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ESSENTIAL CONDITION ONE: Effective Instructional Uses of Technology Embedded in Standards-Based, Student-Centered Learning
ISTE Definition: Use of information and communication technology (ICT) to facilitate engaging approaches to learning.
Guiding Questions: ● *How is technology being used in our school? How frequently is it being used? By whom? For what purposes?* ● *To what extent is student technology use targeted toward student achievement of the Georgia Learning Standards (GPSs, CCSs)?* ● *To what extent is student technology use aligned to research-based, best practices that are most likely to support student engagement, deep understanding of content, and transfer of knowledge? Is day-to-day instruction aligned to research-based best practices?*

Strengths	*Weaknesses*	*Opportunities*	*Threats*
Our district and school utilize technology well. McClure has a lot of technology integrated into our school. Many of our teachers are tech savvy and have a great attitude towards implementing and integrating educational technology.	More standardization would be a benefit in our system. Being as large as it is, our size seems to stifle our standardization somewhat, because we can't afford to become a 1:1 school district.	With the implementation of our LMS, CTLS, we have become much more standardized organization. This learning management system could help unify our vision and approach to educational technology. McClure has a lot of technology already in place, a good TTIS to support staff, and decent support through the system when called on.	The lack of communication and the lack of a shared vision among our local stakeholder's present concerns. Our technology support staff are split among three different schools which creates concerns.

Summary of Results/Conclusions: Overall, day-to-day instruction is aligned to best practices; however, I feel it is largely because McClure has great teachers, who are above average regarding instructional technology.

Recommendations from Analysis: Our leadership at McClure needs to prioritize instructional technology at a much higher level. For starters, a committee should be formed locally to assess and suggest priorities for McClure. Until that happens, we will not make a lot of progress. I feel the school would be receptive to technology-centered professional learning. On the district and state levels, there needs to be more accountability. The district needs to focus on measuring technology objectives in similar way to how

they measure math and reading data. The McClure SIP mentions developing norms and professional development, but only for teacher leaders. I feel strongly that instructional technology should be prioritized much more and that it should include input from all stakeholders, not a small team.

Supporting Sources: ISTE (International Society for Technology Education) *Essential Conditions*; GaDOE (Georgia Department of Education) *3 Year Technology Plan*; CCSD (Cobb County School District) *Technology Plan*; MMS (McClure Middle School) *2020-2021 Strategic Plan*

ESSENTIAL CONDITION TWO: Shared Vision

ISTE Definition: Proactive leadership in developing a shared vision for educational technology among school personnel, students, parents, and the community.

Guiding Questions:
- *Is there an official vision for technology use in the district/school? Is it aligned to research-best practices? Is it aligned to state and national visions? Are teachers, administrators, parents, students, and other community members aware of the vision?*
- *To what extent do teachers, administrators, parents, students, and other community members have a vision for how technology can be used to enhance student learning? What do they* <u>believe</u> *about technology and what types of technology uses we should encourage in the future? Are their visions similar or different? To what extent are their beliefs about these ideal, preferred technology uses in the future aligned to research and best practice?*
- *To what extent do educators view technology as critical for improving student achievement of the GPS/CCSs? To preparing tomorrow's workforce. For motivating digital age learners?*
- *What strategies have been deployed to date to create a research-based shared vision?*
- *What needs to be done to achieve broad-scale adoption of a research-based vision for technology use that is likely to lead to improved student achievement?*

Strengths	*Weaknesses*	*Opportunities*	*Threats*
Our system has a very high-level vision and one that aligns well to the nation. Our school has amazing teachers, many of whom have high-level technology backgrounds.	I am not certain how much our stakeholders are familiar with our vision, but I would gather it is not something they know much about. Our school is where the vision breaks down.	Mostly our school has traditionally been focused on MI and RI scores, and recently behavior and social emotional learning. There is an opportunity to use and	I feel our biggest threat is lack of communication. If we as a school communicated more effectively, we could perhaps share more ideas with one another. Overall, we operate

Overall, we integrate technology well, and appreciate technology and innovation.	Our leadership puts priority on issues other than educational technology.	highlight how educational technology could assist our school with supporting test scores, testing data, and a more inclusive experience.	in smaller group settings, so many people's concerns I do not feel are even known.

Summary of Results/Conclusions: There is clearly a gap between our individual school and the district. In my reflections and my work to define our current reality, I have seen how the state and the county align very well. However, when it comes to our school vision, it falls short regarding a technology plan. It is not accounted for at all. Even committee wise, we are lacking any technology committee and it concerns me. Essentially, our local leadership is operating in a bubble.

Recommendations from Analysis: I recommend forming an educational technology committee for starters. Once a committee is in place as a school, we can begin developing more targeted plans of action. I don't feel we should focus on making newer objectives locally or beyond until our old objectives have been met.

Supporting Sources: ISTE *Essential Conditions*; GaDOE *3 Year Technology Plan*; CCSD *Technology Plan*; MMS *2020-2021 Strategic Plan*

ESSENTIAL CONDITION THREE: Planning for Technology

ISTE Definition: A systematic plan aligned with a shared vision for school effectiveness and student learning through the infusion of ICT and digital learning resources.

Guiding Questions:
- *Is there an adequate plan to guide technology use in your school? (either at the district or school level? Integrated into SIP?)*
- *What should be done to strengthen planning?*
- *In what ways does your school **address the needs of diverse populations in the school or district to include how race, gender, socio-economic, and geographic diversity** giving consideration to how these factors commonly affect K-12 students' access to school and beyond-school access to high-speed Internet, modern computing devices, software, knowledgeable technology mentors, culturally-relevant digital content, and other affordances critical to technology literacy acquisition.*

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats

At the district-level, there is a very strong plan in place.	I think culturally relevant content is a weakness; however, I have limited knowledge on other areas outside of my own. Access to high-speed Internet and devices is a weakness of our district due to the size of the school system.	The digital equity gap provides an opportunity to have the community get involved. Our district is in an area where many stakeholders do well financially and could certainly help contribute to schools if they chose to.	The threats that I see are that so many different groups are working on their own special interests that it causes a lack of unity. By the time initiatives are implemented, changes are made and their does not seem to be consistency. This lack of consistency also contributes to a lack of accountability.

Summary of Results/Conclusions: I conclude that there are so many different groups working on so many different problems, that unification is far from being achieved at this point. In addition to this, the COVID disruption has made situations even worse, because finances are strained more, resources are being used for reasons they were originally designed to be used for. Any digital inequity or gaps in general are going to be incredibly hard to mitigate working in the environment we currently find ourselves.

Recommendations from Analysis: My summary is that individual schools need to work in concert to align more to the county wide plan regarding educational technology. Objectives like these should be monitored by evaluation metrics, just like academics are measured.

Supporting Sources: ISTE *Essential Conditions*; GaDOE *3 Year Technology Plan*; CCSD *Technology Plan*; MMS *2020-2021 Strategic Plan*

ESSENTIAL CONDITION FOUR: Equitable Access *(Specifically Low SES and gender groups)*

ISTE Definition: *Robust and reliable access to current and emerging technologies and digital resources.*

Guiding Questions:
- *To what extent do students, teachers, administrators, and parents have access to computers and digital resources necessary to support engaging, standards-based, student-centered learning?*
- *To what extent is technology arrange/distributed to maximize access for engaging, standards-based, student-centered learning?*
- *What tools are needed and why?*
- *To what extent are strategies needed to **address equity issues among Low SES <u>and</u> gender groups**? What are examples of strategies that would benefit your school/district? (required)*

- *Do students/parents/community need/have beyond school access to support the shared vision for learning?*

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Our county does a great job at supporting low SES students and families. The county provides hotspots, and laptops to students who have demonstrated a need within our district.	A weakness in relation to this particular concern is that we don't have the finances to support everything. The reality of supporting one area of students is that it takes away from other students.	I feel this is an opportunity where the private sector, and our communities can step in at a much higher level.	Many of our school laptops were used to help support digital learning for low SES students. This has taken away laptops from teachers who need them for their classrooms.

Summary of Results/Conclusions: Our county does a commendable job supporting Low SES groups in particular; however, it comes at a price. Technological resources are expensive, and funds are limited. Our county and our state are stretched well beyond what it can successfully support. Government intervention is becoming more of an issue because they are working to intervene, but they are lacking the knowledge and quite frankly the competence to be able to successfully help. This provides an opportunity for our communities to get involved, but I rarely ever hear any progress being made on that front, other than money being pushed at a problem, and branding being implemented in our schools.

Recommendations from Analysis: True partnerships between schools and business/industries in the communities that they serve need to be formed. Out of these partnerships and committees that I am recommending being formed, objectives can be developed. In my reading during this module, I noticed a partnership between the Clark County school district and the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, as well as a few other partnerships; however, there seems to me that there are numerous opportunities that exist in our nation that aren't being realized. My question is why? Are they not aware of the problems? Are they aware and just aren't interested in helping? Why are local and nation governments expected to save them? Because if so, we are in big trouble. With all the expectations and objectives being mentioned; are these same objectives being measured in any logical way? I wish I had more answers, but unfortunately at the time I do not. This project has opened my eyes to many problems that exist in education. I pray that we find solutions soon.

Supporting Sources: Edutopia. (2016, June 21); Gonzalez, J. (2018, April 15); Steele, C. (2019, February)

ESSENTIAL CONDITION FIVE: Skilled Personnel

ISTE Definition: Educators and support staff skilled in the use of ICT appropriate for their job responsibilities.

Guiding Questions:

- *To what extent are educators and support staff skilled in the use of technology appropriate for their job responsibilities?*
- *What do they currently know and are able to do?*
- *What are knowledge and skills do they need to acquire?*

(Note: No need to discuss professional learning here. Discuss knowledge and skills. This is your needs assessment for professional learning. The essential conditions focus on "personnel," which includes administrators, staff, technology specialists, and teachers. However, in this limited project, you may be wise to focus primarily or even solely on teachers; although you may choose to address the proficiency of other educators/staff IF the need is critical. You must include an assessment of teacher proficiencies.)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
I feel that district and school wide, personnel are very much equipped to learn and implement technology at a very high success rate.	The lack of alignment between the schools and the district is making implementation difficult to achieve.	The district has a good plan and they have good resources to build on.	Although the district has a plan that is strong and aligns extremely well with the national technology plan, without a shared vision among the stakeholders, seeing actual results may be a problem.

Summary of Results/Conclusions: Cobb County has a great technology and vision, however, when it gets to our individual schools, the plan breaks down significantly. My school, MMS, does not refer much to instructional technology at all. MMS has teachers that could certainly understand and implement more regarding technology. In a survey that I received from a colleague (that has not been published) during my research for this assignment, teachers feel that they are lacking support regarding the basics of a successful technology plan (access to resources). With the COVID disruption being a reality, this divide has been made much worse, because many of the laptops used by teachers in the past have been dolled out to needy families.

Recommendations from Analysis: Where do I start? First off, we must get back to normal. CCSD has been very wishy washy regarding what next year will look like. Due to our CTLS and great teachers, they have had relative success teaching/learning in a virtual environment, but that does not change the reality of what is needed to make something like virtual learning successful. If schools can't get back access to their laptops, and I argue, be awarded more computers, then moving forward is a moot point. In our current reality, I feel we are moving backwards fast, so until things can be leveled off and "normalized" as much as possible, I don't feel we can even begin to assess where to go next. So currently, I recommend that CCSD gets students back face-to-face, and the district needs to work move more towards a 1:1 environment, or at the least, increase the amount of laptops that all teachers in the schools have access to. Currently, each school has their own individual reality, and standardizing needs to occur at least in regard to access at school. At that point, resources like the CTLS and the other awesome digital resources that the county provides, can be used.

Supporting Sources: Needs assessment survey data by my colleague (Cara Harpin) at MMS; ISTE *Essential Conditions*; GaDOE *3 Year Technology Plan*; CCSD *Technology Plan*; MMS *2020-2021 Strategic Plan*

ESSENTIAL CONDITION SIX: Ongoing Professional Learning

ISTE Definition: Technology-related professional learning plans and opportunities with dedicated time to practice and share ideas.

Guiding Questions:
- *What professional learning opportunities are available to educators? Are they well-attended? Why or why not?*
- *Are the current professional learning opportunities matched to the knowledge and skills educators need to acquire? (see Skilled Personnel)*
- *Do professional learning opportunities reflect the national standards for professional learning (NSDC/Learning Forward)?*
- *Do educators have both formal and informal opportunities to learn?*
- *Is technology-related professional learning integrated into all professional learning opportunities or isolated as a separate topic?*
- *How must professional learning improve/change in order to achieve the shared vision?*

Strengths	*Weaknesses*	*Opportunities*	*Threats*
Our CTLS training and the CTLS solution this year has been good for me. The LMS makes organizing my curriculum easier, communicating with students and parents easier. Students are also developing digital literacy skills which will benefit them in many ways in the future.	We do not have many opportunities at all for professional learning. This year, our professional learning has consisted mostly of teachers training to use our new CTLS, which is constantly being updated.	The lack of professional learning provides plenty of opportunity to be improved upon. Also, the lack of an educational technology plan, provides plenty of opportunity to be developed and modified on in the future.	I feel older teachers, or any teacher who does not value technology, is a threat to progress. A tried and true excuse that teachers have, is that they just don't have the spare time to train up on things like they need to.

Summary of Results/Conclusions: This is an area of weakness overall for our district and schools. Sadly, with the COVID disruption this year, these problems have only gotten worse.

Recommendations from Analysis: Schools need to reopen, and they need to begin functioning 100% face-to-face again. The hybrid model this year has been a nightmare and I have no idea why they decided to do this in the first place. Only then, can we move forward. The district needs to work on assisting their individual schools get aligned with the districts technology plan once things are normal again. At that point, leadership can assess what needs can be addressed moving forward. Statewide and nationwide, politicians need to get out of the decision-making process, because if they are involved, things are only going to get worse.

Supporting Sources: ISTE *Essential Conditions*; GaDOE *3 Year Technology Plan*; CCSD *Technology Plan*; MMS *2020-2021 Strategic Plan*; Sheninger, E. (2019); Roblyer, M.D., & Hughes, J. E. (2019)

ESSENTIAL CONDITION SEVEN: Technical Support

ISTE Definition: Consistent and reliable assistance for maintaining, renewing, and using ICT and digital resources.

Guiding Questions:
- *To what extent is available equipment operable and reliable for instruction?*
- *Is there tech assistance available for technical issues when they arise? How responsive is tech support? Are current "down time" averages acceptable?*
- *Is tech support knowledgeable? What training might they need?*
- *In addition to break/fix issues, are support staff available to help with <u>instructional</u> issues when teachers try to use technology in the classroom?*

Strengths	*Weaknesses*	*Opportunities*	*Threats*
Even our individual school is very much dependent on the system. We have a TTIS assigned to our school and she is very supportive and knowledgeable. We have much technology and resources to draw from, and over my time in the system, these offerings seem to be getting even better.	Too often, new technologies are provided and not supported thoroughly, so many teachers don't incorporate or implement the resources as they should. Technical personnel are too often not being used to support teaching/learning, because they county has them working on other projects that don't help directly with student outcomes.	The gaps that I mentioned as weaknesses can be overcome. Technology and technology support should be related to measurable objectives, and worked on to completion, then the county can re-assess and new objectives can be set going forward.	Outliers. When I need individualized attention, I sometimes do not feel I am assisted as strongly as I could be. Sometimes, my requests/needs have been dismissed, and in a situation like this, it can be difficult to know who to talk to or get assistance from.

Summary of Results/Conclusions: Although the county does have a lot of impressive technology in place and good personnel to help make visions a reality, too often they are distracted or used ineffectively. We were making progress up until the COVID disruption, but now, our reality is chaotic and disjointed.

Recommendations from Analysis: My recommendation is again to try to return to normal. My experience leads me to believe that it will take longer to fix than it takes to mess it up, and it has gone too long as is. CCSD doesn't have the resources to support the digital divide by offering virtual learning. That should be something saved for extreme situations. Teachers need to have their laptops and devices returned so they can implement educational technology effectively. CCSD's CTLS is a success and has a lot of potential, but if all the teachers/students do not have access to them, how can we see results. By returning F2F, at least teachers/students can maximize their time using technology while at school, and the district can start brainstorming ideas on how to bridge the digital divide for homework, etc.

Supporting Sources: ISTE *Essential Conditions*; GaDOE *3 Year Technology Plan*; CCSD *Technology Plan*; MMS *2020-2021 Strategic Plan*

ESSENTIAL CONDITION EIGHT: Curriculum Framework

ISTE Definition: Content standards and related digital curriculum resources.

Guiding Questions:
- *To what extent are educators, students, and parents aware of student technology standards? (ISTE Standards for Students)*
- *Are technology standards aligned to content standards to help teachers integrate technology skills into day-to-day instruction and not teach technology as a separate subject?*
- *To what extent are there digital curriculum resources available to teachers so that they can integrate technology into the GPS/CCS as appropriate?*
- *How is student technology literacy assessed?*

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
MMS's principal has really focused on and does a good job regarding communicating	Parent knowledge of ISTE standards are extremely low. Although, communication with	I feel strongly this is where a program like mine (Engineering/Technology)	The nation/state/district is trying to do too much at one time. Unless more reasonable

| with our stakeholders and keeping everyone informed. | stakeholders is high at MMS, the topics are not focused on technology and technology literacy. | comes in handy. I have my own content standards, but they are also flexible enough for me to tie in well with the school and district technology plans. A major focus of my classroom is developing technology literacy (digital literacy) and exposing students to technology and resources they might not experience in other classrooms. | objectives and measurable outcomes are developed, we are going to continue to move backward and not forward. |

Summary of Results/Conclusions: For my subject, standards are integrated extremely well. In most subjects, I do not feel they align at all to technology standards.

Recommendations from Analysis: This brings up a solid point. For technology to be implemented well, standards and assessments should be aligned and measured. That is all that matters to the state at the time. Perhaps that is why programs like mine are gaining popularity at all grade levels. More funding needs to occur as well, to be able to fund teachers, devices, labs, and technology support professionals. This will in effect, help teachers become more comfortable using the resources in their classrooms.

Supporting Sources: ISTE *Essential Conditions*; Georgia Department of Education. (2020). *Standards | Middle School CTAE Courses*

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