Shared Vision Paper

Wayne Langford

Instructional Technology Leadership

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Dr. Daniel A. Gagnon

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Vision Statement

McConnell Middle School will be a school where technology is seamlessly integrated into every
aspect of school business. We shall strive for solutions which are woven so tightly into the fabric
of learning that the technology itself is largely invisible. All course content will be well
organized and made available online through D2L and/or Google Classroom to the extent that a
student would be able to keep up with coursework even if physical attendance was not possible.
Teachers will instruct, assess and grade students using appropriate technology which has been
custom tailored by and for the teachers themselves rather than settle for easy, off-the-shelf
solutions. The expectations for staff and for the technology they use, shall be of the highest
order.

Rationale

This summer as I review all of the various survey results from teachers, support staff,
parents, students and administrators as well as notes from meetings with many of these groups
within my school the only constant is that there is no constant. The needs and desires of my staff
and, indeed, all stakeholders are as varied as the school itself. Rather than attempt to impose a
single, homogeneous, technology integration strategy this year as we often have in past, I believe
we must begin to further diversify our offerings and our very thinking about technology
integration.

Moving to a coaching model for technology professional development was really the first
step on this journey. We learned a great deal about all of our individual styles and strengths.
Indeed, for some of us it was the first step in generating a mutual respect for the hybrid vigor that
occurs when two or more different viewpoints are honored within a solution.

Now it is time to focus on differentiating not only the training but the solutions
themselves. McConnell Middle School has a hard won reputation for being ahead of the curve in

technology integration. However, in the recent past this was due primarily to high profile, school-wide initiatives such as our move to GAFE or department-wide class flipping. These programs have been successful to a point. However, complete adoption and saturation so that every student is given the opportunity to take advantage of this level of technology has still not occurred. The fact is that many teachers have styles and successful methodologies that are not as malleable as others. For these teachers the way forward is to customize a solution that honors what works for them and finds a role for technology within the existing structure.

For example, one of the primary take aways from student surveys this year is that they get frustrated when assignments and content are separated. They feel like they spend as much time searching for and getting their assignments and decoding the content as they do completing the actual work. By working with teachers, who tend to have more domain mastery than their students, I hope to help teachers refine their online content this year and to focus on what outcome is really desired for learners after viewing the specific content they have placed online. It is my hope that by getting teachers to learn to temporarily suspend the prior knowledge and the cognitive schema this experience has granted them, they can better understand what background students need from them to process the core of the lesson and insure it is easily accessible. As Cook pointed out "If there are few schemas available to process the information, which is a typical scenario for novices, working memory is more likely to be overloaded." (Cook, 2006)

Diversity Considerations

This year we will complete the rollout of our supplemental classroom devices. Although our research told us the average class needed only five devices to insure every student would have a device available, starting this year every class will have ten devices available. We will combine this effort with our continued process of providing content on DVD for students without broadband access at home to insure that students from all socioeconomic backgrounds are able to benefit from our push to provide access to curriculum content that is physically and temporally decoupled from the actual school. Our computer science teacher will continue to offer a girl's

coding club and our Robotics club has made a pitch to increase our already impressive numbers of female roboticists.
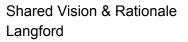
Stakeholder Roles

My role and that of my technology team shall be to continue to coordinate, oversee and manage technological changes as well as provide training, support, consulting, therapy, break fix and encouragement wherever needed. I will also continue to act as a cheerleader when required.

Students will be expected to take a larger role in vision and planning as the PAC (Principal's Advisory Committee), which is made up of more than two dozen students, takes on even greater responsibilities next year. Other student-driven clubs will continue to take an active role in influencing future priorities and informing areas of interest to young, budding technologists.

Staff members will inform as members of the technology committee and as members of LSIC (Local School Improvement Committee). We will also be adding data teams as subsidiaries of this group next year. I will attempt to lessen the profile of administrators further than they have maintained for the last several years with regards to technology as I feel that their attitudes have, at times, served to intimidate certain staff members from fully engaging or participating in planning.

Parents are the area where we continue to struggle to both define a suitable role for and to bring into the conversation. While we have a very active PTA, we have a tough time reaching out to parents who do not fall within the standard definition of an "involved parent." This is another area where finding space for softer voices may be a challenge.

References

Cook, M. P. (2006). Visual representations in science education: The influence of prior knowledge and cognitive load theory on instructional design principles. *Science education*,*90*(6), 1073-1091.