

GLADSTONE SCHOOL DISTRICT

GLADSTONE TECHNOLOGY PLANNING TEAM

REPORT TO THE SCHOOL BOARD

March 11, 2015

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Executive Summary

The Technology Planning Team was charged with developing “a vision for the use of technology to support the Gladstone School District’s student achievement, parent involvement, and community engagement goals, in alignment with the district’s mission and goals... a responsible plan — but also a plan that stretches us, something we can move forward on, something that represents the best Gladstone has to offer.”

The 41 members of the Gladstone Technology Planning Team included 18 community members, 20 staff members, and three board members. They met nine times between October 14, 2014, and March 3, 2015. The Gladstone Technology Planning Team adopted the following vision statement and recommendations unanimously.

*The Gladstone School District sees technology as a powerful tool
for enhancing student learning and for preparing students
for postsecondary education and careers.*

- ❖ The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District encourage and support the integration of technology to transform instruction at all grade levels, to offer every student an engaging, challenging, and supportive learning environment.
- ❖ The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District provide professional development opportunities and ongoing support to help all staff members use technology effectively.
- ❖ The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District implement strategies to ensure that all students have sufficient and equitable access to technology they need to be successful students.
- ❖ The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District use technology to engage families in their students’ learning in meaningful ways.
- ❖ The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District develop community and industry partnerships that enhance student access to the technology and enrich learning opportunities.
- ❖ The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District create a committee to plan and to monitor the implementation of the recommendations above.

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Technology Planning Team Process

Charge and Membership

Board member Sharon Soliday reviewed the team’s charge at the first meeting, which was to develop “a vision for the use of technology to support the Gladstone School District’s student achievement, parent involvement, and community engagement goals, in alignment with the district’s mission and goals.” She told them the school board expects this process “to generate a responsible plan — but also a plan that stretches us, something we can move forward on, something that represents the best Gladstone has to offer.”

The 41 members of the Gladstone Technology Planning Team included 18 community members, 20 staff members, and three board members. Three district administrators and two consultants supported the team’s work, providing planning, facilitation, and technical support. Four team members joined them to serve as a steering committee throughout the process.

Study Process

The committee met nine times between October 14, 2014, and March 3, 2015. (The minutes of these meetings appear in Appendix A.)

The meetings were sequenced in phases. The first phase was designed to be both informative and thought-provoking. Over the course of the first five meetings, team members heard from:

- ❖ a panel of elementary, middle, and high school students;
- ❖ Christine Blouke, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Technology for the Parkrose School District;
- ❖ Bill Tracy, Director of Solution Architecture at Structured Communication Systems, Inc., in Clackamas;
- ❖ Pete Vraspir and Steve Nelson, of Apple Education;
- ❖ Joe Morelock, Executive Director of Secondary Education for the Lake Oswego School District;
- ❖ a panel of Gladstone teachers, representing all grade levels;
- ❖ Kelly Welch, Director of Special Services for the Gladstone School District;
- ❖ a panel of Gladstone principals, representing all grade levels;
- ❖ Ryan Johnson, Technology Coordinator for the Gladstone School District; and

- ❖ Lennie Bjornsen, Director of Student and Family Supports for the Gladstone School District.

Team members received copies of Michael Fullan's *Stratosphere: Integrating Technology, Pedagogy, and Change Knowledge*, and also had access to a wide range of other written and video resources. (A full bibliography of the materials made available to the Technology Planning Team appears in Appendix B.)

On December 2, the Technology Planning Team reflected on what they had heard and identified a set of preliminary guiding principles and a list of the components they intended to cover in their recommendations. This created a framework that bridged to the second phase of their work.

The Technology Planning Team spent most of their remaining four meetings formulating their recommendations, working in small groups first to develop content for each component and, at the following meeting, to review and revise draft recommendations drawn from that work. At their final meeting, on March 3, 2015, the team reviewed and revised a draft of their full report, adopting this final report, and the recommendations it presents, unanimously.

Vision and Guiding Principles

*The Gladstone School District sees technology as a powerful tool
for enhancing student learning and for preparing students
for postsecondary education and careers.*

- ❖ Technology should be increasingly integrated into the educational program, transforming instructional practices and enabling both teachers and students to achieve at their highest levels.
- ❖ Every school, and every classroom within any school, should have equivalent, age-appropriate instructional technology (hardware, software, and Internet access).
- ❖ Access to technology is becoming fundamental to success in school, and the district should address inequities in student access to technology after school hours.
- ❖ Students require more than technical skills; they also need the skills to use the Internet safely, securely, and responsibly.
- ❖ The district's technology program should be cost-effective and sustainable, with sufficient technical staff and ongoing professional development for all staff.
- ❖ Technology should enhance communication between and within schools, and also between schools and families, engaging parents in support of their students' learning.
- ❖ Community partnerships represent a significant resource in using technology to expand learning opportunities for students.

Recommendations: Integrating Technology to Transform Instruction

The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District encourage and support the integration of technology to transform instruction at all grade levels, to offer every student an engaging, challenging, and supportive learning environment.

Integrating Technology into Instruction

- ❖ Technology will be integrated seamlessly into the curriculum at all grade levels, using developmentally appropriate devices and applications to support learning in all subject areas.
- ❖ Teachers will receive the encouragement, training, and ongoing support they need to teach confidently at all SAMR levels (substitution, augmentation, modification, and redefinition) and to achieve a mix of learning activities appropriate to their teaching goals and their students' needs and capabilities.

Higher-order Thinking Skills

- ❖ Teachers will receive the encouragement, training, and ongoing support they need to employ technology effectively across all categories of Bloom's Taxonomy: remember, understand, and apply; analyze, evaluate, and create.
- ❖ Teachers will use technology to increase the proportion of teaching and learning activities that utilize and further develop higher-level thinking skills (analyze, evaluate, and create).
- ❖ Teachers will use technology to explore alternative, best-practice approaches to engaging students in learning, such as: the "flipped classroom," expecting students to acquire content outside the classroom, reserving class time for discussions that foster deeper understanding and critical thinking skills; and STEAM, integrating science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics into the curriculum.
- ❖ Students will exercise creativity and develop their individual talents, using technology to create, publish, perform, and share original work.

Collaboration and Communication Skills

- ❖ Students will develop the collaboration skills they will need to be successful in school and in postsecondary education and careers.
- ❖ Students will use technology to help them to develop effective written and oral communication skills.

Individualized Learning Environment

- ❖ Teachers will use technology as a tool in the implementation of evidence-based, student-centered instructional practices.
- ❖ Teachers will use technology to individualize instruction, challenging students to achieve at their highest level and enabling them to pursue personal interests, work at their own pace, and find their best learning style.
- ❖ Teachers will use technology to expand, adapt, and enhance learning opportunities for all students.

Global Learning

- ❖ The secondary schools will strive to use technology to expand course offerings, giving individual students and small groups access to online learning opportunities outside the school's formal curriculum (e.g., world language, advanced math).
- ❖ Students will communicate and collaborate with other students beyond the Gladstone community, anywhere in the world.
- ❖ Teachers will use technology to help students gain a deeper understanding of the larger community, the nation, and the world.

Digital Literacy and Technology Skills

- ❖ Students will learn to use a variety of devices and applications as they relate to the Oregon Educational Technology Standards. The district will research and adopt standards for a PK-12 skills-development sequence.
- ❖ Students will develop the technology skills they will need to be successful in school and in postsecondary education and careers, including how to conduct effective Internet research.
- ❖ Students will develop digital citizenship skills, including how to use the Internet safely and responsibly.

Professional Development

The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District provide professional development opportunities and ongoing support to help all staff members use technology effectively.

Professional Development Opportunities

- ❖ The district will provide professional development opportunities for all staff to help them make effective use of technology in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.
- ❖ The district will expect all instructional staff members to achieve competence in the use of classroom technology and in its effective integration into instruction.
- ❖ The district will offer a range of professional development opportunities that allows individuals to begin where they feel comfortable and to meet district expectations.
- ❖ Teachers will receive instruction that prepares them to teach confidently at all SAMR levels (substitution, augmentation, modification, and redefinition) and to develop a repertoire appropriate to their teaching goals and their students' needs and capabilities.
- ❖ Teachers will receive instruction that prepares them to employ technology effectively across all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy: remember, understand, and apply; analyze, evaluate, and create.
- ❖ Staff development providers will model the effective use of technology in creating engaging learning environments, differentiating instruction, engaging higher level thinking skills, and using data both to monitor learner progress and to improve instruction.
- ❖ The district will develop an annual plan for professional development related to technology, based on an evaluation of staff interests and needs as well as an assessment of the continuing evolution of technology and of best practice.

Ongoing Support

- ❖ Teachers will have opportunities to develop and apply their skills: time with devices to explore their possibilities and time to develop lesson plans that incorporate technology in new ways.
- ❖ The district will seek to remove obstacles to the effective use of technology in instruction, such as the limited availability of devices and the limited ability to modify devices and applications to support individual use.
- ❖ The district will provide ongoing technical and pedagogical support to reinforce and enhance professional development activities.

- ❖ The district will encourage teachers to take college classes and attend professional conferences that enable them to further develop their skills and understandings.
- ❖ Teachers will have opportunities to share their learning with colleagues in other Gladstone schools, as well as those in their own schools.
- ❖ Teachers will have opportunities to collaborate with, and learn from, professional colleagues in other school districts.

Access to Technology

The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District implement strategies to ensure that all students have sufficient and equitable access to technology they need to be successful students.

Access to Technology at School

- ❖ The district will develop classroom technology standards that align with state and national standards. In addition to providing for equity across and within schools, these standards should recognize that:
 - ready access to devices and to the Internet is an integral part of the curriculum at all grade levels;
 - the reliability and speed of Internet connection are important;
 - consistent access helps both students and teachers to develop competence with devices;
 - devices should be developmentally appropriate; and
 - students who have special needs may require adaptive or other technologies to enable them to benefit from the classroom program.
- ❖ The district will prioritize the allocation of funds to move all classrooms toward these standards and seek outside funding to expedite that process.
- ❖ The district will periodically review and update these standards to ensure that technology and professional development resources continue to be used effectively.
- ❖ The district will periodically review and update as indicated its policies regarding the use of technology in schools and by students.

Access to Technology Outside School

- ❖ Teachers will consider home access to devices and the Internet when they make assignments.

- ❖ Schools will explore ways to provide before and after-school access to technology for students who do not have consistent home access.
- ❖ The district will explore ways to fund and manage a program to loan devices to students who do not have consistent home access to technology and to the Internet.

Family Engagement

The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District use technology to engage families in their students' learning in meaningful ways.

Improving Communication Between School and Home

- ❖ The district will use technology to facilitate consistent, timely, and meaningful communication from the school to the home and to provide user-friendly ways for parents to communicate with the school.
- ❖ Teachers will use a variety of technology options (e.g., the Student Information System (SIS), email, blogs, e-newsletters, webpages, images of student work, links) to: (1) provide timely information about classroom activities and student progress and (2) establish meaningful two-way communication. These efforts will supplement, rather than replace, face-to-face communications.

Empowering Families to Support Successful Learners

- ❖ The district will inform parents about the use of technology in each school, sharing the district's philosophy, addressing concerns about safety and security, describing the technology curriculum, and clarifying opportunities for the use of technology outside school.
- ❖ The district will offer opportunities for family technology training and use to support their students' learning. The district will consider scheduling and location options that may encourage participation.
- ❖ The district will provide information that clearly communicates district and family responsibilities regarding the off-site use of district-owned technology.
- ❖ The district website will inform families about community organizations that support the well-being of children and families.

Community Partnerships

The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District develop community and industry partnerships that enhance student access to technology and enrich learning opportunities.

Enhancing Student Access to Technology

- ❖ The district will encourage local businesses and public offices to make Wi-Fi available to students, especially in areas with high concentrations of students who lack consistent access to the Internet and during the summer.
- ❖ The district will seek the support of community partners for a loan program to provide students with consistent home access to computers or other devices that access the Internet and support schoolwork.

Enriching Learning Opportunities

- ❖ The district will develop community and industry partnerships that:
 - provide financial or in-kind support for its efforts to increase access to technology,
 - bring experts into schools to teach technology skills or to advise extracurricular activities, and
 - inform students about potential careers or help them to develop real-world skills that prepare them for employment.
- ❖ The district will develop community and industry partnerships that utilize technology to:
 - enable teachers to incorporate real-world problem-solving into the curriculum,
 - offer students authentic learning experiences,
 - foster a sense of connection to the Gladstone community,
 - offer students opportunities to perform community service, and
 - help students understand and appreciate their role as a citizen of the state and nation.
- ❖ The district will assign staff responsibility for developing and coordinating partnerships that bring volunteers, funds, equipment, or services into Gladstone schools.
- ❖ The district will assign staff responsibility for developing and coordinating partnerships that place students in relationships or settings outside the school (e.g., mentoring, job shadowing).

- ❖ The district will develop agreements with postsecondary institutions that give students opportunities to earn technical certificates or college credits.
- ❖ The district will explore reciprocal agreements that offer Gladstone High School students access to unique technology programs in neighboring school districts.
- ❖ Offsite enrichment opportunities, such as field trips, internships, and job shadowing, will be available to all students as authentic learning and career awareness opportunities, as well as to students who have already identified a particular interest in technical careers.
- ❖ Schools will provide opportunities for students to help other students further develop their technology skills (e.g., peer tutoring, clubs).
- ❖ Schools at all levels will support club activities that help students identify and develop interests and talents related to technology, as well as social, communication, and collaboration skills.

Implementation

The Technology Planning Team recommends that the Gladstone School District create a committee to plan and to monitor the implementation of the recommendations above.

Technology Implementation Committee

- ❖ The district will assign staff responsibility for convening the committee and facilitating its work and for serving as a liaison with the instructional staff.
- ❖ To ensure continuity, the committee's initial membership will be drawn primarily from Technology Planning Team members who volunteer. It will also represent all stakeholders, including students, parents, community members, and the technology industry, as well as district staff.
- ❖ The committee will undertake the related tasks necessary to the successful implementation of the Technology Planning Team's recommendations, including:
 - the formulation of funding strategies;
 - policy review, revision, and development;
 - the development of a strategic plan to grow technology initiatives to a districtwide scale; and
 - provisions for ensuring accountability.

- ❖ The committee will develop a process for awarding grants to individual teachers or groups of teachers that will enable them to pilot — and then to disseminate — effective uses of technology to transform instruction.
- ❖ The committee will conduct ongoing annual assessments of the district’s progress in implementing these recommendations, updating strategic targets and implementation strategies as necessary to respond to changes in district needs, priorities, and resources and to changes in available technology.

2015-2016 Targets

- ❖ The district will spend the funds necessary to address critical infrastructure-upgrade needs in the schools.
- ❖ The Technology Implementation Committee will develop technology budget proposals for the following three years (2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19).
- ❖ The district will spend \$50,000 to establish a fund for teacher grants and will work with the Gladstone Education Foundation and other partners to increase the size of that fund.
- ❖ The district will implement outreach strategies to provide information to — and to gain the support of — students, families, and school staffs regarding the implementation of the 2015 Technology Plan.