

## **Maine School Administrative District #75 Technology Vision & Philosophy**

**Introduction.** The technology plan for Maine School Administrative District #75 (hereafter referred to as the District) describes our vision of how technology will assist us in achieving our mission.

This plan provides a lens for guiding technology purchases as they relate to curriculum content, instructional practices, professional development strategies and enhanced services. Areas where technology will impact our District and our mission include:

- improving student performance through effective technology integration in the classroom,
- understanding the role of technology in our students' futures in order to prepare them to be successful in a changing world
- using technology to collaborate and learn together as a community of learners

The plan identifies the current status of technology and defines a technology system that will support the learning and administrative systems of the district. The plan prompts us to challenge our present understanding of the ever-evolving role of technology and question how we organize ourselves to ensure improvement, increase our effectiveness, and evaluate our efforts. The plan is focused on preparing our students for the future.

**District Mission:** "The four communities of MSAD No. 75 are united in our dedication to develop confident, life-long learners. It is our mission to work together to ensure a community of fluent learners, critical thinkers and creative contributors to our society."

**Technology Vision:** The role of technology in education, in society, in work and the world has changed significantly in the past few years. These changes merit exploration as we envision how technology should be used in our district. As a learning organization we will foster a collaborative culture that pools the experiences and expertise of our staff, students and communities striving to transform the work to be done through the use of such technologies as social computing, visualization and simulations, educational gaming, and digital storytelling.

- We will use the methods of social computing, visualization and simulations, educational gaming and digital storytelling to improve student learning and prepare them for their future.
- Through collaborative cultures we will pool our staff expertise and grow in knowledge and skill as a learning organization.
- We view technology as part of almost every function in our enterprise.
- We will encourage our students and our community to provide their experiences with technology for transforming the work to be done and how to do it.
- We recognize that the devices will continue to shrink and their functions will continue to expand.
- We will ask ourselves what new knowledge, skills and dispositions will be necessary to be successful in the future?

**Philosophy of Service.** The District's Information Technology Department strives to attain the goal of providing services that are stable, reliable, accessible, and sustainable. To achieve this the Department employs the following philosophies:

1. **Technology in the Classroom.** Technology has two functions in the classroom. First, technology supports the acquiring of information and the interaction of students with experiences that challenge new learning. Second, technology gives students opportunities to synthesize, arrange, and associate the information they have acquired. These two functions work together to allow our students to transform information into knowledge. Technology is as basic to the learning environment in our schools as are the buildings and grounds, the heating and lighting, food services and health services. What teachers, students, and administrators do with the tools of technology is a demonstration of their imagination and professional creativity. In this educational environment where technology is integrated and functioning, both teachers and students are able to focus on acquiring and sharing information.

2. **Systems Approach.** In order to be useful and effective, technology services must be developed as a complete system using a repeatable process. To this end the Technology Department uses the Systems Approach to evaluate technology projects for the District. The Systems Approach is a method of evaluating a technology project through the six phases of its life-cycle to affect an organized, efficient plan to achieve success. The Systems Approach is preferred because it takes into consideration all of the needs and issues the technology will require and how the service will impact other people, existing technology, and District resources. This approach reveals the degree in which the new service will align with the District's core beliefs about learning and technology integration, the overall direction of technology within the organization, general operating procedures, and policy.

- a. **Analysis Phase.** The first phase of a technology project is the detailed analysis of all aspects of the system and the impact the new system will have within the organization. This phase includes a needs analysis to define the requirement, a resource analysis to identify available resources and required resources, and a cost-benefit analysis to determine if the technology project should be undertaken with respect to cost and the benefits achieved.
- b. **Design Phase.** The second phase of a technology project is a detailed design of the technology solution that will satisfy the defined requirement. This phase involves research and the development of a system design that includes capacity planning, integration planning, testing and implementation planning, and finally long-term planning with respect to the scope of the project's life.
- c. **Development or Implementation Phase.** The third phase of a technology project is where the work is performed in accordance with the design to develop the solution to meet the need established in the first phase.
- d. **Testing Phase.** The fourth phase of a project is where the solution is tested to ensure it meets the requirements before being implemented. This phase is guided by the test plan developed in the Design Phase.
- e. **Implementation or Installation Phase.** The fifth phase of a project is when the solution is put into production. This phase is governed by the implementation plan developed in the Design Phase and may be an immediate cut-over, parallel operations until cut-over, or phased in over time.
- f. **Maintenance Phase.** The last phase continues for the life of a system, typically consumes the most resources, and is most often the least planned. This phase includes system upgrades and modifications as needed and identified by the end-users or Technology Staff.

3. **Facing Challenges.** The District is faced with many challenges. Once identified these challenges are discussed and communicated to all those who are involved. The identification and subsequent discussions are a necessary part of the process to ensure solutions are found and challenges are overcome. Facing the realities of our environment leads to the resolution of issues and leads to a system that better supports student learning.

4. **Opportunities.** Creative and new funding sources, alternative methods of delivery, TCO studies, changes in the status quo, and consolidation of efforts can be used to meet the challenges we face. Standardization of technologies and the development of a core system providing basic services to all will provide a solid foundation. This foundation, once firmly established, will allow specialized technology services for small groups to expand and meet the individualized needs of many, not just a few technology users. It is clear, methods of technology instruction and integration must permeate every classroom. This will require the need for specialized systems that must be as reliable as paper and pencil.

5. **Universal Design.** Two current challenges in education are the great diversity of the student population, and district, state, and national requirements for higher expectations for all students. The role of the technology department is to assist in the design and implementation of a technology system that allows for the new technologies to be deployed to meet individual learning differences while encouraging good instructional practices for all. The Tech Department's systems perspective must include an education perspective based on the most current research. This is a unique requirement that demands a team of individuals who can bridge both worlds: the technical and educational.