

Case Study- District Technology Plan

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Fall 2018

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**Introduction:**

This paper will evaluate and make recommendations to the Revere School District's current technology plan. The current plan is being evaluated by Margaret Kreider, Instructional Design consultant. Margaret has been hired by the local Board of Education to make recommendations to further develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in all students in the district according to the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards for teachers and students. Margaret will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the current plan and make specific recommendations for moving forward with the plan.

Revere designed a technology plan on 10/19/2014. This plan is a 4 year plan with long and short term goals. The technology team responsible for this plan is a mix of district administrators, teachers, and community stakeholders. Kathy Nolan, Revere's Curriculum and Instruction head is the lead and coordinator for the current technology plan.

**Planning Team:**

The current technology plan was based on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills using the enGuage Model. The planning team was to use this model to help plan an initial starting point for their plan. An explanation of the enGuage Model for digital learning can be found here:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234731444\\_enGauge\\_21st\\_Century\\_Skills\\_Digital\\_Literacies\\_for\\_a\\_Digital\\_Age](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234731444_enGauge_21st_Century_Skills_Digital_Literacies_for_a_Digital_Age)

The committee found that there were over 20 skills involved in this model so they chose only the most relevant one to start their technology initiative. They decided to focus on Effective Communication to start their technology plan.

The committee wanted to identify and meet the needs of community members and business owners. In August of 2018, they had identified several businesses to form this partnership. They have developed several resources to help teachers, students and parents in the community through the use of technology. These resources have enhanced the learning experience for the students.

### **Strengths**

I see a relative strength of this planning team. The lead committee member has been able to gather a diverse group of stakeholders for designing this technology plan. They have administrators, teachers, and business leaders around the community. They have also proposed contacting surrounding school districts to compare resources and plans to collaborate with for future success of using technology in their district.

### **Weakness**

One weakness that I found was that there are not opportunities for parents or students to be involved in the planning process for this technology plan.

### **Recommendations**

I recommend that the committee involve parents and students. I believe that involving these people will help with the implementation of any new plans or new technology that the committee plans to introduce in the future. Students and parents are a very important part of the population. They must “buy in” to the new plan or technology for it to be successful.

### **Curriculum Alignment and Instructional Integration**

One of the first goals to be completed by the technology committee was the alignment of technology with the curriculum and instruction. It seems as though they were able to list a set of assessments to measure attainment of the student's mastery of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills with existing curriculum. They propose using authentic assessment, project based learning, performance assessments and rubrics to measure student mastery and growth. This goal has been updated to "In Progress" because of the changing New Learning Standards in Ohio.

### **Strengths**

Authentic assessment and project based learning assessments are a good way to measure student mastery and growth. It seems that the students will be able to use their communication and collaboration skills to creatively learn and demonstrate learning more readily using technology. These skills are part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that are outlined in the ISTE standards for students.

### **Weaknesses**

There is no mention in the technology plan about collaboration among teachers or departments, or time set aside to voice concerns to administration.

### **Recommendations**

I believe that the technology plan needs to have a section about collaboration among teachers. Teachers should have a central location to research and share online resources that are used in the different content areas. Also, the plan should set aside planning time, by content area, for teachers to discuss how they are using technology in their lessons. Administration should be

involved in the department level meetings so that they are better able to hear concerns voiced by the staff.

### **Technology Policy, Leadership and Integration:**

The current technology plan has outlined the role leadership is to take when integrating technology. The school district's website outlines the policy of student data use and the beliefs that they hold. This information is found at the following site:

<http://studentdataprinciples.org/the-principles/>

The administration is to write the policy for the district keeping in mind Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). They have provided links to online documents for teachers to read about these laws and policy. They can be found here:

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act>

### **Strengths**

I believe that the administration has been able to write and document the correct protection policies for this technology plan. They have made available clear guidelines on the use of student data. They have provided links to explain the two different federal laws that are in place to protect student data and they have made these policies available to the students and parents.

### **Weakness and Recommendations**

I do not see any weaknesses in this part of the technology plan and therefore have no recommendations.

### **Technology Infrastructure, Management, and Support:**

Revere's 1:1 device initiative was implemented in the 2017-18 school year. Each student has received a laptop computer that they are to utilize for every class. The Wi-Fi situation was addressed in the plan and assessed. The necessary improvements have been made. The committee met with professional contractors during building projects to ensure that correct infrastructure and robust Wi-Fi network was available to handle all the devices that would be accessing the network daily.

The district is going to research and recommend online resources and software programs to implement that align with the curriculum. They will consult with software professionals and other school districts to learn what is available that would fit the needs of their students.

Professional growth is part of this technology plan. The administration has given the staff opportunities for professional development in the implementation of Google Classroom since the one to one device plan was put into place during the 2017-18 school year. The staff has benefited from this professional development but would like to have more time to learn about the Google Suite and all the available apps and how to integrate those resources into the lessons they are planning and delivering.

### **Strengths**

A strength of this section of the technology plan is that the committee was able to work with contractors in the construction of a new building and recommend the hardware that was

being installed. They were able to plan for larger usage in the future and build a robust network. Another strength in this plan is that the administration is giving the staff professional development opportunities to explore new software options.

### **Weaknesses**

There could be a weakness in this part of the plan if the committee listens to a consultant for a big software company and buys the product they are trying to sell.

### **Recommendation:**

I recommend that the technology committee conduct a needs analysis before contacting any software or hardware vendors to explore their products. The analysis should involve the teachers, students, and parents. The results should be analyzed carefully and then the committee can explore different options to meet the needs of the population. Once a decision is reached on what software or hardware might be the right option, then they can research how other districts or people have used the option and see if it was successful.

### **Budget and Planning:**

The technology plan outlines the goals of budgeting and planning for new technological options in the future. There was a District Technology Budget Team created. This team is comprised of academic, technical and finance leaders, and other stakeholders who collectively represent the district's interests in preparation for designing a more student-centered budgetary process.

They suggest researching "Learning Return on Investment" before implementing or purchasing any new technology. The technology must meet the needs of the students in

developing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills for technology. The technology also must have proven research those skills are being met with the specific technology.

### **Weaknesses**

I believe that the current technology plan is very comprehensive in its intent to take time to do the research before purchasing any new technology options.

### **Recommendations**

I recommend that the technology committee do a thorough needs analysis before purchasing any new products. The analysis should be directed towards the teachers first. Asking them what they need to help improve student performance and student needs would be important to know. Analyzing the current needs and wants of the students and parents would be the next step. The committee would be able to research the options to fulfill the needs of both parties and make recommendations to proceed in purchasing any new technology.

### **Conclusion:**

The current technology plan is a good framework for your technology needs at this time. It is a fluid document that has the ability to be enhanced with the recommendations stated. Changing and updating the information in this plan would be beneficial to the educational population in this community. Technological needs change as fast as the technology available.



Resources:

1. enGauge Model for the digital age.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234731444\\_enGauge\\_21st\\_Century\\_Skills\\_Digital\\_Literacies\\_for\\_a\\_Digital\\_Age](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234731444_enGauge_21st_Century_Skills_Digital_Literacies_for_a_Digital_Age)

2. Nolan K (2018) *Action Plan: Revere Technology Committee* retrieved September 15, 2018 from:

<https://www.revereschools.org/cms/lib/OH01001097/Centricity/Domain/1/Revere%20Action%20Plan%20Draft%20%2006%2020%2018.pdf>