RIVERVIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT

Technology Program Review

November 24, 2015

Technology Program Review Team

 Conn McQuinn, Puget Sound ESD
 Terry Hippenhammer, Strategic Management Associates

Project Summary

The Technology Program Review Team was retained to perform an external review of Technology services for Riverview School District. The process included completion of a request for information regarding technology use in the district and perception data collected through surveys and interviews. This document contains findings of the Technology Program Review Team, and contains information for discussion with the Riverview School District Board of Directors and district leaders.

Survey Statistics

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<tr>
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<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificated Staff survey</td>
<td>107</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classified Staff survey</td>
<td>47</td>
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Interview Statistics

Individual Interviews

- Dr. Anthony Smith, Superintendent
- Lori Oviatt, School Board
- Jodi Fletcher, School Board
- Paul Censullo, Director of Technology
- Roni Rumsey, Director of Teaching and Learning
- Chris Collins, Network Operations Manager
- Karen Mayfield, Tech Integration Specialist
- Jenni Freeburg, 2nd Grade Teacher
- Wendy Ward, 4th Grade Teacher
- Heather Nelson, PLL
- Ray LaBate, CHS Vice Principal
- Regan Doyle, Fiscal Coordinator

Group Interviews

**IT Team:** Chris Collins, Stacy Eldredge, Ryan Sage, Sean White

**Cedarcrest Student Panel:** Brooke Benson, Yareli Gonzalez, Alec Newton, Vivek Patel, Ethan Staples, Elaine Townley, Travis Wright

**District Parent Panel:** Michelle Clark, Jim Federico, Leanne Gutmann, Amy Jacobson, Patricia Koster, Brian Pattinson, Susanne Stieglitz, Rob Tiffany, Mike Ward, Sean White

**Technology Program Review Board Roundtable**

Chris Collins, Ron Johnston, Mark Klune, Karen Mayfield, Mike Miyoshi, Heather Nelson, Ryan Sage, Connie Schutte, Roni Rumsey, Heather Sanchez

Board Members: Lori Oviatt, Jodi Fletcher, Sabrina Parnell

Site Visits

Toured Technology Department and IT Center. Also visited Cedarcrest High School (including Mike Miyoshi’s engineering and computer programming class and Tim Kennedy’s media arts class), Tolt Middle School (including three 8th grade 1 to 1 math and science classrooms and CTE classroom), Carnation Elementary (including Wendy Ward’s 4th grade “Global Read Aloud” computer lab project), Cherry Valley Elementary, and Riverview Learning Center.
The Technology Program Review Team used the Technology Use Hierarchy to sort data obtained from the data-gathering phase as defined on page 1. Successful technology functions are built from the bottom to the top of the hierarchy, and it is necessary to address the foundational areas at the bottom of the pyramid in order to implement the goals of the top.

This report on findings will point out the current state as discovered by the reviewers. These findings are provided in sequence of the five tiers, bottom to top.
Finding # 1 Vision and Leadership

Finding # 1 Vision and Leadership

Vision and leadership are essential conditions for effective use of technology in schools. A clearly articulated vision shared by the leadership of the district and the technology plans to implement it must be aligned with the instructional mission of the district. This will provide the framework to guide the development of policies and procedures, allocation of resources, and systems that enable and enhance the efforts of students, staff, and community.

Vision and leadership in this area are increasingly critical. From the central office to the classroom, technology has become mission-critical to almost all aspects of operations and instruction, and this importance only grows with each passing year to meeting the district’s mission to Educate Children.

Our review identified the following primary findings and recommendations for Vision and Leadership:

Findings

1. Information gathered through the surveys and interviews show that Riverview has a very strong foundation of vision and leadership in educational technology. We would place the Riverview School District at the top of the list of the twenty-two districts we have reviewed in the last fifteen years.

2. Respect for the Director of Technology – participants in interviews spoke highly of the Director and his leadership in the continued support and development of technology within the district.

3. Director of Technology reports to the superintendent – districts that have placed technology at this level of authority and responsibility seem to do well with integration of technology into all facets of district operations and curriculum. Having the Director working alongside other Cabinet members creates opportunities to focus technology resources where most needed.

4. Stability at the Superintendent and Cabinet level – this tends to create conditions where the whole school system can excel and where the technology function can be more effective in meeting the education learning goals, providing efficient and stable operations, and implementing new initiatives.

5. Technology is part of the Strategic Plan – integration of technology department tasks within Goals 1D and 1E brings the department’s work in alignment with district goals and allows department staff to see how they are connected to broader district goals.

6. Technology levy implementation plan – provides a means for stakeholders to know when key technology changes will come to their site.

7. Annual technology progress report – this year-end summative report provides stakeholders a review of initiatives and activities accomplished in the previous year.

8. Collaboration with other districts – the director collaborates with surrounding district technology leaders, attends regional technology forums at the PSESD, and is a member of key education technology associations. Continued association with NCCE and ISTE is an important way to broaden the Director’s understanding of what is possible and what strategies produce best practice.
9. Participants in interviews and surveys indicated an overall positive view of the improvements and changes made in recent years.

10. While communication with stakeholders is good, there is still room to improve. Some staff in interviews and surveys indicated concerns about not knowing timelines to expect upgrades, new equipment, or other issues of implementation.

Recommendations

1. Develop and Implement new three-to-five-Year Technology Plan – Working with the Tech Steering Committee and in active collaboration with Teaching and Learning, create an accessible plan that provides:
   a. Clear alignment of department activities with the district mission and goals as delineated in the Strategic Plan.
   b. Addresses the multiple roles of technology, such as:
      i. Administrative and productivity system for staff
      ii. Instructional support system for teachers (including presentation systems and access to resources such as online videos)
      iii. Instructional delivery system for students (including access to online content, instructional resources, and testing)
      iv. Productivity system for students to accomplish their work
      v. Content area and skills set for students (including but not limited to CTE)
   c. Guidance for all stakeholders to know when technology projects are scheduled by technology levy implementation plan.
   d. An explicit process of research/pilot/evaluate/implement to test and develop new innovations and initiatives, such as one-to-one and/or BYOD. The greater the potential impact of a new initiative, the more critical it is to pilot and test in select settings before scaling up.
   e. An explicit process for monitoring and revising the plan over time to respond to pilot project results and to predictably unpredictable shifts in technology.
   f. Continue to provide guidance from the Technology Department to teachers and other educators who apply for grants for the purpose of alignment to district technology standards. This provides timely advice in choosing solutions that work seamlessly in the district technology infrastructure.
   g. Guidance for IT staff to see where their work fits into the work of the technology plan.
Finding # 2 Infrastructure

Infrastructure is crucial to normal operation of learning and administrative operations. Staff and students need access to dependable systems to reliably incorporate technology into their work.

Our review identified the following primary findings and recommendations.

Findings

1. The district has made great strides over the last two to three years in developing and implementing important infrastructure upgrades. This includes upgraded wireless networks and establishing the new IT Center, allowing for more effective support of the district systems.

2. Responses and comments from survey participants and interviews were overall positive. For example, over 88% of certificated staff responded that they have a reliable desktop computer in their room All of the time or Most of the time.

3. The need to improve student access was a recurring issue in interviews and survey comments. 32% of certificated staff feeling that students have sufficient access to the computer Sometimes or Rarely. 41% agreed with the statement I would like to integrate the use of technology into my classroom learning activities more often than I do, but there isn’t enough access to equipment. Demands on LRC time to conduct testing (and the moving of equipment from one school/lab to another to create capacity) was regularly mentioned as an issue restricting access for student use of technology. Plans are already in place to increase the number of devices. This includes an additional 570 laptops by this January (925 over the last 2 years) with at least another 1,400 projected in anticipation of a 1 to 1 initiative bringing the total to at least 2,325, grades 3-12. In addition there is currently an iPad pilot for K-2 with 84 devices added this year.

4. As mentioned above, access to the wireless network has greatly improved, but issues with connectivity were mentioned in interviews and in survey comments. 29% of certificated staff rated their access to reliable wireless connections as All of the time, 46% said Most of the time while 13% chose Some of the time and 10% chose No/Needs improvement. There is a plan in place to address this my installing wireless access points in every classroom by the end of this school year, with Tolt having been completed last spring, Cedarcrest this fall.

Recommendations

1. Implement a refresh cycle of three to five years and with options for leasing equipment. Keeping student and staff computers relatively current provides greater flexibility for introducing new software and technologies, and reduces support efforts. Leasing provides for finer control over deployment schedules as well as opportunities to refresh equipment on a faster cycle.

2. Restructure IT Support Team to better support the infrastructure. (See Recommendation #1 in Finding 3. Below).

3. Continue to explore ways to increase the number of devices available for student use in classrooms. Demand for student access for a variety of instructional purposes will only continue to grow.

Finding # 3 Support
Support is an integral part of the technology infrastructure and is critical to successfully using technology at all levels throughout the district.

Our review identified the following primary findings and recommendations:

Findings

1. Integrated technology department includes all areas of technology leadership, planning, professional development and support. The department is responsible for educational technology integration, IT operations, and technology fix and repair. This structure provides for efficiencies in service delivery and coordination among all technology teams. The district is to be commended for creating an organizational chart that clearly defines roles and responsibilities.

2. Staff have an overall positive view of the IT Support team as expressed in interviews and survey comments. 91% of certificated staff 83% of classified staff said that they receive quality service from IT staff All of the time or Most of the time.

3. The IT support team has a very customer-oriented focus and has configured their new IT Center to provide enhanced services, such as computer configuration (without taking over a school lab and network capacity) and advanced network monitoring.

4. Demands for support continue to grow, and while comments were mostly positive, some issues do exist, with 18% of certificated staff saying that the resolution of hardware and software problems is effective only Sometimes, and 55% selecting Most of the time.

Recommendations

1. Revise IT Team Structure – Support and improvement of the system can be improved through a revision of the team structure. We recommend the following:
   a. Change Network Operations Manager to IT Operations Manager, who continues to report to Director, will oversee the Computer Techs, and will collaborate with the Lead Technology Integration Specialist (see Recommendation 1 in Finding 4) to ensure alignment with technology planning and implementation as it relates to classroom integration of technology tools. The thinking should always be towards new strategies and innovation.
   b. Computer Tech 2 reports to the IT Operations Manager, administering ITIL (see below) practices and Help Desk supervision with responsibility for leading the 3.0 FTE Desktop Support Team.
   c. Implement CoSN’s ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) practices for IT service management – this allows focus on aligning IT services with the needs of the district. This will result in use of a 3-tier approach to customer services.
      i. Tier 1 – 7.0 FTE BTC
         1. Only problems that can be resolved in two minutes.
         2. Create tickets for all other problems.
      ii. Tier 2 – 2.0 FTE Computer Tech 1
      iii. Tier 3 – 1.0 FTE Computer Tech 2 (oversees Help Desk)
         1. 95% of calls are resolved on first call
         2. Tickets are created for other calls
d. Train team in ITIL and implement the strategies of these practices.
e. This reorganization and training should improve the department’s ability to provide excellent services with no additional staffing.
f. Director should ensure that BTCs are included in at least four meetings per year with other members of the Desktop Support Team. The key purpose is to update BTCs with latest incident procedures and other strategies implemented by the ITIL model.

2. After ITIL training and implementation of ITIL practices for one year, consider increasing IT staffing if needed to maintain desired levels of support. Data collected in this process will support this process.
Finding # 4 Training

Training is an integral part of any technology initiative and is critical to successfully implementing technology at all levels throughout the district.

Findings
1. The district has funded two Technology Integration Specialists providing training and job-embedded professional development, which is a best practice. Staff spoke very positively about the work of the Technology Integration Specialists and the professional development they provide.
2. There is active collaboration between Technology Integration Specialists and the Teaching and Learning PLLs, working together to ensure that professional development includes technology where needed. This collaboration between Technology and Teaching and Learning provides greater coherence for teachers, and is crucial to ongoing success in this area.
3. Staff see a strong need for expanded professional development opportunities, particularly increased Technology Integration Specialist time.

Recommendations
1. Add Lead Technology Integration Specialist – this will allow oversight of planning across all grade levels, 1.0 FTE Elementary Technology Integration Specialist, 1.0 FTE Secondary Technology Integration Specialist, and a lead who will also teach and provide support across all levels, where needed. This additional position will create a team that reports to the Director and expands collaboration with Teaching and Learning and the PLLs. This is a key collaboration for effective PD and support for teachers and principals. This position must collaborate effectively with the new IT Operations Manager.
2. Working with the RSD Tech Steering Committee and in alignment with the Technology Plan, develop a core set of technology skills for classified and certificated staff. This list must be revisited annually, and used to inform professional development opportunities.
3. In collaboration with the PLLS and IT Operations Manager, the new Lead Technology Integration Specialist should develop an annual calendar of professional development opportunities for certificated and classified staff, while leaving room for training options that arise from feedback of stakeholders.
Finding # 5 Applications

Applications provide the environment in which staff and students spend most of their time working with technology. Applications that are effectively selected, implemented, and supported can enhance the operations of the district and support improved learning and teaching opportunities for staff, students, and parents.

Our review identified the following primary findings and recommendations:

Findings

1. Skyward provides the main administrative backbone for the district. This is a well-established and stable system.
2. The district is in the opening stages of an Office 365 implementation. This will provide a variety of enhancements that will benefit staff, including collaboration tools, web-based file access and editing, and cloud storage of documents.
3. OneNote Classroom is being piloted by teachers (such as the math/science team at Tolt). This can provide a robust tool for classroom use.

Recommendations

1. Develop expectations of which core tools will be used (see Recommendation 2 in Finding 4), and support their consistent use across classrooms and schools. Students will be more successful if they are using the same common resources and applications across their schooling experience.
Finding # 6 Student Centered Classroom

The ultimate goal of an effective technology program is the Student-Centered Classroom. All other levels of the technology hierarchy exist to support the central focus of improving student learning.

Our review identified the following primary findings and recommendations:

Findings

1. The district has provided a robust infrastructure and effective leadership, and this is reflected in a high level of teacher readiness to use technology. 95% of certificated staff agreed that Teachers use and view technology as an integral part of instruction. This puts the district in a very positive place as it prepares to move forward with new technology initiatives.

2. The district has established promising pilots in the use of 1:1 computers at Tolt Middle School and the use of iPads in K-2 classrooms throughout the district that can inform further innovative uses of technology.

3. The technology CTE programs at Tolt and Cedarcrest (including extra-curricular programs such as Technology Students of America) provide valuable opportunities for students to learn about (rather than with) technology.

4. Impediments to greater integration of technology in providing more student-centered instruction were detailed earlier, primarily access to equipment and professional development.

Recommendations

1. The recommendations listed in the previous findings will provided increased support for student-centered instruction.

2. The district should consider ways to increase opportunities for students to increase their skills in the use of technology, including (but not limited to) providing more CTE offerings at middle and high school and integrating explicit technology skills into other content areas.