

NETS-A Standard 2 Brief Paper

Samantha Justice

Coastal Carolina University

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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. Specifically, NETS-A Standard two states that educational administrators create, promote, and sustain a dynamic, digital-age learning culture that provides a rigorous, relevant, and engaging education for all students. 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 (SJE) it is evident that standard two is exhibited.

Performance Indicators

As stated by Hess and Kelly (2007), school leadership is the key to school improvement. Standard two indicator one requires educational administrators to ensure instructional innovation is focused on continuous improvement of digital-age learning. In complying with this standard educational administrators must identify existing documents that describe the vision and plan for technology use in classrooms. Administrators identify procedures for selecting, using, and evaluating various instructional technologies. They define and articulate the current role for administrators in the process of selecting, using, and evaluating various instructional technologies. It is the responsibility of educational administrators to bring a representative group of administrators, teachers, parents, and students together to make recommendations regarding policies and procedures for identifying using, and evaluating instructional technologies. Lastly, educational leaders develop an action plan and timeline for implementation of this process, and establish procedures for evaluation and modification of implementation.

I have observed standard two indicator one at SJE. Technology use is planned for at SJE. Lesson plans are created with technology in mind. Administrators review plans and make suggestions for technology integration when applicable. I have experienced this first hand, and observed colleagues receive such feedback as well. Our school has a team of staff who help make technology integration decisions. In addition to our school, our school district has a team that works to develop, select, analyze, and provide professional developments pertaining to specific technologies. This team is called the EdTech Task Force. In accordance to standard two indicator one, led by administration, each grade level at SJE meets twice a week to discuss lessons, lesson plans, technology, and ways to improve.

Administrators must “provide professional development opportunities to teachers” (Anderson & Dexter, 2005, p. 51-54). As addressed in standard two indicator two, educational administrators model and promote the frequent and effective use of technology for learning. Administrators gather information to determine whether the current learning environment supports collaboration, innovation, and technology use. They develop and implement a plan to encourage and support collaboration, innovation, and technology use. Also, educational leaders model the importance of supporting collaboration and innovation in their own behaviors, including personal technology use, planning, and staff development sessions. It is essential that educational leaders make the commitment of time and resources necessary to analyze the benefits and possible deterrents to implementation of technology use, innovation, and collaboration. Additionally, administrators work together with key stakeholders to develop recommendations concerning technology integration in the learning environment.

SJE administrators model and promote the frequent and effective use of technology for learning. Administrators utilize and promote the utilization of various technologies on a daily

bases. Google Suite applications as well as others are utilized by administrators, teachers, and students on a daily bases and in a variety of ways. Administration also conveys weekly updates through a school specific website created for collaboration and the promotion of technology integration. It is also a norm for educational administrators at SJE to attend professional development sessions such as the Google Forms and Google Classroom sessions I hosted. It is a great motivator for teachers to feel supported in sharing their knowledge of technology as well as attendees to see that administration has set aside time to attend staff development sessions that promote the implementation of technology.

Administrators must “work to see technology support the needs of students’ learning and teachers’ instruction” (Anderson & Dexter, 2005, p. 51-54). Standard two indicator three under the ISTE NETS-A guidelines states that educational administrators provide learner-centered environments equipped with technology and learning resources to meet the individual, diverse needs of all learners. Administrators demonstrate an understanding that these type of environments are closely tied to each teacher’s personal proficiency and confidence in technology use. They meet regularly with staff members to discuss how technology is currently used to meet individual student needs and assist in creating a student-centered environment. It is essential that educational administrators assess the level and type of student centered learning and individualized learning currently taking place. It is stated that administrators must identify student groups that currently may not be having individual learning needs met and the level of student-centered learning available. Also, it is imperative that administrators establish and implement policies and procedures regarding individual student learning needs for students of all academic abilities. Lastly, educational administrators ensure that staff members, students, and parents are aware of options available to them so that individual learning needs are met.

After conducting a technology inventory at SJE, I can confidently state that the administration at SJE provides learner-centered environments equipped with technology and learning resources to meet the individual, diverse needs of all learners. SJE is equipped with a variety of technologies that assist all students. G.T., ESOL, visually impaired, hearing impaired, students with behavioral needs, students with specific learning disabilities, and others are all supported in differing ways by the various technologies accessible at SJE. In analyzing the staff development sessions at SJE, it is clear that the educational administrators have taken standard two indicator three seriously. It is observable that measures have been taken to consider the personal proficiency and technology use of each teacher within the school. Trainings have then been analyzed, planned and conducted to ensure that every teacher (no matter their proficiency level) have the resources available to improve their usage of technologies within their educational setting. After conducting an interview with a member of the administration team, I learned that staff members meet weekly (one fifty minute session) to discuss how technology is currently used to meet individual student needs and assist in creating a student-centered environment. At SJE, data is analyzed continuously to identify student groups that currently may not be having individual learning needs met.

The fourth indicator under standard two of the ISTE NETS-A guidelines requires educational administrators to ensure effective practice in the study of technology and its infusion across the curriculum. Administrators understand that this kind of environment is closely tied to each teacher's proficiency and confidence in technology use. Therefore, administrators should meet regularly with staff members to discuss how technology is currently infused across the curriculum and assess the level and type of technology currently being infused. Administrators aim to identify classes where technology is not currently being infused into the curriculum and

provide support to ensure these areas are being addressed. Lastly, it is essential that educational administrators ensure that grade levels are varying their integration strategies so that students receive different (not redundant) technological experiences.

By observing small group ELA instruction in third and fourth grade classrooms and speaking with third and fourth grade teachers at SJE, I can state that standard two indicator four is evident. Administrators have ensured that grade levels are varying their integration strategies so that students receive varied technological experiences. For example, I observed third graders using Google Slide presentations to gain information needed to complete a web-quest. I then observed fourth graders creating their own Google Slides presentations to convey information they have acquired.

The fifth, and final, indicator under standard two of the ISTE NETS-A guidelines requires educational administrators to promote and participate in local, national, and global learning communities that stimulate innovation, creativity, and digital-age collaboration. Educational administrators should encourage the use of various instructional technologies in classrooms which promote interaction with teachers, students, educational leaders and/or business leaders on locations outside the school. Additionally, teachers should be encouraged to participate in staff development opportunities which are technology based, delivered, or enhanced. As stated in indicator five, educational leaders must establish a professional development program that permits educators to define areas of growth that reflect school and district goals, and to work in a collaborative and technologically enriched atmosphere to achieve these goals. Lastly, as addressed in standard two indicator five, educational administrators must ensure that all staff are provided equal access to professional development support in terms of time and funding.

If a teacher at SJE is willing to put in the time and effort, they have numerous resources available to them that will help them develop their knowledge of technologies. Educational administrators have developed screencasts to assist teachers in utilizing technologies specific to SJE. They have also made it known that our county (HCS) has created a streaming service (DEAR DIS on YouTube) to promote technology utilization and integration. Staff/professional development are held throughout the summer as well as multiple times throughout the school year.

Summary

NETS-A Standard two states that educational administrators create, promote, and sustain a dynamic, digital-age learning culture that provides a rigorous, relevant, and engaging education for all students. SJE promotes teachers as well as students to create a digital-age learning culture through the utilization of rigorous, relevant, and engaging curriculum.

References

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