

## Maine School Administrative District #75 Professional Development

*“ . . . a description of how the applicant will provide ongoing, sustained professional development for teachers, principals, administrators, and school library media personnel to further the effective use of technology in the classroom or library media center.”*

**Introduction.** This document serves as an outline of the opportunities provided by the District in support of the professional development of its staff. According to the U.S. Department of Education, professional development involves obtaining competency with the operation of hardware and operating systems, proficiency with available technology tools, the ability to apply software knowledge toward instructional and (or) administrative activities, and the skills to integrate technology into teaching<sup>1</sup>. The District has organized its development opportunities around this principal.

**Practical Technology Concepts.** There will always be richer classrooms driven by the personalities of outstanding teachers, but there must be a minimum level of competence, in order to provide necessary experiences to all students across the district. To achieve this, the District has identified certain minimum technology knowledge and skills necessary to operate independently within the local network (see [Appendix “Staff Development Checklist”](#)). These knowledge and skills include an understanding of operating systems (including file structure for navigating, saving, and retrieving work), networking essentials (printing, navigating servers, etc.), computer security (secure passwords, virus awareness, etc.), preventive maintenance (cleaning keyboard, removing dust, etc.), computer ethics (copyright infringement, plagiarism, etc.), and office skills including e-mail, word processing, and internet research and navigation. Staff may independently assess their technology comfort zone using the District Self-Assessment Survey (see [Appendix “Self-Assessment Survey”](#)). The Self-Assessment Form includes assessment of integrating technology in curriculum and instruction.

**Beyond Skills.** In addition to the practical technology concepts, the district is working to support professional development in integrating technology into the curriculum. This includes training staff in the use of specialized technology systems adopted by the district in support of student learning. District adopted technology systems include direct connections to the curriculum and methods of providing instruction to students along with support staff to assist in the ongoing professional development of staff and in the implementation in the classroom.

**Methods.** The District employs various methods to meet development needs. These methods are broken into ten major categories.

1. **Access** - If teachers are not able to use computers in their daily work, it is pointless to train them. In most cases this requires a classroom computer which is used by students as well as staff for educational purposes. For staff members, a shared computer does not constitute access, unless its availability is frequent enough to allow use for a variety of tasks throughout the day. Our goal is to provide every staff member with access to an adequate computer and related technology to support the daily tasks of teaching and learning.

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *Technology in Schools: Suggestions, Tools and Assessing Technology in Elementary and Secondary Education*, NCES 2003-313, prepared by Tom Ogle et al. Washington, DC: 2002.

2. **Technical Support** - Students and staff members need adequate support in using technology toward the work of teaching and learning. Assistance must be available in each building on the same day it is needed. Dependence on technical people will be kept to a minimum, by ensuring that staff and students have a high comfort level with computers and related equipment, online support tools, self-help resources, and written documentation. The District uses an automated Helpdesk system to assign and track problems through resolution (see [Appendix “Helpdesk System”](#)). The system supports a browser-accessible knowledge-based tool that makes the resolutions available to the staff as a reference tool for individual learning.
3. **Professional Development Benefit** – Professional development opportunities (particularly in educational technology) are strength of the District. They will continue to be maintained. Additional funding for conferences, release time, course reimburses, etc. is provided for in part under employment contracts, but can also be a discretionary function. Improvements can be made in making staff aware of opportunities and evaluation the effects of the district’s efforts. Through the staff computer purchase program, staff can purchase a new computer and have the cost deducted from their paycheck during the next school year interest free. This includes the purchase of a laptop, handheld, or desktop computer including bundled monitor, printer, and software not to exceed a total price of \$2,000.
4. **Individual Instruction** – Our goals is to deliver sufficient individual training experiences to staff members to develop a high level of comfort using computers and related technologies. Currently, individual instruction is available by appointment from a variety of sources, including: building aids, technology support leaders, stipend positions, and curriculum data leaders. The structure of these sessions varies from informal sessions after school to planned time with the use of substitute teachers to facilitate training during the workday.
5. **Embedded Instruction** – New technology projects are required to include an embedded staff development plan. (See appendices [“Project Process”](#), [Project Assessment Narrative](#), [“Project Assessment Checklist”](#), and [“TimeLine & Writing Software“](#) )
6. **Adult Education** – MerryMeeting Adult Education plays a crucial role in delivering professional development to district staff. (See [“Collaboration with Adult Literacy Service Providers”](#))
7. **Technology Day** – All new teachers in the district will spend an equivalent of one day engaged in various technology staff development activities to include practical concepts and integration.
8. **School Day Training** – Professional development will be offered at various times during the school day in a manner that minimizes loss of instructional time.
9. **Classroom Support** – Additional support is provided in the classroom at various schools across the district. The goal of the support is to assist teachers in integrating technology while providing professional development to empower teachers to

continue integration. (See [“Integration of Technology with Curricula and Instruction”](#))

10. **Formal Instruction** – The District Technology Staff schedules periodic formal classes that are available to the staff. They are also available to conduct unscheduled site-sponsored classes when coordinated through the Director of Technology. The instruction includes formalized handouts that are generated for each student to serve as a reference both during and after instruction.
11. **Informal Instruction** – The District Technology Staff is available for unstructured informal training as dictated by either site requirements or on an individual basis as authorized by the Director of Technology. Additionally, students are able to participate in the Intern Program (High School) or iTeam Initiative (Middle School) to assist with individual development.
12. **Computer-based/Web-based Tutorials** – The District is sponsoring web-based tutorials as resources permit and sufficient need demands.
13. **Remote Classrooms** – The state-sponsored ATM classroom is made available for interacting with remote classrooms to expand the opportunity for learning for staff and students. The classroom provides video conferencing and multi-media projection across the state ATM network.
14. **Training Media** - The District uses a variety of media to foster differentiated learning including multi-media projectors, hands-on application, video-conferencing, printed handouts, and interactive computer-based applications.
15. **Other Resources** - Learning may also be achieved across the Internet from various sites. Resources are also provided for collaboration within the District.