

Eltown Area High School
Technology Plan 2009

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School Overview and Context

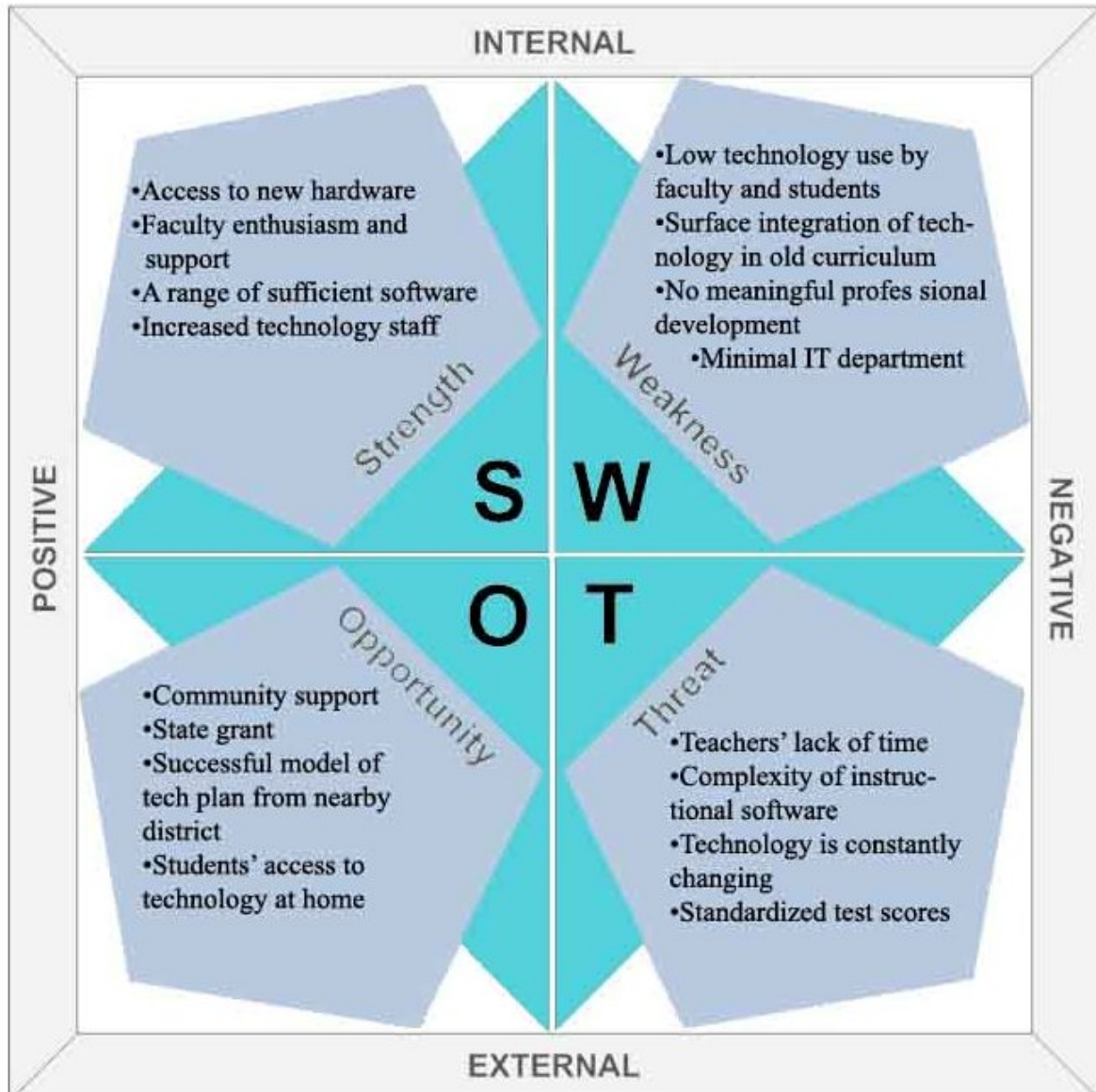
This Northampton County school district contains 11 elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high school campuses. Currently, the district does not have a formal technology plan or a strong technology department. A committee of two teachers from each high school's business department, the district's Information Technology director, and another technology specialist from a nearby district will assist in guiding and implementing technology use in Eltown Area School District. Because of the district's size, this plan will initially be implemented in the high schools. Upon its second year of evaluation and revision, it will be executed within the middle schools.

Needs Assessment

At the close of the 2008-2009 school year, a variety of administrators and teachers completed a School Technology and Readiness assessment. According to the STaR analysis results below, Eltown Area School District is at the **Mid Tech** level.

- Hardware: **High Tech**
- Connectivity: **Mid Tech**
- Content: **Low Tech**
- Professional Development: **Mid Tech**
- Integration and Use: **Low Tech**

From the STaR Chart data, a SWOT analysis outlined EASD's technology usage in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The chart on the following page depicts this data and serves as a foundation for our district's vision, and in turn, our technology implementation plan.



Vision

Elton High School aspires to inspire students to actively participate in their learning. EHS offers a NETS-driven curriculum rich in critical thinking and imbued with relevant 21st Century skills. Teachers will be equipped to model this skill development, for frequent in-service will enable them to learn how seamlessly integrate it in content presentation. Furthermore, EHS hopes to make educational tasks, objectives, and communication more efficient for teachers and administrators manage. Appropriate software will be in place to help them understand and focus on improving the learning environment. To bridge the gap between parents, students, and teachers, Eltown seeks to make classroom happenings more accessible to parents. Parents will be provided with better online communication of updated grades, assignments, and events via the districts website and teacher pages. Eltown Area School District is committed to establishing a community that supports progressive learning.

Strategic Goals

The vision of the district is idealistic, but obtainable with clear objectives and specific strategies. The four realms on which EASD will focus are essential to the plan's success.

Technology Leadership

At the heart of employee morale is leadership. Eltown High School seeks to maintain (and select more) visionary leaders who will create/adopt, teach, and supervise technology procedures. Each of the two technology specialist will be in charge of two grade levels between the high schools. One person will lead grades 9 and 10, the other

11 and 12. Since the school's two campuses are within a walking distance of .5 miles, the specialist will split time between the schools during the first year. When more teachers are trained, the district will hire two more part-time specialists from within the district during year two. The technology specialists and their technology department team will support technology in the following ways:

1. Become familiar with the core curriculum courses at the assigned grade level.
2. Participate in rewriting the curriculum to embed technology skills within each core subject area.
3. Observe classrooms on a bi-weekly, walk-through basis to collect data on technology integration.
4. Establish technology skills training for teachers during the first week of every month. Teachers will sign up the week prior to participate in one one-day session of the professional development training, which will be available Monday-Thursday.
5. Host subject-related professional development that answers teachers' concerns during the third week of every month. Elective content areas such as art, music, business, etc, will occur during the second week of the month.
6. Offer free after-school technology skills training for parents and students on at least once a month, depending on enrollment. Training will focus on basic skills and hands-on practice.
7. Allow students to teach after-school technology skills training in exchange for community service credit (which is a graduation requirement). Students must demonstrate proficiency in the skills and construct a demonstrative lesson prior to teaching a supervised session.
8. Teach teachers to use appropriate software for daily classroom tasks such as: attendance, discipline referrals, grades, standardized test track, Individualized Education Plans, etc.
9. Encourage teachers to update their district supported teacher pages in order to open communication with parents and students.
10. Monitor student and teacher usage of technology by distributing the district's Acceptable Use Policy. The policy is a contract that teachers and students must review and sign every year.

Professional Development

Technology will be used to support meaningful professional development experiences for all faculty members. This plan for technology training opportunities will be in effect for year one and two. Prior to the start of the school year, the technology support team will meet with each grade level subject area to assist in embedding technology skills within the curriculum.

Through out the school year, staff members are expected to participate in two sessions a month, but are not required to stay passed their contracted time. The professional development sessions will occur at the end of the school day from 2:20 until 2:50. Teachers are not required to stay passed contracted time; however, they are encouraged to supply feedback areas where they need support.

The first session will occur during the first week of the month, regardless of on what day the month actually begins. (If the first of the month is on a Friday, that week is considered a PD1 week.) Prior to this week, teachers will sign up for one day in which to participate in this general technology skills session. The cap for each Monday-Thursday session is 20 teachers. Teachers will be more likely to participate if the schedule is flexible, and technology specialists will be able to teach teachers better in smaller group session.

The second will meet by content area according to the following schedule: mathematics on Monday, Science on Tuesday, Social Studies on Wednesday, and English on Thursday. Elective content areas such as art, music, business, etc, will occur during the second week of the month.

While the second session is subject-related, the first training session will focus on familiarizing teachers with the following technology elements:

- National Education Standards
- AESOP substitute system
- Eschool Attendance and Grading System
- IEP Plus for Special Ed Students
- CEP Tracker for Professional Development
- Performance Tracker for standardized tests
- Scholastic Reading Inventory for student reading levels
- Power Library
- TeacherWeb
- Audio-Visual Use (LCD projectors, SmartBoards, digital cameras)
- Online Resources (United Streaming Video, ArtsEdge, UTunes podcasts, etc)
- Microsoft Applications (MS Word, PPT, Excel)
- Apple Applications (iMovie, Garageband, iTunes)

Curriculum Integration

Prior to the start of the school year, technology specialists will work with all academic and elective departments to tweak the curriculum so that it aligns with National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers and Students. As revised by content area instructors and the technology planning team, the curriculum is revised to incorporate the following constructivist elements into daily instruction:

- Interactive models of instruction
- Learning assignments designed to be challenging, authentic, and multidisciplinary

- Ample opportunities for collaboration
- Various performance/portfolio based assessments
- Tasks that require problem-solving and reflection
- Student-centered instruction in which students act explore and produce while the instructor facilitates and guides
- Metacognitive activities to help the student
- E-learning prospects
- Educational technology skills

Linked to each unit of instruction within a content area is at least one educational software meant to enhance the aforementioned constructivist elements. Technology Specialists will work one on one with teachers of special education students to fine-tune their the technology component of the course to propel students' learning.

The technology elements of each individual curriculum are skill-based and, will be revisited throughout the year. Each high school will share technology specialists to asses the curriculum in action according to The National Educational Standards for students and teachers. The technology specialist will routinely provide the teacher with constructive feedback every month during the first year of technology implementation. Before the start of the second year, teachers will be grouped by subject matter to review and revise their curriculum according to NETS.

Networking, Hardware, Software, Facilities

Eltown Area High School maintains high connectivity throughout the school. The faculty of each have a district issued Macbook. Approximately two out of four teachers in each department area have a laptop cart containing 20 laptops in their classrooms.

With these laptop carts come an classroom Epson printer, Smartboard, Epson LCD projector, and a digital camera. The teachers who have this equipment in their classrooms are encouraged to share technology tools within their department. The distribution of this equipment is the responsibility of each individual department chairperson, but the IT director will supervise if necessary. Should the equipment be requested by multiple classes on the same day during the same period, teachers are instructed to utilize the computer labs within the schools. Each school has one lab containing approximately 35 computers.

The IT Department will be responsible for providing technical assistance and support in a timely manner, contingent upon the submission a service form. Teachers must fill out and submit a service form on the district's technology page in order to ensure fast and proper support.

Coupled with the Technology Integration team, the IT department will review and purchase software appropriate for maintaining a proper teaching and learning environment. Research of technology equipment will be conducted by the IT Director based on need and suggestion. Sustaining this equipment will be the responsibility the IT department. Aside from fixing reported hardware issues, they will conduct a bi-annual inventory of the equipment status. The IT Director and the Technology Integration team are equipped to handle software related concerns.

Community Communication

Eltown Area High School ' s vision is to establish and maintain a strong community that supports learning. To do so, the school seeks to connect students, teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and others. To aid this

communication, EASD will conduct frequent technology skills classes for community members. Students will have opportunities to gain community service points for their senior graduation requirement by teaching these classes.

Another way EASD attempts to bridge the school and the community is via the Internet. Teachers will be equipped to publish school data so that parents can view what their children are learning in school and how well they are doing academically. In addition, community members who explore the district's website will be able to view upcoming community events and have the opportunity to make suggestions are the school's role in the community. Their concerns and advice will be filtered by the IT Department and delivered to appropriate administrators.

In addition, students can use the community page to gather ideas about neighborhood needs so that they can find a focus for their service learning graduation project. In this way, organizations (libraries, museums, business) can reach out to students and vice versa. By posting examples of previous student service projects on this community page, staff and students can share information to foster positive community relations. Public support for this communication will be shown in the form of participation.

Funding

Funding policies and opportunities for implementing the plan come from state grants. Since the school already has ample, updated equipment, much of the state money will go into supporting professional development, curriculum integration, and technology staff increase.

To deal with the rapid changes in technology, staff will maintain hardware and purchase only necessary software. Over the first two years of the plan, the district budget can support funding. In year three, the technology integration team will seek more state and community funding to support the plan. The program area, discipline, or staff that will be prioritized in receiving technology will be determined by the Technology Department and the source of the funding.

Evaluation

Ongoing assessment of technology integration is essential to the plan. Students, teachers, and administrators will be monitored according to NETS at least 4 times throughout the year in the form of observation by the technology specialist, and surveys. These surveys will be administered online via email. Technology will be used to support the school's accountability by using these results to construct statistical data for PD demonstrations. Visuals of progress may encourage staff to continue implementing the technology plan. The influence of the technology plan implementation on student performance will be determined by the teacher during the first two years of the plan, and via standardized test thereafter. The level of proficiency gained by staff will be determined through formal observation at least twice a year. The consistent commitment to learning by the community and staff will open opportunities for changes in the implementation of the technology plan and the plan itself. This technology plan will be revisited frequently throughout the year, and it will be revised upon complete and successful implementation in 2011.