

A Vision Statement

Moving Toward Standards for Technology in EGUSD

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Executive Summary

Implementing the vision contained in this document will provide the following benefits to our students, parents and staff:

- Students benefit by continuing to use technology as a tool to improve their learning in our Libraries and Computer Labs, as well as in specified technology courses such as animation and networking courses. Technology as a learning tool will also be available in classrooms via our Technology Project 4 and Technology Literacy Challenge Grant.
- Parents will benefit from increased access to information and to teachers. Parents will be able to email teachers, check homework assignments from the web, and check their students test scores, attendance, and grades from the web in a secure environment.
- Staff will benefit by increased access to technology and information. Email will be accessible for all employees, access to student data such as test scores, grade histories, and attendance will be available in a secure manner to teachers in every classroom. All staff will have access to information stores containing such information as training materials, policies, and late breaking information.

Technology improves the effectiveness and efficiency of our employees and it plays a vital role in student learning. Teachers at many of our schools are utilizing technology in diverse and innovative ways. They are also using technology to save time taking attendance and posting grades. We have teachers teaching networking classes which have enabled a number of students to obtain outstanding employment in the technology industry directly out of high school. We also have teachers who incorporate computers in a wide variety of ways in nearly all of their instruction from multimedia as an illustration tool, to simulation instruction to telecommunications projects. We also have teachers who have helped their special education students excel by using computers to help them master curricular objectives. Additionally, students have learned real world computer skills that will enable them to be more productive when they exit high school. We also have teachers who construct units integrating technology with Social Studies with an emphasis on primary source research. Throughout the district we have pockets of technology integration that have been very effective. As the number of innovative classrooms/programs continue to grow, it is vital that we establish clear standards for implementing technology projects in the Elk Grove Unified School District.

In analyzing technology in the Elk Grove Unified School District, it quickly becomes apparent that a tremendous amount of activity is taking place. To name a few areas of emphasis, the district is rolling out new and necessary software systems, implementing many technology grants, and networking a large number of new computers to the world. To improve our effectiveness even more it is time for the district to concentrate on doing a few things very well and reclaim a focus on its core technology values and competencies. It is time to identify those areas that the district believes are the most important for our

success in the immediate and near future. Once identified and agreed upon, we must address them in a systematic and deliberate way. The following vision statements can become the foundation from which we successfully move toward Technology standards in our district.

- 1. Communication and Information will play a critical role in how successful the district is in the future and whether we meet our collective goals or not. Making it a priority "that all employees have quick and convenient access to appropriate information in electronic formats (email, SIS, QSS, electronic documents, asset tracking)" will help to insure success. Parents and students will benefit from increased communication with teachers and access to relevant data for them or their student.**
- 2. Infrastructure and equipment that is as reliable as turning on the lights will support district personnel in performing their duties and will assist students in their learning endeavors.**
- 3. A focus on powerful, proven, instructional software across the district with an emphasis on professional development will allow teachers to maximize the use of technology resources to improve learning opportunities for our students.**

In the not too distant future, every employee will have access to information instantaneously via email, instant access to information from a robust student system, and instant access to financial data necessary to run his or her program or school. Further, it will meet minimum standards so that everyone has adequate equipment and software to do their jobs. If by chance, the hardware fails or software reacts strangely, support will be readily available without an unreasonable wait. Employees will have the opportunity for professional development so that they can learn how the technology can enhance student learning. Parents will have access to their student's data via the web and to their teacher via email. Students will continue to have access to core technology courses, the Internet for research purposes, and to computers in libraries, labs and various classroom settings.

This would be the foundation upon which future technology uses will be built. It would insure all employees in the district had access to learning how to use technology, to actually using it, and to using it to access appropriate information for them to aid in their job performance. Simply put, in order to build the solid foundation, we need to concentrate on the following core items; access to equipment and information for all, reliability, and professional development.

Technology Standards

The purpose of these standards is to meet the needs of and to provide leadership to the Elk Grove Unified School District.

- Standard One: Develop and implement a plan to **ensure that 100% of our employees have access to email** and require that they check it at least once per day while at work. This means all employees would have access to computers that meet our minimum standards and all would have an email account.
- Standard Two: Provide **quick and convenient access to data** for all with a verifiable need for such access. This would include parent/student access to appropriate student information data in addition to teacher and administrator access to such data.
- Standard Three: Strive towards providing support that is readily available to all within reasonable response times. This would include keeping equipment running and operating at a level necessary to meet our minimum hardware and software standards. **Technology must become as reliable as turning on the lights.**
- Standard Four: Develop a **professional development plan** that links and synergizes state requirements with our district needs.
- Standard Five: Develop an implementation plan to **focus on powerful, proven, instructional software and its implementation across the district.**

Standard One:

Develop an implementation plan to **insure that 100% of our employees have access to email** and require that they check it at least once per day while at work.

This would require that each classroom had at least one computer meeting our minimum standards and would require that at least each work area had a communal computer that employees could use to check their email (for those that do not have traditional office areas). Providing email to all our employees on computers that meet our standards is the single most important thing we can do support the process of integrating technology in our district. It will have an immediate impact on improving service to our schools.

Email provides employees a benefit to using technology. It saves them time. It increases the speed at which they are informed with district news and information. It increases all employees' ability to gather information quickly (online surveys). It lowers the cost of distributing information (electronically versus paper).

Parents, students, and staff will benefit from improved communication and access to Teachers once all teachers have email accounts.

Standard Two:

Provide **quick and convenient access to data** for all with a verifiable need for such access.

Most visibly at the sites, this will come about because of our migration to a new Student Information System. By integrating "Making the Grade" - our standard grade book software - with the new system we will be in effect providing quick and convenient access to data for teachers, administrators, parents and the public where needed.

Teachers and Administrators throughout the district will save time because they will be able to:

- Complete attendance online in the classroom.
- Upload their grades automatically.
- Access test score histories on their students very quickly.
- Access a variety of data they need to improve their instruction.

The system will also allow parents secure access to grades, homework assignments and attendance records from the Internet. At least one or more of the potential SIS Programs will have the capacity to help teachers align instruction to content standards.

In addition to the Student Information System, we need to provide quick and convenient access to data no matter where it is located. This will include our Business System (QSS), our documents and policies (DocuShare), and our staff development materials and inventories of texts and computers (asset tracking per Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement 34 (GASB34))

Standard Three:

We need to ensure our technology is well supported and sustainable. **Technology must become as reliable as turning on the lights.**

We have custodians for every school in our district. If we are to implement and maintain a Technology system to support our rapidly growing district, we must become the custodians of our technology. Our infrastructure and machines must be supported and maintained if any plan for its sustainability is to be prudent.

By December 2001, inventory and remote control software (Intel LanDesk and Apple Network Assistant) will be deployed to inventory the computers on the network. This software also provides remote control capabilities. These remote control capabilities will allow our support staff to reach out over the network to a remote computer at a school site and control it. This will provide a tremendous benefit to schools by lowering response times for support and by aiding in problem understanding. Support staff will be able to pull up a remote computer screen on their computer and while at their desk be able to see exactly what is wrong or how a particular action is being performed. Teachers with questions on "how do I do this" can be showed via the remote control feature without ever having to leave their desk.

While the deployment of remote control software will greatly improve our efficiencies in response time to support issues, with the rapid growth in the district it will not solve all our support issues. Staff will need to be added over time to insure that response times are maintained at a reasonable level and that our infrastructure is properly supported and managed.

Standard Four:

Develop an implementation plan to provide a **professional development plan** that links and synergizes state requirements with our district needs.

Once a person has a computer and it is being supported, they need to know how to use it and how to use it well. Professional development is an extremely important item in the process of integrating technology in the district. For it to be most effective, it needs to be done as part of an integrated total professional development plan.

Current state requirements require some level of technology training for all teachers. Rather than having our teachers take technology training somewhere else in addition to training we feel is necessary, our goal is to petition the state to have our technology needs and subsequent training satisfy the state requirement for teacher certification.

Standard Five:

Develop an implementation plan to **standardize instructional software by grade level and subject matter**. Standardized software should be limited, if possible to no more than 4-6 different software titles.

Standards currently exist in the district for hardware and for administrative software. They do not exist for instructional software. The development of these standards is critical. Technology Services will work closely with the Office of Curriculum and Staff Development so that any adopted software will help teachers teach to the rigors of the adopted content standards.

Examining a classroom on a school site will show that even in the same grade level, the same software is not used consistently. Further adding to the problem is the fact that the majority of computer application software and instructional materials are not yet aligned. If the district is to move forward in any substantial way and be able to support the environment when it does move, standards must be implemented.

Summary

Implementing the changes to realize this vision will not be easy nor will they occur overnight. In order to move the district as a whole toward its goals we must develop a system where communication and information play a critical role, the infrastructure and equipment is reliable, and we emphasize powerful, proven, instructional software across the district.

The specific standards put forth in this paper support our future direction with respect to technology.