

Educational Technology Leadership Platform

Goals of Public Education

The primary goal of the public education system should be providing a quality education in a safe and supportive environment so that all students can reach their highest intellectual and emotional potential. With this in mind, it is the task of educational professionals and leaders to do everything within their power to select and deliver valuable, well-rounded instruction, using best practices that are supported by current research. It is also imperative that these professionals and leaders work to create an environment that is safe and welcoming to all teachers, parents, and students, encouraging them in setting and achieving their goals. One important emerging field of learning relates to educational technology. Leaders in the field of educational technology should contribute to the safe, supportive environment of a school by encouraging the mindful integration of appropriate technologies into the curriculum.

Educational Technology

I believe that educational technology promises to help level the playing field for all students, no matter their interests or abilities. Technology makes knowledge accessible – whether students are limited by geography, personal history, or ability, I believe technology is the great equalizer. Students who live in small towns have access to the same online resources as their peers who live in big cities. Students who come from generations of poverty have access to the same instructional materials as their peers who come from generations of wealth. Students who struggle with intellectual or physical disabilities have access to tools that lessen the impact of those challenges and allow them entry to the same learning opportunities as their peers. Some students will enter the public education system without the background knowledge needed in order for them to begin using available technologies. For these students, I will provide additional support and education in the form of during and after-school workshops to help them develop the

skills they may lack. I hope to serve as a leader in educational technology so that I can be part of the movement to provide truly universal access to the world's knowledge.

Teachers

Teachers are the most critical component of a successful school. Teachers who are respected, trusted, and treated as professionals are much more likely to contribute to a positive and encouraging school environment. Part of this trust and professionalism comes from acknowledgement and assistance – those teachers who excel at integrating technology into their curriculum should be acknowledged; those who lack confidence should be given extra assistance. Teachers should be able to rely on their educational technology leadership team to highlight their accomplishments and support them in building new strengths or compensating for areas of weakness. As a school leader in educational technology, I plan to meet teachers where they are with the use of technology in the classroom:

- to be an expert resource for teachers who are already self-sufficient and effective in their use of educational technology, collaborating with them to make reaching their educational objectives easier and more engaging for students.
- to offer more in-depth, personalized support for teachers who are interested in educational technology, but ineffective or unsure of the affordances of the available technologies.

I plan to offer flexible options that suit the learning preferences of teachers – drop-in office hours where teachers can get one-on-one help with technology questions; in-services and workshops for whole-group demonstrations of available educational technologies; and individual classroom visits to collaborate with teachers on incorporating technology appropriately into their lessons.

Relationships

An effective leader in educational technology understands that relationships are vital for success. Leaders must build rapport with their colleagues, students, parents, and other community members, looking for ways to find common ground and see problems from others' perspectives. I am committed to showing appreciation for the efforts of others, especially when they are learning something new or outside of their comfort zone. I have also found that my sense of humor is an asset that keeps morale high and motivates others to persevere.

An educational technology resource person should not be locked away in an office, only responding to calls for help after a problem has arisen. I plan to be available, accessible, and proactive, looking for opportunities to enrich the learning environment for students and parents as well as to make teachers' jobs easier. I want to intervene to help staff and students before they reach the level of frustration with a new technology. If new software helps students organize their research more easily, I want to know about it and be prepared to teach it to the school community. If a new grade-book system is counterintuitive, I want to be ahead of the curve in learning tips to pass along to teachers and parents. It is also essential to me that I maintain a warm and inviting persona so that no staff member or parent is ever afraid to ask for my help or use me as a resource.

School Leadership & Continuing Education

An educational technology leader must maintain expertise in the rapidly changing field of educational technology. They must be prepared to serve as a resource for staff members and students and, when asked, be able to provide relevant research to support best practices. I have an ongoing dedication to research and learning. This includes reading scholarly journals, attending conferences about educational technology, and using social media to stay informed

about the latest trends in the field. I am also committed to maintaining and utilizing a social network of other educational technology professionals for collaboration and troubleshooting.

In this way, I hope to be a resource for the rest of the school and district leadership team, translating the relevant research for them and making recommendations for new purchases.

Principals and superintendents are extremely busy; often they must rely on the advice of trusted subordinates to make informed decisions. I will maintain a strong professional relationship and foster open communication with these school leaders so they can rely on my expertise when decisions about educational technology need to be made.