide2digitallearning.com
Interview with Tom Murray

Background
The Quakertown Community School District (QCSD) serves roughly 5,400 students in grades K-12. The district began its blended-learning program in 2008 with two goals: to keep high-risk students from dropping out and to offer more flexible course offerings to students with outside of school commitments and those wishing to accelerate.

Our first attempt had 91 students, 33 of whom took between five and nine, mostly core courses. The program was a combination of courses we contracted from outside the district and those taught by QCSD teachers. The program has since expanded to offer all students the opportunity to take an online course and have control over the pace of their learning.

What instructional technology accomplishments are you most proud of?
We offer sixty online classes for grades 6-12 and approximately one-fourth of the District’s 2,880 students in grades 6-12 take at least one class online. Courses reflect the QCSD face-to-face curriculum and are designed and taught by QCSD teaching staff, with the exception of Chinese and Japanese.

The district offers students in grades 6-12 the option of taking one or more supplemental online courses. All students complete a cyber orientation course prior to enrollment. Because courses are asynchronous, students can work on them any time during the day. Many students take advantage of this option in order to work around vocational programs, work schedules, and extracurricular interests. Some students work on their online classes at home, and others work on them at school during cyber periods.

QCSD has created designated areas in the middle and high schools for students to work on their online courses. These spaces are set up like comfortable cafes and are called cyber lounges. The district has fully implemented BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) and allows students to use the technology device that best suits their learning. This initiative complements the one-to-one laptop initiative found in the Senior High School. And we encourage students to use smartphones to gather information.

What has been the greatest change you’ve seen as a result of teaching and learning with technology?
Student engagement has increased dramatically, and student achievement has grown as a result. This generation of students is wired and connected 24/7. We’re now able to channel them into using their tools and connectivity to increase engagement and promote learning through 21st century skills. However, it is really not about the technology. It’s about the learning that occurs through proper technology infusion.

What results have you seen?
More important than the technology equipment and infusion are the results. Student, parent and community surveys show positive attitudes toward the initiatives. Student achievement data indicate:

- Increased standardized tests results including state tests and college placement exams
- Increased graduation rates (88% to 95%), increased attendance at 2 and 4 year post-secondary institutions after graduation
- Reduced student discipline problems
- More students returning to QCSD from charter schools with fewer students leaving the district.

How do you measure success?
We measure achievement in two areas; teacher quality and student achievement. When they are implemented effectively, technology programs lead to improved student achievement and a significant return on investment. If student achievement isn’t at the core of the initiative, why do it?

What was the biggest lesson(s) learned throughout the process?
We learned to differentiate professional development for our staff. We realized that counting hours and forcing particular PD sessions was meaningless and...
Tom’s Advice: Key Factors for Success

- **People:** Our staff is made up of incredibly talented, highly dedicated, student-centered teachers. The team carries out our mission; it’s not about any one individual.

- **Leadership with clear vision:** From a visionary Superintendent, to out-of-the-box thinking principals, the leadership in QCSD is forward thinking and results-oriented.

- **Professional Development:** We have systemic, relevant, differentiated professional development driven by the staff’s desire to be better tomorrow than they are today.

- **Support:** School board financial support and understanding the vision of the 21st century student have a huge impact.

an ineffective use of staff time. With that, we changed the professional development model for QCSD from a traditional approach of tracking time, to an individualized model where teachers evaluate their own needs and develop their goals for self-improvement.

When the district dropped the required seat hours, teachers gained the freedom to grow where needed. The one-size fits all approach doesn’t work in meeting the needs of students, and it certainly doesn’t work for teachers either. Teachers are now focused on growing professionally rather than spending a certain number of hours to meet contractual obligations. This is a huge shift in mindset. Professional development has morphed from certain days per year, to an ongoing, continuous process of growth. The expectation is excellence and the roadmap varies from teacher to teacher.

**What do you hope for the future of your program?**
Our vision is anytime, anywhere learning. Our goal is that all students will have equitable access to - and use properly - the multitude of learning resources that are available. Our wired generation needs this. Thus our cyber program will continue to find innovative ways to meet the needs of all students in an online environment. For example, Blended learning will become the norm in all K-12 classrooms.

Because of our BYOD initiative, students will be able to use any device of their choosing at any time of day to learn.

Our technology department will continue to meet whatever demands are needed to support and promote student achievement.

**What keeps you awake at night?**
I lose sleep thinking about education and how it continues to evolve and that we must find ever more efficient and effective ways meet the needs of all students. Continuing to find innovative ways to do this is a challenge and like other fields in this economy we need to continue to find ways to do more with less.

**If you could offer advice to other districts that are getting started with technology, what would it be?**
Don’t adopt the block it and lock it philosophy. Many districts fall into the trap of blocking some of the best learning resources available on the web including YouTube, Twitter, Google Apps, and many other Web 2.0 Tools, thus limiting both students and teachers. Encourage the use of these resources and teach students how to use them appropriately. Find the balance between network security and needed instructional resources for staff and students. What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today? Leaders need vision, integrity, and perseverance. A leader’s vision sets the stage for others to change and translates that vision into reality. Leaders with integrity create an environment of trust where innovation flourishes and leads to transformation. Real leaders persevere; they remove the roadblocks and help others to change. Leadership is action, not a position title.

**How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?**
Staff members become motivated when they understand the compelling reason to change their practice. When they see results and see an increase in student engagement and motivation, and when they understand today’s generation of students, change is inevitable. My motto is: Hire great people, train them well, and get out of their way.

**Who or what inspires you?**
I’m inspired by the hundreds of talented educators that I learn from daily in my professional learning network on Twitter. QCSD’s Superintendent, Dr. Lisa Andrejko and my technology partner, Joe Kuzo, also inspire me.

For More Information

*Forbes.com: Bright Spots in Online Learning*
http://tinyurl.com/6rle3rw

*Project Red: Press Release*
http://tinyurl.com/d3ygo4
What instructional technology accomplishments are most important?
The instructional technology accomplishment I am most proud of is not a piece of technology but the technology strategy we call STAR. It stands for Student Technology Access and Resources, our multi-pronged approach to ensuring that every student has access to tools and resources for anytime, anywhere learning.

- **Devices:** We make sure that every student has access to a computing device through our One-to-One program or computer refurbishing program that provides refurbished equipment and support to families in need.
- **Connectivity:** We partner with broadband providers to inform families of low-cost connectivity options with the King County Housing Authority to install kiosks and Internet hotspots in its apartment complexes. We have plans to partner with cities and local businesses to expand this network of free hotspots for our students and families.
- **Resources:** In addition, we try to ensure that all electronic resources available at school are also available remotely. In the coming year, this will also include delivering the entire Kent School District software suite virtually to student-owned devices.

What has been the greatest change you've seen as a result of teaching and learning with technology?
Today our students and staff have unparalleled flexibility in the classroom. Teachers have a host of tools that they can customize to fit their comfort and skill levels, cater to student learning styles, increase student participation and engagement, convey rich content, and improve and enliven the process of knowledge delivery. We have evolved to use technology as a way to deliver learning opportunities in virtually any subject area. Classrooms are borderless; at home, students have access to the resources they used in class, so their learning does not end at the schoolhouse steps.

What results have you seen?
Our alignment of technology tools with district instructional strategies has increased and enriched student achievement. Independent research data provides objective evidence of these results in increased graduation rates, improved state standardized testing results, and reduced disciplinary offenses. The data is available in the downloadable Evaluation Report at the end of this profile.

What was the key factor in making your program successful?
The long-term support from our community, our board, and our superintendent has been the key factor in our success. The district’s ability to expand implementation of new tools and resources and systemically embed technology into the day-to-day operation of our schools required consistent and sustained funding and support.

How do you measure success?
For me, success has four components.
- First, everything we do is designed towards improving student achievement. Our District’s mission is “Successfully prepare all students for their future.”
- Second, success means providing increased access to learning opportunities.
- Third, we are committed to making district operations run more efficiently to save resources for reinvestment in the classroom.

Name: Than Nguyen
Title: Chief Information & Automated Operations Officer / Assistant Superintendent
School District: Kent School District
City/State: Kent, WA
District’s Web site: www.kent.k12.wa.us
Finally, IT is a service-based organization and customer satisfaction is paramount. If our customers are satisfied, they are more likely to use technology resources to their full benefit, which provides the greatest return on investment.

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
With any new technology adoption, it’s important to test your assumptions. We began with a critical analysis of available options and a willingness to look beyond standard data and vendor guarantees. We found that the best way to learn about a new technology was through a proof of concept, a small-scale implementation to gather data.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
My hope is that the program expands to include new partnerships with local businesses and organizations. We want to leverage today’s tools and resources to provide our students with the unique experiences and opportunities of both academic and experiential learning.

What keeps you awake at night?
Student security and safety are ever-growing concerns. I worry about potential student access to inappropriate content or communication that is not conducive to a safe and productive learning environment and breaches of security of highly sensitive district data. We safeguard against both, but it’s an ongoing battle to keep current on software and tools designed to circumvent these issues.

What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
Effective educational leaders must be civic-minded and must remember that our schools do not belong to us. Our role is to carry out the objectives of the community and not our personal agendas. Our schools must reflect the values of our community.

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Thuan’s Advice: Key Factors for Success

- Partner with other school districts to learn from their successes and mistakes. You can draw upon a wealth of knowledge and experience simply by reaching out to colleagues across town, across the country, or across the globe.

- Engage your community. You know the value of professional development, staying current on technology trends, and forecasting future technology needs. You should share that knowledge with the community: Show them how the resources you support are critical to student success; share the data and statistics that drive your decision-making, and demonstrate how your work correlates with the skills students will need in the future.

- Don’t be afraid to admit when you’re wrong or when something hasn’t gone well. As technology innovators, we often find ourselves blazing the trail without a clear path to follow. If your path leads to a dead end, stop and chart a new path. Admitting mistakes builds credibility and develops a culture of responsibility and adaptability in your team. Your team is more likely to admit its shortcomings to you and seek your counsel if you have shown such courage.

In addition, effective leadership requires strategic focus. We are required to be mindful of the future and to focus on the long-term mission while accomplishing short-term objectives. A strategic leader must look beyond today’s challenges by anticipating and planning for tomorrow and providing a vision and a roadmap for moving forward.

How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?
Creating opportunities for our students and teachers to tell their stories and share what they’re doing in the classroom builds interest and excitement in new technologies and new technology applications. It reminds operational team members how their work directly and significantly impacts student achievement, showcases the creativity happening in our schools, and offers a preview of what is available when students leave our schools.

Who or what inspires you?
I find inspiration in the little reminders about how my work impacts the classroom.

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For More Information

Kent School District
http://www.kent.k12.wa.us/IT

Independent Evaluation Report
http://goo.gl/3XpNP

Kent School District wins award for website
http://www.kentreporter.com/community/129918613.html

School district uses virtualization to ‘kid-proof’ 10,000 student PCs

Two levies, one ballot: Kent School District runs M&O, technology levy elections for February

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PROFILES IN LEADERSHIP 21
Interview with Debbie Rice

What instructional technology accomplishments are you most proud of?
I am most proud to work with individuals who take pride in educating Auburn City School students. I am fortunate to work with a technology team made up of administrators, support staff and teachers who support technology resources to enhance student academic advancement. This team was responsible for changing the culture of a teacher-centric focus to one of student-centric at a time when not all teachers were in favor changing their educational practices. Today the practices are embedded in instructional delivery in all content areas.

What has been the greatest change you’ve seen as a result of teaching and learning with technology?
The greatest change has been with classroom educators. Teachers who were ready to retire began to rethink their time in the classroom and found a renewed sense of purpose because of digital tools and resources. Classrooms today are more student-centric and teachers and students both share in the learning process. Students often serve as teachers in the process.

What results have you seen?
Auburn City Schools now has a graduation rate of 90% and all of our schools have met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in all 80 categories. The school system has met 100% of its AYP goals since its inception. Student engagement has grown and we use creative ways to achieve learning outcomes.

What were the key factors in making your program successful?
The 1:1 program at Auburn Junior High School and Auburn City Schools has been successful for several reasons. The main factor is our shared commitment to providing an educational system that meets the needs of every one of our students. We have learned that regardless of the program, if the focus is on what is right for children, we will be successful.

How do you measure success?
We measure success in many ways. In addition to using test scores and graduation rates, I think a school system is successful when students graduate on-time and those students are successful beyond their high school experiences.

What was the biggest lesson(s) learned throughout the process?
For our laptop program initiative, we learned how to plan and this process was the greatest lesson we learned. The technology steering team identified three goals and our planning focused on them. We collected research, reviewed the findings, and we scheduled three site visits to observe systems that had implemented a 1:1 program successfully. We also set up a conference call to discuss why one district felt their efforts were not successful. The technology team discussed all aspects of our proposed project: funding, infrastructure, professional development, curriculum, assessment and evaluation. It was through this process that I learned the value of spending 80% of the time planning and 20% of the time implementing.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
My hopes for Auburn City Schools’ 1:1 program is to secure funding so that we can
expand the program across the district into all classrooms K-12. We will base this expansion on the curricular needs of students in the various grades.

**What keeps you awake at night?**
Technology funding in this state and across the nation keeps me awake at night. Below is an excerpt taken from an advocacy letter written and distributed to legislatures in Alabama to advocate for funding in schools.

“The reality of how our students’ technology needs are not being met is best illustrated by the following by Bruce Ellard of Cullman County Schools:
• If teacher units were funded like technology, a 500-student high school would have fewer than 5 teachers.
• If textbooks and furniture were funded like technology, a class of 20 students would have 3 desks and 3 textbooks.
• If transportation were staffed like technology, the county system would have 16 buses and 16 drivers to run 104 routes.
• If the school cafeterias were staffed like technology, the county system would have 17 employees staffing 14 cafeterias.”

Personally, I feel that the infrastructure in schools should be managed and maintained as a utility. Schools do not function without power. Schools do not function without water. Schools cannot function without technology. How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?

Our policy at the district level is to listen to the needs of stakeholders and work to provide solutions that support their needs. It is through this practice that so many staff members embrace change.

**Who or what inspires you?**
My faith is my inspiration. I quote Martin Luther King Jr. “Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase.”

**What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?**
Leaders have the ability to communicate and collaborate with others. Communication is about two-way communication, listening and sharing to and from all stakeholders.

Leaders have the ability to embrace and manage change. They roll up their sleeves and model what they are asking others to do.

Leaders’ value trust and integrity and that trust and integrity resonates in their daily actions and practices.

**For More Information**

*Technology as a Tool for System Transformation Intel Whitepaper*
http://tinyurl.com/c5kgfap

*Promoting Equality, Success Through Technology*
http://tinyurl.com/bu3qs53

*Juniper Networks Helps Auburn City Schools Students Learn Anytime, Anywhere*
http://tinyurl.com/bhrs587
infrastructure and equipment deployments; we are strengthening our relationships with key vendors to solve many existing problems; we have been developing strategic alliances to advance the vision; and we are creating a strong IT team with a more clearly defined role and function for each member. We are now fully staffed with action-oriented, results-driven team members who are committed to the vision.

Our work has also focused on aligning the vision to leverage technology with high-yield instructional strategies – all aimed at using technology to improve student achievement. We’ve done this by linking technology use to Common Core Standards and instituting a professional development requirement. We are addressing inequities of technology access and have instituted action-based research studies to monitor the effect of our HP laptop implementation on student achievement in one-to-one and other classrooms.

What has been the greatest change you’ve seen at your district as a result of teaching and learning with technology?

Over the past five years, we have seen technology transform our classrooms with personalized learning as technology has motivated us to develop a new mindset of how we approach teaching and learning. In addition, cloud computing, storage and virtualization have become significant for our district because they allow us to leverage high accessibility and high reliability in our quest to improve student scores. Collectively, these factors are game changers.

How do you measure success?

There are multiple measures to use for measuring success: Does everyone understand the vision, and are they committed to that vision? Does the technology work in a way that students, faculty, and staff expect? Do we address engagement, rigor and relevance? Are we able to take advantage of new and emerging technologies? Is risk-taking, discovery, and innovation promoted? Are staff action-oriented and results-driven, and are those two facets a significant part of the culture? The district’s achievements show how well we have grown.

What results have you seen?

We have seen much success in the last couple of years. We now have staff using blended learning and flipped classrooms to more actively engage students, raise curricular rigor, and make instruction more relevant. On the 2012-2013 Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE), our students scored above the state average in all tested grade levels in reading and mathematics. We have won several awards and gained national recognition.

What were the biggest lessons learned throughout the process?

I would identify five important lessons:

1 Vision linked to high-yield instructional strategies is vital
2 Leadership matters, and everyone is a leader
3 Distinguishing what is at the core from what is at the periphery - it matters immensely
4 Contemporary infrastructure and deployment strategies are essential
5 Strategic alliances are critical to advancing technology programs
What do you hope for the future of your program?
I hope that within five years we have ubiquitous access to technology in all its forms and structures – and that faculty are fully prepared to take advantage of this access in their daily instruction. I hope to keep our technical and innovator teams action-oriented and results-driven and our technology infrastructure and deployment practices aligned with our systemic reform work. I hope to keep community support strong and the pieces in place to make a significant difference in student achievement through the power of technology.

What keeps you awake at night?
I ask myself two questions every night: (1) Have my actions today produced the results that changed the trajectory of the lives of students, faculty, and staff I serve, and (2) did I tackle the hard questions today through courageous conversations so that I addressed the most fundamental and significant questions facing us – and did I do it with integrity?

If you could offer advice to districts getting started with technology, what would it be?
• Commit to the journey,
• Set a vision such as: “How do we develop a digital-age learning environment, with a focus on academic achievement gains, so that all students graduate from our high schools college and workforce ready?”
• Hire and train the best administrative, technical, and innovative staff possible.
• Help staff to be personally committed to the vision, be action-oriented and results-driven – and have an innate sense of systems and systemic reform.
• Stay the course; it’s a journey, not a destination.

What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
There are six leadership qualities needed in today’s educational technology programs:
1. Set a vision that is forward thinking and employs technology wisely
2. Develop and support your administrative, technical, and innovative leaders.
3. Act on the factors that are at the core as opposed to the periphery.
4. Focus on a strong and resilient infrastructure and deployment.
5. Develop strategic alliances.
6. Be willing to understand the questions not asked and speak hard truths.

How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?
Two factors now support educational technology change and growth for the system: First, we developed and established technology networks that the end users can have confidence using. When teachers build instructional lessons on a technology foundation, and when students log onto the network, technology work seamlessly. Second, we developed and promote a culture of risk taking, discovery, and innovation that makes change easier and faster. When you cover the basics well, make the network highly stable with sufficient bandwidth, and support a culture and spirit of change, you unleash the power of potential by giving students, faculty, and staff the confidence to do things differently.

Who or what inspires you?
I am inspired by those who are helping students to achieve, who use innovative approaches, and who achieve results through their leadership and actions. This includes national and state leaders as well as the educators, staff and administrators in Janesville.

For More Information
Janesville High Schools Awarded Silver Medals by US News
http://www.janesville.k12.wi.us/Portals/1/US News for Website.pdf
The new digital learning environment allows Huntsville schools to provide 24/7 access for students and teachers and changes how children are taught and learn. It takes a lot of hard work by teachers, administrators, staff, and community.

The school district has been preparing for the major transition by working to save money through significant operational efficiencies and to secure federal E-Rate funding earmarked to help cover most of the cost. Over time, the shift to digital is expected to save the district money. The school system has also been building up the technology infrastructure and bandwidth will increase as student access to the comprehensive digital resources grows. The school district is collaborating with community organizations to help increase students’ access to the Internet outside of schools.

What instructional technology accomplishments are you most proud of? We are proud of our digital one-to-one Initiative that we began in June 2012 for the entire Huntsville City School District. Our role is to provide students with exceptional learning experiences that prepare them for life and career in a world of exponential change.

What has been the greatest change you’ve seen as a result of teaching and learning with technology? Students are more engaged. Learning can continue to take place beyond the classrooms walls, 24/7. We now have access to information that allows us to personalize education and make it student centric.

What was the key factor in making your program successful? Teamwork and partnerships are critical to our success and partnering with a firm that can deliver an integrated digital curriculum is key. Our digital conversion entails a partnership between educators, technologists, and Pearson on-site and remote support.

What results have you seen? We see positive results in the areas of student behavior and achievement.

- In-school suspensions are down 42% through Week 9
- Out-of-school suspensions are down 49% through Week 9
- Total suspensions are down 45% through Week 9
- Principals attribute reduction in discipline to much improved student engagement due to the digital curriculum

In addition, we see improvements in academics and achievement. Our focus on achievement and growth has resulted in increased AP course enrollments and increased numbers of students who earn qualifying scores (3, 4, and 5).

While we are increasing rigor, we are also turning around persistently underperforming schools. Math achievement has increased by an average of eight percentiles since the spring of 2012 and reading scores are on the rise as well.

How do you measure success? We evaluate student growth and achievement and that is our core focus when making decisions.
What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
We learned that it is just that - a process. Once you enter the world of digital learning, you are never complete; you are always gaining new insights, making adjustments, and fine-tuning the process.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
We hope to create a learning environment that results in increased personalization and opportunities for our students to learn 24/7 and instill the desire for lifelong learning.

What keeps you awake at night?
I worry about making sure the hardware is working properly and the maintenance of student computers occurs in a timely manner. I want to know that we always have adequate spare devices when there is a breakage.

How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?
We provide continuous professional development opportunities so the staff will learn, grow, and apply what they’ve learned. We make it a priority to align professional development with the curriculum and digital learning to help teachers see the big picture. And we provide the data and information that gives the teachers and administrators insight into how the student learning is being impacted by our digital and curricular initiatives.

Who or what inspires you?
I’m inspired by a vision of what the future is going to look like. Having a vision of the future dictates that we must start today to determine what the future for our students will be. We hope to make teaching and learning aligned with the interactive, networked world characterized by accelerating change that is ahead.

What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
Tomorrow’s leaders need courage and a willingness to try new things. Risk-taking is key.

Too many people think you have to have all the answers before you start; however, what you really need is to have is a good vision of where you want to go and the willingness to prioritize resources to get you there.

How did you get your start in education and educational technology?
I started at West Point and led major efforts over a 30-year career to use technology to improve processes, shorten schedules and dramatically improve outcomes. Technology is the way to connect people to the information they need when and where they need it – for students that could mean curriculum, for teachers and administrators it could be data to help guide instruction and personalize learning.

Editor’s Note
Dr. Wardynski is well versed in how technology and education intersect. As Colonel Wardynski, he developed America’s Army Game Project, a series of video games for the United States Army that would provide the public with a virtual soldier experience that was engaging, informative and entertaining. The goal was to give soldiers information to help reduce the number of recruits who wash out during the nine weeks of basic training.

For More Information
Publications
http://tinyurl.com/cvlt5l4
Outstanding Superintendent of the Year
http://tinyurl.com/cgu4jbv
Huntsville’s Casey Wardynski Named Tech-Savvy Superintendent of the Year
http://tinyurl.com/crcs8aq
Dr. Casey Wardynski on Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Americas_Army
What instructional technology accomplishments are most important?
Instructional technology has had a major impact on learning in our district because the staff is so dedicated and the community is so supportive. We integrate technology into many areas of learning and carefully monitor the results.

Two models drive many of our decisions.

Our Data Model: All our systems talk to each other in a single point of entry for student data. When data is entered into our SMS, it populates all other systems including creating network logins and storage, food services, library, LMS, transportation etc. This was a major accomplishment for our district and it saves hundreds of hours a year in data entry. Now all our data is consistent and accurate across all systems.

Our Technology Enhanced Instructional Model: We make decisions that deal with learning and technology. It starts with what we want students to know and do and ends with student achievement.

What has been the greatest change you’ve seen as a result of teaching and learning with technology?
The most significant change district wide is moving from a culture of No to a culture of Yes. Yes, we can all succeed. Yes, all students can learn. Yes, we can do it together and everyone wins!

What results have you seen?
Last year, we focused on math in grades 3-5 with Pearson’s SuccessMaker. Students took turns at the six laptop computers in each classroom four days a week. Of the students who met the required number of minutes each week, 98% of third graders, 100% of fourth graders, and 100% of the fifth graders passed the state test in math. These results were validation of our decision to make a change in classroom instruction and management because of the major gains in learning.

What was the key factor in making your program successful?
The most important factor in our success is the strength of our people. We knew that just giving out the technology and software would not yield the results we needed in our district. So we relied on our people. Our instructional technology personnel know how to relate to staff and students. Our educators are strong leaders; they understand the classroom and are able to see the big picture to integrate technology.

How do you measure success?
I don’t measure our success by the test scores or rankings. I measure success every time a student walks across the stage at commencement and I know they are ready for their future. This district provides each student with the skills and attitudes they need so they can think critically; think for themselves, and understand complex professional and social issues.

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
We learned that building a relationship of trust with the faculty, staff, students and community made the difference. We listened to what they had to say, analyzed their needs, interpreted how that fit into the big picture, and found resources to meet the
Mike’s Advice: Key Factors for Success

- Put people first: Make sure you have the right people on the bus to support, advise and lead your staff, students and community.
- Keep in mind the important role of professional development: It doesn’t do any good to have equipment without knowing how to use it and what its role is in student learning.
- Have a Learning Plan in contrast to an isolated ‘Technology Plan. It’s all about Learning. Technology and information services are wonderful tools and processes that support, enhance and accelerate learning.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
I hope we will always serve the needs of our students, staff and community; put people first; support learning, and continue to make this community a great place to live and work.

What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
Relationships are the building block of great leaders. Building caring, service-oriented and trustful relationships at all levels is a must. Great leaders must be patient and compassionate and have a professional and personal vision that inspires others to join.

Who or what inspires you?
I am an avid student of John Maxwell, Steven Covey, and Jim Collins. I believe in their approach to principle-centered leadership and offering the opportunity to anyone who will work hard, care, believe, build substantive relationships and make the journey, to rise to the top together. It’s not lonely at the top if you bring others with you.

How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?
In order to have enduring and substantive change, we try to create an environment of high trust and sharing. In order for change to happen, and to believe that it is good, we try to have ongoing dialog among people who have trust. In addition, I ask myself and ask staff to pose three questions at the end of each day:

What did I do well today?
What could I have improved on today?
Whose life did I touch today?

For More Information
Download diagrams of the district’s Data Model and Technology Enhanced Instructional Model:
http://www.guide2digitallearning.com/node/1573
We are leveraging the federal E-Rate program for some of the cabling, network and telephone infrastructure. The district is also taking advantage of a federal low-interest loan program.

Complementing the student device upgrades, we are replacing the two main administrative systems – the student information system and the enterprise resource planning system (human resources, payroll purchasing and finance). These system replacements are giving the district the opportunity to examine many of their daily processes, and find efficiencies.

What goals are most important?
The ultimate goal of these initiatives is to give staff and students the tools and information they need at the point of instruction to improve the educational process significantly.

What instructional technology accomplishments are most important?
We went from minimal mobile computing to seeding mobility in all district schools. Before this summer, the district had very few mobile devices for student use. We added 1,600 student laptop computers on wireless carts. The carts became hot spots, adding wireless capability where it did not previously exist in most of the district schools. This is allowing students to perform more academic work at the point of instruction.

What has been the greatest change you’ve seen as a result of teaching and learning with technology?
We see that where technology is used in conjunction with supportive teaching methods, it substantially increases student engagement.

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
Planning and logistics are most important when you go to scale with a deployment.

What keeps you awake at night?
The consumerization of IT means that many of our students and staff have better personal hardware than their work hardware. Ultimately, we need to tap

Name: Craig Williams
Title: Director of Information Services
School District: School District U-46
City/State: Elgin, IL
District’s Web site: http://www.u-46.org/

What Ed Tech Programs in School District U-46 are you most proud of?
We are in the early stages of a technology turn-around. Our district is an urban/suburban district that suffered the effects of several budget crises over the last ten years. With support from the Board, Superintendent and COO, the IT department is kick-starting the renewal of the technology resources available to students and staff.

One of the challenges was to find additional funding outside of regular channels. A major purchase of desktop computers came to the end of a four-year lease. Funding constraints did not allow us to replace these computers for an additional two years. Our other computers were even older than these. We used a combination of leasing and ARRA funding to purchase 4,400 computers (including 1,600 laptops), and we upgraded an additional 5,000 more. It was the single largest deployment in the district’s history.

What were the key factors in making your program successful?
Improving communication with principals and the other operational departments. This has led to a freer exchange of ideas. Better communication also allowed money from other department budgets to flow into technology projects.

Logistics. The summer deployment teams, led by the tech support manager, organized interns, techs and vendor staff to put the computers in place. The teams were an outstanding combination of energy, building knowledge and consulting expertise. They worked with the HP and internal warehouse staff to streamline the deployment process.

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
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What keeps you awake at night?
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What do you hope for the future of your program?
The ultimate goal is to give staff and students the tools and information they need at the point of instruction to improve the educational process significantly. Accomplishing this goal will certainly involve more mobility and more end-users devices. It will also involve assessment and reporting that is nearly real-time at the point of instruction.

What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
In the school IT discipline, leaders need to be very open to working with instructional staff to weave technology into the instructional process. Collaboration is the only way that technology use will be successful. Leaders need to be able to communicate their business case for each new technology, speaking to the same instructional success measures that the administration is using. This starts with listening to the needs of school staff and responding with solutions that address their biggest pain points.

Who or what inspires you?
I pray for wisdom to bring the right solutions to the district, which will actually change the ability of our students to thrive in the technology-driven work and world.

How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?
We are emphasizing customer service and measure our success based on surveys. This has led to a more responsive team, without major personnel increases. I also think that the amount of change that we are bringing inspires the staff to pitch in when they see that the change leads to tangible improvements.

For More Information
Courier News article on the district’s summer deployment project: http://tinyurl.com/744qfom
**Interview with Marianthe Williams**

Name: Marianthe Williams  
Title: Director of Technology  
School District: River Dell Regional School District  
City/State: River Edge, NJ  
District’s Web site: www.riverdell.org

What Ed Tech Program in River Dell are you most proud of?
The River Dell Regional School District is a regional school district serving approximately 1,600 students in grades 7 - 12 in Bergen County, New Jersey. Newsweek magazine ranked the high school as one of the best in America. All 1,100 students at the district’s high school participate in a one-to-one, learner-centered digital program using HP laptops.

District goals are developed collaboratively with administration and teachers and focus on teaching and learning and student achievement. The district technology goals are aligned with the national technology plan and act as our framework for all curricular decisions.

These national and district goals are:
- All learners will have engaging and empowering learning experiences both in and out of school that prepare them to be active, creative, knowledgeable, and ethical participants in our globally networked society.

- Our educational system will leverage the power of technology to measure what matters and use assessment data for continuous improvement.
- Professional educators will be supported individually and in teams by technology that connects them to data, content, resources, expertise, and learning experiences that enable and inspire more-effective teaching for all learners.
- All students and educators will have access to a comprehensive infrastructure for learning when and where they need it.
- Our educational system at all levels will redesign processes and structures to take advantage of the power of technology to improve learning outcomes while making more efficient use of time, money, and staff.

The board of education, superintendent, administration, and teachers are committed to creating a 21st century digital school district. Evidence of our commitment includes:
- The Superintendent and building principals have replaced their monthly meetings with professional development opportunities such as staff-directed workshops and Professional Learning Communities.
- Every classroom in the district is equipped with a docking station for the teacher’s laptop (HP and Intel laptop), projector (some wireless), and monitor for using extended desktop keyboard.
- All High School students are provided with a laptop.
- All Middle School students have access to several laptops in their classrooms and computer labs equipped with HP desktops.
- We are now streaming live school events to the Internet (such as Graduation).
- We provide parents with ability to approve all forms online, view grades, progress reports, report cards, attendance and pertinent data concerning their child.
- Our district is now totally digital and there are no mailings. All communication is disseminated digitally.

River Dell personnel continue to change the way they think of their learning environment by empowering students to create knowledge and to personalize their learning. School websites are used for course management and provide opportunities for blogging and the posting of student projects behind a secure log in. Teachers are using their laptops to create course content as we migrate to a flipped classroom model.

Many HS courses are taught without textbooks using digital resources. Students collaborate to create videos such as book trailers and documentaries, podcasts, participate in blogging and forums, and create content in a multitude of portals. We have our own YouTube channel to showcase student projects and productions.

What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?
Migrating to a learner-centered digital school was not an event but a series of incremental changes. This needed a strong commitment on the part of teachers and staff to both teach and learn from ongoing, sustained, quality professional development. Another lesson we learned was to stop at regular intervals to celebrate the successes of the teachers and students.
Marianthe’s Advice: Key Factors for Success

• Focus goals on teaching and learning to drive all decision-making. Devices should not be the driver.

• Lead by example. District and building administrators should embrace and use technology to share with staff and the community.

• Bring all stakeholders to the table to create the common vision.

• Use technology to drive the way all students and staff communicate, work, collaborate and achieve success.

• Commit to providing all staff with ongoing professional development that is pertinent and reflects the staff’s needs and the way learning environments are changing. You can never have enough professional development.

• Require that the technology available to the students and staff support the learning process and that the goals outlined in the technology plan are revisited and are aligned with the curriculum.

• Assess the health of the network and its resources. This needs ongoing assessment to make sure that the students, teachers and staff are able to sustain just-in-time learning and the knowledge creation.

• Create a secure parent portal so that parents are able to participate. Use such items as online form submittal and the ability to view their child’s progress such as grades, attendance, projects and communication with teachers and administrators.

What keeps you awake at night?
Technology provides a medium for students to create their knowledge and to develop and to share their voice. I am concerned that the financial issues that plague all schools will one day interfere.

What accomplishments are most important?
• The accomplishments of the district are a direct result of the dedicated stakeholders who developed the shared vision of success and the continuous movement toward a digital classroom.
• All district initiatives are aligned and goals are centered around teaching and learning to raise student achievement. There is a commitment to assessing those goals.
• While striving to provide an e-learning environment, River Dell continues on its path to find the best digital content, provide professional development, and determine how to assess the outcomes.
• Students are provided with e-learning opportunities, are able to communicate digitally with their teachers and with each other, and have opportunities to personalize learning styles with just-in-time learning through the use of technology.
• Teachers drive the professional development for each content area so that the workshops are meaningful and differentiated. Teachers assess the needs of the members of their department and develop relevant workshops to meet those needs.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
I hope that we will continue to share and articulate the district vision to create anytime anywhere learners and that we are able to stay current. Another hope is to extend the one-to-one initiative to all of the students in the middle school.

What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
• To include multiple perspectives in decision-making so that everyone has an opportunity to develop and to share the vision.
• To become reflective in your practice and to provide guidance to help others develop the skills.
• To share best practices with each other to guide change and to understand and respect that change is a process and not an event.

Who or what inspires you?
I am inspired every time I walk down the halls and have the opportunity to see how students are engaged and excited to learn as they develop their projects. The commitment of students, dedication of teachers and the ongoing support of the community inspire me. The board of education, the superintendent and the principals inspire me because they are dedicated to creating a culture of excellence.

For More Information
Archived Webinar: Technology, Learning and Change: Digital Content, Professional Development, and Assessment

Focusing on Learning in Oradell, New Jersey
http://www.guide2digitallearning.com/leadership/focusing_learning_oradell_new_jersey

River Dell district home page
www.riverdell.org

Newsweek article naming River Dell Regional High as one of the best high schools in America in 2011
The community passed a large bond in 2006 and thanks to a supportive Board and Superintendent, we were able to begin a large-scale modernization program that put computers, document cameras, projectors, and more in classrooms throughout the district. A modern data center provides the applications for staff and students. At the core of this software sits our MyJISD Portal, which provides a platform for students and staff to get to the district resources they need from virtually any device and from any location.

What instructional technology accomplishments are you most proud of?
We have been working to offer more access to resources and technology for all of our students. We have provided our youngest learners in each of our elementary classrooms with access to computers in every elementary classroom at a cost that we feel is relatively affordable and sustainable.

What has been the greatest change you’ve seen at your district as a result of teaching and learning with technology?
There are a myriad of changes, but the greatest is that five or six years ago, because of lack of access and tools, it was difficult to see examples of technology and learning in use. Today one can walk around and see traditional teaching with technology, more innovative uses with students groups and projects, and implementations of teachers using BYOD with their students, allowing personal devices to make for a richer learning environment. Perhaps the greatest indicator of reliance on technology for instruction and learning is that we know that any sort of outage today seems to be much less tolerated than one we would have had five years ago. There is so much happening online every day that we are now striving to ensure we have resources available as close to 24/7 that our staffing and budget will allow.

What results have you seen?
When students have access to technology, they readily embrace it and usually show a great interest in what they are doing. An example of this is the readers’ workshop program that our curriculum team has implemented at the middle school using e-readers. There is clear evidence that students who weren’t reading so much before the program have gravitated to devices and are reading much more.

How do you measure success?
All means of measuring success are important, but what really gets me excited are the stories that teachers and principals tell about things that are working and getting them and their students jazzed about learning. It may just be a teacher relaying excitement about using BYOD and how well it worked, and if it works better now than what they did in the past, that is a success. It thrills me that teachers are so excited about implementing new ideas and new methods with their students. Excitement helps build success – it provides motivation to learn, experiment, and ultimately succeed.
What was the biggest lesson(s) learned throughout the process?
We learned so many lessons, and the most important is that the key to success is to plan and then plan some more. Creating a long-term vision based on a technology plan with the support of district staff and leadership is critical. Of course budget matters as well, and a plan without funding is a dream. In Texas we have been especially hard hit with the economic downturn, state budget cuts, staff cuts, and more. This has added to the challenge of proper technology implementations. Another factor is the key role of teacher support and staff development, which are often targeted when budgets are trimmed.

What do you hope for the future of your program?
I am hopeful that we can put more devices into the hands of students. We still have access issues to address, especially at our high schools. I think the advent of BYOD and easy-to-support devices may allow us to achieve this in the near future. Our biggest need is to redesign high school instruction, so having tools to integrate at the same time is essential.

What keeps you awake at night?
What doesn’t? We have so much going on and never enough hours in the day to do it all. Nonetheless, certain things take center stage. Retaining a high quality technology staff is highly important to me. I have a fantastic team, but at the end of the day, training and retaining are huge challenges. The workload on the team is phenomenal. They are supporting the same technologies as Fortune 500 companies with a team the size of a mid-sized business. This can cause stress and burnout and certainly is something that challenges us daily. Next is trying to provide up-to-date, accessible and equitable technology to students despite the challenge with funding. This is an exceptional challenge given the current economic situation and massive funding cuts in Texas.

If you could offer advice to districts getting started with technology, what would it be?
I would say start with an audit of your current situation and capabilities. Then decide where you want to be in a few years. The hardest part is to figure out how to get there from here and to secure the funding to make it happen.

What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?
I think today’s leaders need to embrace change, be risk takers, be life-long learners, be highly organized, and effective communicators, just to name a few. If leaders are not learning from their peers and colleagues, what are the chances that their teachers will do the same?

How do you inspire the staff to embrace change?
I think there is no better way to show others that change is necessary, than to be willing to embrace it myself, and I am working very hard to embrace change better. This means that we often have to look at what we are doing and how we are doing it. We have to be willing to tweak or start over to do it better in the future.

Who or what inspires you?
My colleagues around the state inspire me daily. They provide me with ideas, support, and inspiration to continually do better. Texas has a very strong group of leaders, which formed the Texas K-12 CTO Council, the first state chapter of CoSN, the Consortium for School Networking. My peers in this group cannot be matched – and without them my job would be much more challenging.

For More Information
Not So Easy Money:
http://www.techlearning.com/features/0039/schoolcio--not-so-easy-money/52705

Getting Easier to Be Green:
http://www.techlearning.com/features/0039/getting-easier-to-be-green/46986

CTO Technotes Blog:
http://ctotechnotes.blogspot.com/

Presentations:
http://www.slideshare.net/syoung2008/presentations

SchoolCIO Profile:
http://www.schoolcio.com/cio-profiles/0111/steve-young/53509
Visit the
K-12 Blueprint Web Site!

The newly designed K-12 Blueprint website provides dynamic just in time planning resource for the busy ed-tech professional.

- White papers, technology briefs and a variety of helpful publications from Intel, easily accessible in one place.
- Toolkits on hot topics such as BYOD, Ed Tech Policy, Planning for Digital Content, ICT Program Evaluation and Common Core Standards Evaluation

The K-12 Blueprint offers resources for education leaders involved in planning and implementing technology initiatives. These include:

- Case studies from schools and districts involved in 1:1 and other technology-supported initiatives.

Check out the new and improved site today. If you like what you see, we invite you to bookmark us, save and share your favorite Blueprint resources using the site’s new virtual briefcase, and subscribe to our twice-monthly newsletter to receive updates on what’s new.

www.k12blueprint.com

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