

Vision Paper
Edith F. Wood
Kennesaw State University

Vision

In keeping with the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards, stakeholders at North Paulding High School envision a future where students use a variety of technology to engage in creative, innovative learning activities which challenge them to think critically and explore complex problems while communicating and collaborating with each other and with individuals or communities outside of the school to develop global awareness and understanding of diverse cultures. They will evaluate and ethically use information found in a variety of media, investigate and make decisions about authentic, meaningful problems, understand ethical issues surrounding technology and demonstrate personal responsibility in its use, and exhibit proficiency in selecting, using and troubleshooting a wide variety of digital tools and resources (ISTE, 2007). Students will use existing and emerging technologies to engage in project-based learning that is aligned to state content standards in order to develop critical 21st Century Skills that will help them develop into informed, productive members of society.

Rationale

In the past 20 years there has been a revolution in our society that has impacted our careers, our government, our social lives, and our education. Technology innovations have become a part of our daily lives. At this point it is safe to say the vast majority of the students at North Paulding High School technically know how to work computers. In fact, large numbers of them have their own personal computers, smart phones or other connected devices. Despite this state of affairs, until now NPHS has had no technology plan or committee to guide the integration of digital innovation into our classrooms. It is time to rethink where we are going

with technology and how to best use digital tools for student engagement and to increase student learning and achievement.

ISTE (2008, June) and Cisco & Metiri (2009) cite studies that show that technology integration has a positive impact on student achievement. Programs in Missouri, Michigan, Texas and Iowa all have instructionally sound instructional technology programs that have proven to contribute to rising test scores. These studies have found that certain factors influence the success of technology in the classroom: effective professional development; alignment of technology to content standards; integration of technology during the school day; individual feedback and customization of applications; student collaboration; project-based, authentic learning experiences; and appropriate leadership, support, and modeling from all stakeholders (ISTE 2008, June).

With the explosion of collaborative Web 2.0 tools it is now possible to flatten our classroom walls in order to connect with other classrooms, cultures, business people, researchers, and other experts. Students have the opportunity to engage in authentic learning experiences without ever leaving the school. These experiences provide rich environments that allow students to explore and construct their own learning through project-based, interactive education which sharpens critical thinking skills and creativity. We believe that it is time for all stakeholders at North Paulding High School to explore ways to integrate real-life, project-based learning that challenges and engages students. To achieve this end, the following roles must be fulfilled:

- Administrator Roles

Administrators will inspire, engage, and support teachers as they integrate technology into their instruction and advocate on all levels for funding to sustain and expand technology in the school. They will model and promote a digital age environment rich in challenging instruction based on best practices. They will provide and evaluate appropriate professional learning opportunities to improve technology integration into higher order thinking activities aligned with content standards. Finally, they will ensure the continued improvement of education at NPHS with effective use of technology implementation and make sure all students have equitable access to digital resources and instruction (ISTE-A).

- Teachers Roles

Teachers will serve as facilitators, monitoring student-guided work and posing pertinent questions as needed: as guides in a collaborative classroom, mediating student learning by adjusting the level of support based on individual needs: and as co-learners or co-investigators collaborating through online, real-world projects with participating professionals (Creighton, 2003).

- Student Roles

Students will work as explorers building on prior knowledge to discover new ideas, concepts, and abilities while making decisions about what they what they want to learn next: as cognitive apprentices, applying and refining information through interaction with real-world experts: and as creators and producers, synthesizing and applying their knowledge into new products and skills and sharing them with their community and the world (Creighton, 2003).

- Other Stakeholders|

Parents will support digital learning for their children by providing access to tools outside of school either at home, at public libraries, or through other resources. Other community members will share their real-world knowledge with our faculty and students and inform them of technology innovations in their career fields.

References

- Cisco Systems, & Metiri Group. (2009). Technology in schools: What the research says, a 2009 update. Retrieved June 22, 2014, from http://www.cisco.com/web/strategy/docs/education/tech_in_schools_what_research_says.pdf
- Creighton, T. B. (2003). *The principal as technology leader*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). (2007). ISTE Standards for Students. Retrieved June 22, 2014, from <http://www.iste.org/standards/standards-for-students>
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). (2008). ISTE Standards for Teachers. Retrieved June 22, 2014, from <http://www.iste.org/standards/standards-for-teachers>
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). (2008, June). ISTE policy brief: Technology and student achievement, the indelible link. Retrieved June 22, 2014, from http://www.k12hsn.org/files/research/Technology/ISTE_policy_brief_student_achievement.pdf
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). (2009). ISTE Standards for Administrators. Retrieved June 22, 2014, from <http://www.iste.org/standards/standards-for-administrators>