
Pennsylvania Department of Education



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Educational Technology Report

Monday, January 14, 2008

Entity: Ferndale Area SD

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Core Purpose

Mission

As a result of a consensus building process involving professional staff, school board, community, parents, and business representatives, the strategic planning steering committee retained the district's mission statement:

“BIG ENOUGH TO CHALLENGE, SMALL ENOUGH TO CARE”

“FERNDALDE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT - WHERE CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS FIRST”

Vision

To accomplish this mission the Ferndale Area School District will strive to provide a safe and nurturing community for excellent teaching and learning where students prepare for a life of continual learning, and acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to solve problems, communicate effectively and to be responsible citizens.

Shared Values

- We believe that all students can learn.
 - We expect students to learn the skills, concepts, and values necessary for them to be successful in both their personal and professional lives.
 - We ensure the academic success and personal growth of all students through modeling and instruction by providing individualized opportunities.
 - We hold ourselves to a standard of excellence in our professional practices.
 - We will promote a caring environment of mutual respect and trust.
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Needs Assessment

As a result of the current district technology plan coming toward its end and the recent progression of technology (specifically in education), the district conducted a needs assessment to determine how to move forward for the next 5 years. The objectives of the assessment were as follows:

Audience: Gather feedback from all levels of users within the district (teachers, administrators, students, etc.)

Objectives: The needs assessment was designed to meet specific objectives with respect to district technology:

- Gain an understanding of current strengths and weaknesses
- Identify potential strategies on how to move forward
- Identify all aspects of technology currently within the district and its use/non-use
- Leverage industry standards as the benchmark for weighing all feedback and planning

Identified Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths:

- Microsoft Domain model for network backbone
- The majority of faculty is willing to embrace technology
- The administration is committed to supporting the implementation and use of technology
- The district utilizes an enterprise IT management company to provide reactive/proactive support of all aspects of technology
- The district has invested in, and deployed, several technology based learning tools, including:
 - Laptops and projectors
 - Educational software
 - Cognitive tutor
 - Study Island
 - SMARTscience
 - Accelerated Reader
 - Microsoft Office
 - Web development software (Dreamweaver, Adobe CS2)
 - Distance learning equipment
 - Blendedschools.net
 - APEX
 - KET Learning
 - Video conference equipment
 - Upgraded labs and increased number of student computers
- The district uses a centralized student management system for grading, attendance and scheduling (MMS and Gradequick)
- Student and faculty network shares

Weaknesses

- Antiquated infrastructure leading to network stability and performance issues
 - 10 base-T hubs as part of the backbone
 - Servers running on desktop units
 - Several PCs still running older architecture (P2s and 3s)
- Limited access to training opportunities
- Some faculty not embracing the use of technology in classroom instruction
- Inability to work remotely
- Outdated district website
- Limited capability mail program
- Lack of public (parent, student, community) technical resources such as web-site information, online grades, etc.
- Limited access to labs (amount, scheduling, and outdated equipment)
- Overall limited access to resources at the elementary level

Goals and Strategies

Goal: TECHNOLOGY

Description: Identify and integrate technology standards to achieve the following:

- Obtain technological resources to design technology-enriched curriculum
- Technology literate students, able to access and analyze information from a variety of resources
- Implementation of enhanced, district-wide, technology-driven communication methods

Strategy: Design and implement community-wide, technology-driven communication

Description: Provide resources to create timely, accurate, and efficient communication between FASD, its students, its parents and the community at large.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Enhance student management system (parent/student)	Provide online parent/student access to student information system at appropriate grade levels, including: grades, attendance, and lunch balance.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 6/1/2007 Finish: 1/18/2008	\$1,200.00

Activity	Description	
Enhance/redesign district Website	Develop a new district website using current development tools and hosting services to allow for greater access to district data for students, parents, and community members, including: teachers' contacts (email lists), teacher Websites, include disclaimers, etc., forms, and online training modules.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 6/1/2007 Finish: 1/18/2008	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Implement parent notification systems for emergency events	The district will research, purchase and deploy a system that will allow for administration to mass notify employees, students, parents, and community members in the event of emergency events, including: school outages, early dismissals, and Amber alerts.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 9/3/2007 Finish: 8/29/2008	\$1,500.00

Strategy: Develop Planned Instruction

Description: Research, obtain, and develop resources and strategies to align a comprehensive K-12 technology education curriculum

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Enhance K-12 Curriculum	Develop K-12 curriculum which addresses the competencies required to graduate technology literate students, including: word processing, powerpoint, spreadsheet, technology-based research, and Windows usage at an intermediate level.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 9/30/2007 Finish: 7/31/2008	\$500.00

Strategy: Expand and increase district-level technology driven communication and collaboration

Description: Provide resources to create timely, accurate, and efficient communication among faculty.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Enhance mail and messaging system	Implement and utilize MS Exchange/Outlook to achieve the following: Email, calendar, tasks, distribution lists, Web access, and public folders.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 6/1/2007 Finish: 1/18/2008	\$6,000.00

Activity	Description	
Enhance student management system (inner-district)	Implement online component to existing SMS, including: appropriate student data (example: health, demographics, etc.), deploy on-line grading component at appropriate grade levels, and fully utilize health module of MMS, including integration with health-related tools (HealthEtools, etc.).	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 6/1/2007 Finish: 1/18/2008	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Enhance/Redesign district Website	Develop a new district web site using current development tools and hosting services to allow for greater access to inner-district data, including: teacher Web pages, increased faculty/staff driven content (policies, forms, etc.), and online training modules.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 6/1/2007 Finish: 1/18/2008	\$0.00

Strategy: Integrate Technology Across the Curriculum

Description: Support content instruction with technology uses and resources.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Implement and utilize distance learning equipment	Utilize distance learning equipment to offer alternative and advanced courses to expand opportunities for students (APEX, summer school, KET, Blackboard.com, BlendedSchools.net).	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$75,000.00

Activity	Description	
Implement mentors/coaches	Use mentors who are savvy with technology to team with or coach other staff members to increase overall staff proficiency.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Increase faculty technology integration	Teacher research and utilization of technology-driven resources within the curriculum, as supported by administration, will enhance content delivery: virtual field trips, smartboard, PowerPoint, online assignments, and streaming video.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 9/30/2007 Finish: 5/31/2013	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Technical hardware deployment	Deploy hardware into classrooms for student and teacher use, including: smartboards, projectors, computers, video equipment, and student response systems.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 9/17/2007 Finish: 8/29/2008	\$0.00

Strategy: Obtain technological resources to design technology enriched curriculum

Description: Create Supportive Infrastructure - Implement an upgraded network environment that is conducive to current/future technologies (district technical systems - servers, switches, routers, PCs, instructional equipment) to meet or exceed current industry standards.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Create Supportive Infrastructure	The district is currently running antiquated core network systems (10 mbps switches, servers running on converted desktops, lack of wireless). Newer hardware will be introduced to bring the district to the following specifications: Gb speed backbone, Act 183 broadband connection (8x8mb internet, I2, and 100Mb regional WAN connection), servers running RAID 5, redundant/backup power on all critical devices/servers, daily back-up of critical data, Windows XP on all PCs, and wireless in all school areas.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 6/1/2007 Finish: 1/18/2008	\$30,000.00

Activity	Description	
Upgrade classroom instructional hardware/software aids	Upgrade and expand classroom equipment to enable teachers to utilize technology as part of their instruction, including: additional student PCs, upgraded student PCs, projectors, and scanners.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 6/1/2007 Finish: 5/31/2013	\$60,000.00

Strategy: Student Use of Technology

Description: Students will become technology literate, accessing and analyzing information from a variety of resources, in order to create, assess, present, and evaluate materials and projects in the classroom.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Incorporate learning software into curriculum	Students will use programs such as Study Island, Cognitive Tutor, Accelerated Reader, and SMARTscience to enhance their learning.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 8/29/2007 Finish: 5/31/2008	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Incorporate technology in student assignments	Integrate technology skills into content area projects and assignments such as electronic reports, presentations, etc.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 1/20/2008 Finish: 6/30/2009	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Provide opportunities for advanced/gifted learners	Leverage blendedschools.net, APEX, KET Learning to deliver courses that would otherwise be unavailable through current district gifted offerings.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Michael Stohon	Start: 8/29/2007 Finish: 5/31/2013	\$75,000.00

Staff Development

Ferndale Area School District remains committed to all aspects of staff development. To address the specific need of technical staff development, the district will incorporate the following methods into the on-going professional development plan:

- In-service training sessions
- "1 on 1" and "1 on small group" mentoring sessions
- In class assisted coaching
- Online training library
- Summer and after school training sessions

The session will target the following skills:

- Microsoft Office
- Smartboards
- Streaming video
- Virtual field trips
- Distance learning
- Electronic lesson plans
- Virtual blackboards
- Microsoft Outlook/Exchange

Budget

Summary: Potential Funding Distribution

Funding Source	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	Total
010 - ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$105,000.00
TOTAL	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$105,000.00

Goal: TECHNOLOGY

Identify and integrate technology standards to achieve the following:

- Obtain technological resources to design technology-enriched curriculum
- Technology literate students, able to access and analyze information from a variety of resources
- Implementation of enhanced, district-wide, technology-driven communication methods

Integrate Technology Across the Curriculum	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	Total	Funding Source
Implement and utilize distance learning equipment	\$12,500.00	\$12,500.00	\$12,500.00	\$37,500.00	010 - ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

Obtain technological resources to design technology enriched curriculum	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	Total	Funding Source
Upgrade classroom instructional hardware/software aids	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$30,000.00	010 - ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

Student Use of Technology	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	Total	Funding Source
Provide opportunities for advanced/gifted learners	\$12,500.00	\$12,500.00	\$12,500.00	\$37,500.00	010 - ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

GRAND TOTAL	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$105,000.00	
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TOTAL	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
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Monitoring

The district currently has several mechanisms for monitoring the progress of technical initiatives, they include:

- Technology Committee — The tech committee will continue to monitor district progress toward defined goals, recommending necessary revisions to the FASD Strategic Plan.
- Administrative technical status sessions — Monthly meeting will provide real-time identification of needs and solutions, to promote the operational functionality of the district's technological development.

Evaluation

The district will develop and enhance several mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of technical initiatives. These include:

- Annual staff and student surveys,
- Teacher/student observations, and
- Technology inclusion in lesson plans.