

NETS-A Standard 1 Brief Paper

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Introduction

As stated by Metcalf and LaFrance (2013), NETS-A standards help leaders develop the knowledge and skills necessary to lead technology rich schools. NETS-A Standard one states that educational administrators inspire and lead development and implementation of a shared vision for comprehensive integration of technology to promote excellence and support transformation throughout the organization. It is essential that leaders be able to support students and teachers to ensure that optimal benefits from technology are in place (Knezek, 2009). At St. James Elementary it is evident that standard one is exhibited.

Performance Indicators

The first indicator under standard one of the ISTE NETS-A guidelines states that it is the responsibility of educational leaders to facilitate the shared development by all stakeholders of a vision for technology use and widely communicate that vision. As addresses in this indicator educational leaders should evaluate the school/ organization's existing vision and mission statements to determine whether they address all major instructional strategies and corresponding issues with technology use. They should review the process that was used to develop these statements to determine the level of participation of various stakeholders. Educational leaders should also determine the means used to communicate these statements to the stakeholders. Lastly, as indicated in standard one indicator one educational leaders should conduct informal surveys or interviews to determine whether stakeholders are aware of the contents of current mission and vision statements.

I have observed this indicator in action at SJE. Collaborative learning sessions and professional developments are organized by educational leaders and held frequently to ensure

that teachers are supported by technology development. Teachers are guided and learn how to utilize new technologies. Teachers share how they are using them within their classroom. SJE educational leaders utilize a website to push information to staff. Teachers are often asked to provide evidence of how specific technologies are being utilized. This is a great way for others to determine uses for their own classrooms. Stakeholders are also given surveys to determine what technologies they would like to research in more detail. The surveys are reviewed and resources are provided when needed.

The second indicator under standard one of the ISTE NETS-A guidelines requires educational leaders to maintain a cohesive process to develop, implement, and monitor a dynamic, long-range, and systemic technology plan to achieve the vision. In doing so educational leaders should be familiar with existing plans that affect students' academic performance in any fashion. They should compare instructional program plans with technology plans, looking specifically for areas where the plans are aligned or misaligned. Educational leaders should find out who has copies of each plan and how plans are currently used. In addition, they should identify the process used in the development of each plan. Educational leaders should identify current timetables for writing, implementing and evaluating plans. Lastly, educational leaders should encourage staff members to identify areas of concern with instructional programs and technology and to explain their feelings.

The use of standard two is evident within SJE. The long term plan for technology at SJE is to prepare students to utilize technologies in order to demonstrate an understanding of content knowledge in unique and meaningful ways. They start in early grades by learning the basics of technology programs. As they advance through the grade levels within the school students are required to produce original products. Technology plans are formulated by teachers and recorded

within weekly lesson plans. These plans are then shared within grade level teams and with the school administration team. Once a week plans are evaluated for effectiveness, edited to be more beneficial, and stored for future use.

Leaders should model and promote effective use of technology while keeping up with local, national, and global innovations (Sykora, 2009). The third indicator under standard one of the ISTE NETS-A guidelines states that educational leaders should foster and nurture a culture of responsible risk-taking and advocate policies promoting continuous innovation with technology. In doing so, educational leaders should identify the values, beliefs, and traditions that determine the current organizational culture. They should articulate how the existing culture supports or discourages risk taking. Additionally, they should articulate how the existing culture supports or discourages use of technological innovations. Educational leaders should take time to learn about how the current culture of the organization developed. Lastly, as addressed by standard one indicator three, educational learners should learn about the relationship between schools and the district office to explore how culture is affected by interactions.

Risk-taking and technological innovation is supported at SJE. The school as well as the district (Horry County Schools) encourages risk-taking and technological innovation by providing face-to-face development session as well as providing digital resources. Digital Integration Specialists also visit the school at least once a month to provide trainings and to provide opportunities for stakeholders to share recent experiences with technology.

The fourth indicator under standard one of the ISTE NETS-A guidelines addresses the fact that educational leaders use data in making leadership decisions. Educational leaders need to identify the types of data currently used when making leadership decisions, describe how this data is being collected, and explain how this data is analyzed. Educational leaders then need to

clearly articulate how this data is used in developing mission statements, vision statements, and strategic planning. Lastly, as addressed in standard one indicator four, educational leaders should research how data is currently reported.

Data is used continually throughout the school year at SJE. Formative and summative assessments are administered on a weekly bases and analyzed for lesson effectiveness.

Technologies are then added or modified to fit learner needs. Benchmark tests are also given frequently through the use of unit tests, map tests, DORF tests, and tests designed to determine student's progress towards learning outcomes. Once data is collected and analyzed plans for further instruction based on data results are developed. Educational leaders review the data and analysis. They then review the formulated plans. Leaders then make adjustments to plans and explain ideas that will benefit learners.

Leaders are expected to promote and model digital tools as well as remain current in technology research and trends (ISTE, 2009). The fifth, and final, indicator under standard one of the ISTE NETS-A guidelines require educational leaders to advocate for research-based effective practices in the use of technology. They determine methods used to identify technology integration components in instructional plans through review of documents, interviews with staff, and conducting surveys. Standard one indicator five states that educational leaders should review practices for selection of technology-based instructional materials.

Lastly, standard one indicator five is evident within SJE. Once lesson content is determined, technologies are analyzed for their effectiveness to support student learning. Apps, devices, technology based games, and programs are evaluated to determine if they could be used to further understand content, or if they would hinder instruction. Once technologies are selected they are studied by teachers to ensure they can trouble shoot problems and provide digital

examples of expectations. Technologies are then analyzed after instruction to ensure they were utilized as expected. Educational leaders meet with teachers and recommend technologies. They provide suggestions and examples as to when technologies can be implemented.

Summary

Standard one as stated by ISTE NETS-A states that educational administrators inspire and lead development and implementation of a shared vision for comprehensive integration of technology to promote excellence and support transformation throughout the organization. At St. James Elementary it is evident that standard one is being addressed. Today's administrators need to have a strategic vision supported by technology to help tomorrow's students compete globally. These standards were "meant to inspire administrators to become 21st century leaders and provide guideposts to get there" (Sykora, 2009, p. 48). At SJE there are many levels of leadership. Administrators, curriculum coaches, HCS digital integration specialists, and teachers all play important roles in fostering an environment that encourages technological innovation. Data collection, evaluation, and articulation is essential in producing technological growth as discussed in standard one.

References

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