SHARED VISION AND RATIONALE

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Shared Vision and Rationale

**Vision Statement**

As describe in the Mission of Dawson County School System (DCSS), our goal is to prepare and equip students to compete globally in the 21st century (DCSS, 2016). By providing equitable access to technology and the Internet, DCSS will empower its teachers to inspire their students to become digital learners and digital creators. Specifically, by allowing equitable access through the 1:1 Initiative and programs that allow WiFi for low income families, Dawson County Students will be prepared to compete on a global level and Dawson County Community members (administrators, stakeholders teachers, students) to communicate via social media and other mass communication forms.

**Rationale**

Using the results from the survey and interview data that was collected from Dawson County High School, DCSS has a significant need to complete the 1:1 iPad initiative as well as to implement a system of equitable Internet access for all DCSS students. When surveyed, eighty percent of teachers identified that the use of technology effectively will impact learning and relevance to students.

However, ninety percent of DCHS teachers responded that they needed better training to implement more meaningful technology. They commented that at the present time, they are using technology for extension activities, communication and to provide resources for students. One hundred percent responded that they would like training to teach them different ways for students to lead Internet-based activities or to provide more meaningful or thought-provoking activities for students. In fact, “Effective tech integration must happen across the curriculum in ways that research shows deepen and enhance the learning process. In particular, it must support four key components of learning: active engagement, participation in groups, frequent interaction and feedback, and connection to real-world experts” (Edutopia, 2016).

Only twenty percent of teachers responded that the technology they use in their classrooms is seamless and a complete asset/compliment to the lessons they are teaching. In order for technology to have the greatest impact on student learning, teachers need to, “…apply technology empowered pedagogy, (and) use technology to increase access and differentiate teaching approaches” (ISTE, 2016).

When interviewing administrators at DCHS, they all acknowledged that the low socioeconomic status of DCSS Students greatly affects students’ technology usage outside of the school setting. Currently, DCSS provides WiFi access in all of their buildings and recently added WiFi access on school buses. This latest step is aimed at allowing students more time to use the Internet to complete their homework and/or begin to initiate a self-led learning process. Through this process and the implementation of the 1:1 iPad Initiative Process, administrators also acknowledged and stressed the need to better educate students to become responsible digital citizens. Brody Hughes, Assistant Principal of Curriculum at DCHS, stated, “We assume that just because students are so savvy with their devices, that they know how to be responsible with the technology we give them and ask them to use. However, this is just not the case. Students are confused with what is appropriate and believe that if it is out there and not blocked, it is ok.”

In order to address these concerns, I would use the ISTE Essential Conditions to help guide our system to develop a plan of action. The Fourteen Essential Conditions offer “ … educators and school leaders a research-backed framework to guide implementation of the ISTE Standards, tech planning and system wide change” (ISTE, 2016). I would speak with the Technology Team and School Administrators to develop Professional Learning Communities to help all understand the process. I would further implement Learning Communities to facilitate the necessary Professional Learning that would enable teachers to differentiate via technology and offer strategies to use technology as a vehicle for student-led and project-based learning.

I would also address the need of WiFi access for all Dawson County Students. Currently, Dawson County only has one Internet provider (they do subcontract, but it is the same service). This one Internet Provider also does not offer low-income options for their services. I would speak to the technology team regarding the financial means to incorporate programs like Kajeet, that we could work with to provide Internet access to low-income families. By continuing to allocate the necessary funding to support our technology vision, Dawson County Schools System would be one step closer to reaching its vision.

**Diversity Considerations**

In order for DCSS to provide students with the resources and tools to compete globally, we must find a way to allow students to have WiFi access outside of the school setting. Forty-seven percent of Dawson County Students qualify and receive the Free and Reduced Meal Service. By providing these families and students WiFi access, we would give them equal opportunities to access technology. Acording to Brian DeRose, Instructional Technologist of DCSS, “ Free WiFi at home would (in theory) benefit our low income population, not only with an increase in performance, but also aid in college and career readiness.

Currently, DCSS is looking into Kajeet and other services similar to Kajeet that provide a “pre-paid” WiFi card that would allow any student a certain number of minutes Internet access outside of the school setting. Brian DeRose adds, “Another great thing about programs like Kajeet is that it is student-centered and student-safe. The same filters that DCSS has enabled during the day for students’ protection.” This is not to say that students are completely safe; we would also need to make certain that families receive adequate Digital Safety training. By allowing all of our students the opportunity to access technology outside of the school setting, we would lower the achievement gap that separates our students. All students would have the same tools to continue their education at home and to promote student-led learning.

Through the 1:1 Initiative and Technology Education that will be offered at DCSS, we can also identify Assistive Technology Resources that would be useful to our students. There are various levels of disabilities, from cognitive problems to physical impairment. Educating ourselves in available assistive technologies is the first step to help students overcome these disabilities and empowering them to move forward. By providing our teachers with adequate training on various assistive technologies, we can allow our students, “… to have a sense of independence and self-reliance” (Great! Schools 2016). Using technologies to help translate, lower Lexile levels, provide speech recognition, alternative keyboards or optical character recognition, etcetera, we would enable all of our students to learn equally and in a way that relates to them.

Another student population that the 1:1 Initiative and Equitable Internet Access Implementation would benefit from would be females. It is no secret that women earn over 20 percent less than men in the same job position (USDOL 2016). Women make up, “Fifty-nine percent of the workforce and fifty-one percent of the population, but only 30 percent of jobs in technology are held by women” (CNET 2016). By allowing all students access to technology and using technology more-effectively in the classroom, we can increase the opportunities for technology-based projects. By being exposed to more STEAM activities and providing all students familiarization and education in these areas, it allows females the opportunity to explore careers that they may not have been exposed to without the access to technology. This access also allows females to break traditional gender-stereotypes regarding job options. It allows young ladies to explore options that they may not know they had. Simply by allowing all students to have equitable access to technology and WiFi, allows for students to explore and take control of their education and what they want to do. DeRose also adds, “Students would be better employees with access to resources and be able to find and maintain community provided jobs”.

**Stakeholder Roles**

**Instructional Technology Coach**

The Instructional Technology Coach should provide teachers, faculty members, etc. the education and resources to facilitate the learning process of technology and its uses. The IT Coach should set up and conduct Professional Learning as well as research ways to implement site-specific goals. The IT Coach should lead the Instructional Technology Team by providing research results regarding ways to facilitate the process. The IT Coach should also provide examples from other school districts of implementation strategies, tactics and resources.

**Administrators**

Administrators should facilitate the training process with the IT Coach. District Level-Admin should also coordinate any PL and create the IT Team that will lead the system in this area. Both district level and school level admin should provide the financial resources to facilitate the implementation process and work with the IT Team and Coach to troubleshoot any problems. School level admin should access the need for various Instructional Technologies that could facilitate this process (via TKES, feedback, surveys). They should also help with by-in and create a positive environment to facilitate this process.

**Teachers**

Teachers link everything together. They provide feedback and offer suggestions to the IT Team and Admin. They also need to go through the necessary PL to implement change to reach the Vision. They will aid in Digital Citizenship and identify and address needs of the students. They provide a link between Admin students and parents via communication. Teachers will enable students to utilize technology by implementing lessons with better and more-seamless technology integration. They will allow technology to become a tool to shape and inspire the 21st century learner.

**Parents**

Parents will support students by accepting and encouraging school-led technology use. They will also apply for the necessary programs (Kajeet), attend any training sessions regarding the implementation of the 1:1 program and (allow) set-up the WiFi access in their homes. They will support their children’s endeavors and will not misuse the students’ WiFi access. They will also encourage responsible online behavior.

**Students**

Students will embrace technology and provide feedback regarding how technology is meaningful to them. They will enhance their learning by using the resources that DCSS provides. They will learn from their Digital Citizenship training and demonstrate responsible technology use. They will use the tools and skills they learn from their experiences in DCSS to complete globally. They will also learn the difference between credible and incredible online sources and how/when to use them. They will also use technology resources to help them develop better study habits and communicate in both formal and informal ways (work place communication vs. social media).

**Superintendent**

The superintendent is responsible for getting by-in from the Board of Education and various stakeholders. He will advocate for DCSS needs in this vision regarding both the necessity of the vision and funding for the vision. He will work with the Instructional Technology Team and the IT Coach to establish and implement framework system wide.

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**Appendix**

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