

ITEC 7410 SWOT Analysis Template for Technology Planning Needs Assessment

What is the current reality in our school?

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Summer

Semester:

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?*

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
<p>We lead most of the middle schools in the county in integration. We have a motivated subset of teachers who continue to push the envelope</p>	<p>We continue to pull and push a small group of our teachers into doing the best thing for their students.</p>	<p>There is a chance this year to push some of these teachers to acknowledge best practices as we expand our data teams and begin investigating solutions for test score anomalies that surfaced last year.</p>	<p>There are more than a few private companies that are hoping for us to fail and some are actively working against our best interests.</p>

Summary/Gap Analysis:

While I have been trying to move our teachers beyond the substitution phase of SAMR for some time now, we are still not moving as quickly as I would like. The single biggest holdup is a small group of teachers who are not embracing PBL and other student-centered pedagogies that would best leverage our BYOD network and the device limitations in some classrooms. The fact is that this “limitation” could be an advantage if viewed through the lens of a more student-centered paradigm. I think this will be addressed by administration more directly this year in implementing some of our data teams and LSIC (Local School Improvement Committee) suggestions created over our summer leadership getaway last week.

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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 believe 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? Explain how will you advocate for a solution.*

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
Our surveys are robust and teachers seem comfortable with expressing their needs and ideas to my team.	There is a difficulty in building consensus with some teachers who like to play the devil's advocate or engage in negative or non-productive discourse.	Our data teams are making a major expansion next year and we involve all teachers for the first time in data gathering and planning.	Negative or stubborn teachers as well as teachers too close to retirement to be bothered with new ideas and change.

Summary/Gap Analysis:

While there is no formal means of tying instructional best practices to technology, this is one of the primary responsibilities of my office. It is expected that I will have done due diligence on plans I collaborate on with teachers.

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The plan which we create, however, needs to be more effectively communicated to our entire community. This will be a focus of my department next year as we try to gather more buy-in with all stakeholders. It will also tie in with our principal's goal of increasing our school's score in the area of communication on next year's RBES evaluation.

Our teachers are actively trained to view technology as one arrow in their quiver. We stress that using technology correctly is fundamental to achieving positive results. Therefore, we try to avoid generalizations or ever making empty promises towards improved student achievement solely based on the presence of technology in their classrooms or in a lesson plan.

Data Sources:

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.*

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
There is a direct path to my desk for questions on technology planning.	There are a limited numbers of times and avenues to provide input for some stakeholders.	We have a chance to open communication further this coming year.	The tendency to close ranks as criticism is leveled at the school/system may sabotage some efforts at open communication.
I maintain a close relationship with my administrators, department heads, support staff	Diversity can be a struggle without an adequate forum to voice concerns.	We are building more relationships with business partners.	

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and school improvement stakeholders.			
<p>Summary/Gap Analysis: Planning technology implementation has been a task left up to me for as long as I can remember. It has taken a long time indeed for me to find strategies to involve the maximum number of stakeholders in this planning process. Last year was the first year where I leveraged our new PAC (Principal's Advisory Committee) which contains several dozen students to provide formal input on direction at McConnell Middle School. This activity drove home just how much buy-in the active involvement of high-profile representatives from a group can win for an inclusive vision.</p> <p>Next year I hope to build upon this by involving a small subset of teachers who do not actively pursue involvement in any group on their own. This group represents a significant hurdle to achieving several school and personal goals for our building. Making them feel genuine ownership of more aspects of technology at our school would bring more hands into the pot and get more technology into their student's hands. My personal goal is no less than 100% of our students interacting with and utilizing technology each and every day.</p>			
Data Sources:			

ESSENTIAL CONDITION FOUR: **Equitable Access** (Specifically address low SES and gender groups – ie. females.)

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 arranged/distributed to maximize access for engaging, standards-based, student-centered learning?*
- *What tools are needed and why?*
- *How will you **advocate** in regard to **digital equity issues among low SES and gender groups (ie. females)?***
- *Do students/parents/community need/have beyond school access to support the shared vision for learning?*

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
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<p>We now have a remarkably robust BYOD network with increased access for students.</p> <p>Students have embraced BYOD.</p>	<p>Teachers are still not all comfortable with students using devices even when we provide extras for students without personal devices.</p>	<p>BYOD has provided a platform for almost limitless development and taken away most all excuses.</p>	<p>Teachers who don't embrace station and other forms of grouping and only utilize devices in labs and other 1:1 situations rather than supplement BYOD with provided devices.</p>
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Summary/Gap Analysis:

While we have made huge strides in a relatively short period of time, it is important and humbling to remember how far we still have to go. While we are approaching my goal of daily student technology use which I formerly wrote into a vision plan three years ago, we are still not there. The last mile is proving to be very frustrating. We have turned a corner on the guarantee my department issued to teachers of 99% uptime two years ago. Now we just need to get all staff to fully embrace complete technology integration. This is one of the final hurdles in establishing equity as well. Our equity is now not so much split along socio-economic boundaries, but rather along a student's homeroom assignment.

Data Sources:

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.)

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<p>The majority of our staff Leverage technology effectively.</p> <p>Support staff have responded to calls for technology and productivity to an even greater degree than teachers.</p> <p>Training is an expected component so that staff knows to demand it.</p>	<p>We take much for granted and have difficulty moving beyond substitution and augmentation to really impact the nature of instruction itself.</p> <p>I expect support staff to continue to take the lead in promoting productive and creative uses of technology.</p>	<p>I expect support staff to continue to take the lead in promoting productive and creative uses of technology.</p>	<p>Private industry is moving to compete for FTE funds.</p> <p>Our own central office sometimes runs interference instead of supporting change.</p>
<p><i>Summary/Gap Analysis:</i> I am proud of my support staff. They continue to ask for training at least as often as teachers. They are also paving the way by embracing new training delivery methods sometimes a year or more ahead of teachers. My hope is to leverage their excitement along with students to encourage the handful of teachers who are still dragging their feet and jumping onboard the technology train.</p>			
<p><i>Data Sources:</i></p>			

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?*

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Is technology-related professional learning integrated into all professional learning opportunities or isolated as a separate topic?</i> ● <i>How must professional learning improve/change in order to achieve the shared vision?</i> 			
Professional learning is very strong where teachers are invested in positive outcomes.	Not all staff seems comfortable with a coaching model.	There is a chance to bring the rest of our teachers into the fold this year as students and support staff model the results of coaching and JIT (Just In Time) training which we have focused on for the last four years.	The county is rolling out a number of new systems which will take up a great deal of training hours over the next two years and they continue to lean hard on universal D2L implementation.
Training is highly customized and personalized.	There is a conflict between those who would like a return to large group, cookie cutter training and my department's focus on individualized training and coaching.		
Teachers seem comfortable with our model.			
<p>Summary/Gap Analysis:</p> <p>This was my primary focus when I took this position five years ago. No real staff development beyond the required large group sessions designed to fulfil the minimum requirements had occurred over the prior ten years. Now we have completed a transition to a coaching model where development is delivered based on needs assessment and staff members' desires.</p> <p>We try to be inclusive, however, there are those who would rather come for one big session, get their hours and leave rather than have an outcome-based training where they are expected to demonstrate mastery. Our surveys continue to inform each year's offerings and support staff have been very vocal in their needs. Therefore, I am planning on using the resulting online classes I will offer them to model for teachers what is possible.</p>			
<p>Data Sources:</p>			

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?*

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- *Is tech support knowledgeable? What training might they need?*
- *In addition to break/fix issues, are support staff available to help with instructional issues when teachers try to use technology in the classroom?*

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
<p>We have historically had very strong technical support.</p> <p>This remains central to our mission and teachers know that they will be taken care of.</p> <p>We also focus on empowering staff with troubleshooting skills to further reduce downtime.</p>	<p>Some factors which are beyond our control at the local level.</p> <p>Teachers are not always proactive in their support requests and some breaks are not reported quickly enough.</p>	<p>We have further opportunities next year to increase our techno-buddies' skill sets as well as widen our savvy teacher base.</p>	<p>Hackers continue to target GCPS and the portal.</p> <p>Aging technology will not be replaced for two additional years due to budget concerns which may present a challenge.</p>

Summary/Gap Analysis:

While this continues to be one of our strengths, I will not be happy until all technical issue can be resolved without impacting instructional time. My new staff is top notch in taking care of technology issues. They are also professional and have a very high customer satisfaction rating (among the highest in the system).

The area where I wish to focus this year is in reporting habits among all staff. Problems need to be reported as soon as they are noted rather than waiting until they are impacting instruction. I need to make more strides in getting all staff members to take ownership of reporting every little issue anytime they witness a potential problem.

In addition, I plan to increase my tutorials on basic troubleshooting this year and will roll out my webquest which takes participants through the steps to resolve the most common issues currently reported by teachers.

Data Sources:

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<i>ISTE Definition: Content standards and related digital curriculum resources.</i>			
Guiding Questions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>To what extent are educators, students, and parents aware of student technology standards? (ISTE Standards for Students)</i> ● <i>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?</i> ● <i>To what extent are there digital curriculum resources available to teachers so that they can integrate technology into the GPS/CCS as appropriate?</i> ● <i>How is student technology literacy assessed?</i> 			
<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
<p>All student textbooks are electronic.</p> <p>ISTE standards are available to teachers, students and parents.</p> <p>Technology is well integrated into most academic areas and, over the last three years, we have made huge strides in getting it embedded into our fine arts curriculum and other exploratory classes as well.</p>	<p>There are still pockets of resistance to technology among a few teachers and even some parents.</p> <p>This is likely a communication issue.</p>	<p>We have a chance to work on opening more effective communication channels with our community this year.</p>	<p>Negative attitudes towards technology in the media and among a handful of vocal parents can have an outsized impact on perception if we are not careful.</p>
<p><i>Summary/Gap Analysis:</i></p> <p>Our school has historically been very closed mouthed about all operating decisions. This has been a tough change for many Gwinnett County schools who have been used to unwavering support among the tax base. Rather than be threatened by this, our principal has called upon greater lines of communication. This started with the requirement for public, teacher web pages and video introductions to parents so that those who could not make an open house or get into a classroom physically during the year, would still have a face to put with a name and get to see the adult charged with their student's safety.</p>			
<p><i>Data Sources:</i></p>			