

Maine School Administrative District #75 Technology Vision & Philosophy

Introduction. The technology plan for Maine School Administrative District #75 (hereafter referred to as the District) is an attempt to meet the goals as defined in the mission statement below by bringing together the technology with the curricula. This plan provides a guideline for evaluating technology purchases as they relate to the goal of improving student learning. The plan identifies the current status of technology and defines a technology systems that will support the learning and administrative systems of the district. The plan is firmly grounded in reality, by taking into account where staff and students are on the learning continuum, available financial resources, analyzing existing systems, and identifying functional requirements. The long-term vision defines the future direction. There can be little growth, if all resources are used to just maintain the foundation level, however, the vision cannot supercede the realities of the environment that technology users are in today.

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 technology mission of the District is to integrate technology into our community in order to facilitate and enhance the educational experience. The District will utilize technology to foster inquiry and enhance access to the curriculum. Technology is used to provide a wider range of learning experiences, empower students with learning tools, and help prepare them as workers and citizens.

Technology increases the instructional strategies available to teachers to accommodate various learning styles, creating conditions for interactive and hands-on experiences. As a result, technology serves to personalize education for each student, focusing on the goal of attaining desired learning outcomes. Students of all ages will use technology tools to access, analyze, and communicate information in order to succeed in an information-based society.

The District is committed to using technology to increase communications with parents, support the maintenance of district facilities, and manage administrative expenses while increasing productivity and services. Technology provides powerful and effective solutions for the educational and administrative functions required to successfully operate a school district. By leveraging technology through the streamlining of processes and the controlling of costs, resources are directed toward the effective education of our students.

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.