Running Head: SHARED VISION & RATIONALE

Shared Vision and Rationale

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Vision Statement

The vision at Taylor Elementary School is to educate and train all students and staff to reach their full potential. Using technology in the classroom is a good way to help our school follow this mission and reach our goals. We will be working to help students reach their full potential using authentic learning. Through the use of technology as an authentic learning tool students will be able to strengthen communication skills, enhance problem based learning, and become more engaged in learning.

Rationale

When discussing the ways to help students and staff reach their full potential there was a lot of feedback by stakeholders which included teachers, administration, and the technology coordinator. While there is not a technology plan for Taylor Elementary School yet, all stakeholders have one thing in common being that they would like technology to be used for authentic learning in their classroom. Authentic learning was defined by the teachers as real life situations that involve student input. After teaching a technology workshop at the school and observing teachers, doing a survey, as well as collaborating with administration and the technology coordinator we have found that students do use technology in the classroom but they are not using it to reach their full potential. It was discussed that students need to use technology as a tool to better their education through real life scenarios rather than to just play learning games.

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       The first aspect of the vision is that students will be able to reach their full potential by strengthening their communication skills with technology. Stakeholders voiced that students struggle to communicate and could learn to do so with a real life task. When given this real life task they would be able to go online and research. This may include reading websites, talking with experts in a field, or listening to videos about a topic. All of these would increase their communication skills. In a study by Pinar Kasapogulu Akyol about English as a second language students, it was found that technology helped them improve their language and communication skills. When researching topics, going to online dictionary sites, messaging, typing, and listening students were able to observe good grammar techniques and good communication examples which in turn showed them how to effectively communicate (Akyol, 2010). This aspect of learning will benefit not only ELL students but all elementary students as they get older and need to work with others. The more students use technology the more they will be able to communicate with others in their classroom and the community. Learning about communication through technology will help students with authentic learning and help the school with their vision for technology use.

       The vision also includes student's engagement in learning as well as problem based learning. These two aspects can be grouped because problem based learning can cause more student engagement. This aspect of our vision was brought up mostly by the teachers. In the survey, teachers stated that they wanted students to be engaged when learning and they thought that technology could enhance their lessons to create an environment where students were excited to learn. Sheninger states that "when students are allowed to use real-world tools to apply what they have learned to demonstrate

conceptual mastery and solve real-world problems, their experiences in school become more relevant and meaningful" (2014). In the classrooms at Taylor Elementary, we have decided to use problems that involve real life issues so that students can feel more involved and feel that they are really making a difference in the world. This will cause students to be engaged in their learning using technology. In a research study by Tawfik and Lilly the students involved were asked about their perception of problem based learning after using technology (flipped classroom). The students responded positively and stated that they felt more motivated to solve the problem because it was relevant to them and they were able to use technology to help their understanding (2015). This research shows that students will work to find an answer to something that they are interested in and in turn help them because they worked to find the answer on their own.

At Taylor Elementary we are committed to follow these vision statements to help students reach their full potential which can be measured through test scores. Technology that involves problem based learning with built in communication skills as well as student's engagement is proven to be successful in education. As we use these different forms of technology to enhance these three aspects we will have a better chance of student and teacher success. Stakeholders around the school are excited to build on their technology knowledge so that students are able to solve real life problems using their communication skills to better their understanding of the problem and figure out a solution. We will then be able to gauge student understanding and feelings based on feedback and test scores.

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Diversity Considerations

The vision for students to have authentic learning using technology is for all students at Taylor Elementary. 50% of the school is on free and reduced lunch therefore it is important to ensure that students have access to technology. The school has multiple computer labs as well as laptop carts, iPads, and Chromebooks that can be checked out by the teachers but not everyone has their own devices every day due to limited resources. On goal would be to move toward 1:1 devices. The ISTE standards for coaches include a section for digital age learning environments where coaches should ensure that students are in a technology rich environment (ISTE, 2019). If we work toward 1:1 devices, we can ensure that students are in a technology rich environment at least in the school setting. Because many students do not have access to a computer at home the school would be able to provide a way for students to research real-life scenarios at school. PTA will be continuing to do fundraisers with the sole purpose being to get more technology in the hands of students on an everyday basis. The school also has added a technology special. Students are able to learn about technology and research skills during their specials time which will reach all students at the school. One other major way that the school is working to have equal access is adopting the use of Google Classroom. Students will have access to all of their online assignments and information anywhere they are. The community in our area has a public library where students are able to use the computers after school and log in to work on their Google Classroom assignments. They can collaborate with their classmates which helps with our goal of communication through online tools. Once the school has reached the goal of 1:1 devices we would like

to look further into ensuring households have better deals on internet and partnerships that give special deals to students when purchasing technology for at home use.

Another group we need to pay close attention to and ensure that they are equally represented in the technology world is girls. It is important to make sure that girls are encouraged to use technology and be on the same level as boys. One way we are doing this at Taylor Elementary is by creating a girls coding club. In Sara Ring's article about closing the gender gap in technology she discusses that fact that girls feel nerdy when working with technology and that we should "debunk" that idea. We can do this by explaining to girl's the different fields in technology that they have access to (Ring, 2008). Just talking with girls about this can help them understand and become more interested. Girls are encouraged to join the coding club and learn how to code with a female teacher as their role model. We want all girls to know that they can work in technology just like boys can and show them that technology can be fun and not at all nerdy. We also have a career day every year. During career day we will make sure to have women that work in technology come in to do presentations so the little girls see a role model that is in the technology field. Sara Ring also states that girls are not interested in technology fields because they have never seen women working in that field (Ring, 2008). If girls can see themselves in this type of role they are more likely to strive to be like those women and work harder when it comes to technology in their education. We want girls to feel empowered and see what they can accomplish.

Stakeholder Roles

Stakeholders have various ways that they can help when it comes to reaching the vision goal. The first role for all stakeholders was to voice their opinion when doing the

surveys and having conversations about what we needed to do and what we were looking for in the future of technology. Now that we have a vision for the future there are specific things that stakeholders will do and what we want this to look like.

Students

       Students are the main focus when it comes to stakeholders. We would like this vision to be seen through students. The students will eventually all have access to devices at school and have that 1:1 ratio where they can research information at any time during the school day. Ideally we would also like to have students be able to access any technology at home as well through discounted technology. Because we want students to have authentic learning with technology we would like them to receive a scenario that has to do with real life and be able to research that scenario. Due to the fact that it is real life students should be engaged in this problem based assignment and be able to communicate with others at the school as well as community members to come up with a solution. This new authentic way of learning through technology will in turn raise test scores. Students should work with their classmates and be excited to learn through authentic scenarios with their classmates.

Teachers

       From the student role we move to teacher roles. Teachers should be using technology every day in their classrooms. They can come up with a problem, for example in third grade the students learn about pollution. Teachers would pose the question or problem that the waste management system has and students would be able to come up with a solution using information they find online and then teachers would have students produce a product using technology to show their own solution. Teachers are there to

provide resources like people that students can get in touch with, web resources, and web tools that students can use to create. Teachers need to be knowledgeable about the tools that students can use so they will need to attend professional development to ensure that they have to most knowledge about resources and can be a guide to students. Teachers also need to be held accountable for the diverse needs of students. They should be aware of different groups of students and how they can use assistive technology to help those groups of students.

Administration and Local School Technology Coordinator

Administration and the LSTC (Local School Technology Coordinator) will be the ones that ensure teachers are getting training and be there to support students in their technology endeavors. The LSTC's role is to support teachers and show them new resources. She will come up with new professional development opportunities and stay up to date on new technologies teachers can use. If needed in addition to professional development the LSTC can provide one-on-one help for teachers who need the extra support. She will also keep all devices in working condition so that students have no problem with access. Administration will support teachers and students by budgeting for new technology as well as encouraging students to really embrace technology and its value in the school. Administration will also encourage parents to help students at home with their student's access and understanding of technology resources. This can be done through emails and newsletters sent out throughout the school year. The main way administration can support the vision is to ensure it is being followed through throughout the school.

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PTA and Parents

PTA also holds a role in our vision. Because students need access to technology every day at school as well as at home to be able to do authentic tasks with technology PTA will provide funds through fundraising. They will decide on new and exciting ways that they can raise awareness about their events and ways to gain funds specifically for technology at the school and access in the community. This will be supported by administration, the LSTC, teachers, parents, and students. Parents will not only be a part of the PTA and fundraising efforts but they will have to encourage the use of technology at home and help their students with their authentic learning. The students may need help with research or access to devices and parents need to be on board with the vision. Because they need to be aware they will be encouraged to use the schools Learning Management System and Google Classroom at home. They will receive information in the form of a technology newsletter as well as receive a survey on how to school can support them more at home. They will also sign off on the vision at the beginning of school year saying that they will support their student in any way needed by the school as well as that they are aware that the school will also support them at home as much as they can.

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Appendix

Essential Conditions Interview

1. How do you think technology is used in our school now and how do you see it being used in the future?

2. For your future plan for technology what aspects are enabling or hindering us from reaching those goals?

3. When you think about technology usage at our school do you feel that students all have equal access during school, before school, at home, and in the community? If not, do we have funding to implement a plan?

4. http://www.iste.org/standards/essential-conditions- When looking at ISTE's essential conditions what is the biggest weakness that you see? How can we improve it?

5. Is the staff at the school aware of a technology vision? If not, would they be willing to help implement one? How does the staff feel about technology usage?