



Anacortes School District
Digital Transformation
Technology Plan
2018-2022



December 2017

Background

The vision of the Anacortes digital transformation technology initiative emerged from strategic planning that resulted in the passage of a technology levy in 2014. The planning and subsequent levy resulted in the transformation of classrooms with student and staff devices, supported by instructional technology staff across schools. The plan intentionally connected technology with the previous strategic plan: creating the conditions for students to be school ready, transition ready and college/career ready.

In the last four years, technology goals focused on:

1. Ensuring that students are College and Career Ready

Students need to be able to navigate online resources to gather, evaluate and synthesize information, particularly in doing research. Many college settings are now paperless, and students must navigate such an environment in middle and high school to prepare them for success.

2. Improving academic achievement

Increased technology integration in classrooms aligns with the skills and attributes needed for success in the 21st century. Researchers often refer to these as the “6 Cs.” They are: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, character and citizenship. In addition, new standardized testing moved completely online in 2016 requiring students to use technology as a standard part of the learning process.



3. Closing the digital divide

Anacortes has a notable achievement gap among students in regards to socio-economic status. At present, students receiving a free or reduced price lunch constitute about 30 percent of the total student population. Often students from disadvantaged families face a “digital divide” because they lack access to technology at home. A rich technology environment at school helps close this opportunity gap and prepares all students for a technology-rich college and career environment.

4. Providing relevant instruction

When used effectively, technology helps teaching and learning become more relevant. Students can guide their learning by pacing themselves through material. Online resources, meanwhile, can provide a wide array of choice for students. This connects to the Anacortes School District’s instructional framework: The Five Dimensions of Teaching & Learning (University of Washington). The framework puts forth a vision of instruction that focuses on purpose, individualization, engagement, thinking skills and positive classroom culture. It supports student self-assessment, rich student talk and deeper, project-based learning. Technology aligns with this model of teaching, as it offers opportunities for personalized student learning and collaboration.

District technology policy

The district's digital transformation has followed district policy. The policy states:

The district recognizes that technology is an important element of ensuring that students have the necessary skills to navigate the 21st century and excel in their native digital world. The superintendent shall ensure that the district creates the necessary conditions to effectively leverage technology for learning.

Therefore, the superintendent will create or provide the following levers:

- **shared vision** for educational technology
- **empowered leaders** in effecting change at every level
- a systematic technology **implementation plan**
- **consistent and adequate funding** for infrastructure, personnel, digital resources, and professional development
- **equitable access** for students and staff
- **skilled personnel** to select and effectively use technology resources
- **ongoing professional learning** which included dedicated time to practice and share ideas
- **technical support** for maintaining, renewing, and using technology resources
- **curriculum framework** that is aligned with and supports digital age learning and work
- **student-centered learning** which stems from the needs and abilities of students
- **continuous assessment** of technology resources
- **engaged communities** that include partnerships and collaboration
- **support policies** which include financial plans and accountability measure

2018-2022 vision

Technology & the ASD strategic plan

In 2017, the district unveiled a new, five-year strategic plan. Technology plays an important role in the future of teaching and learning in our schools. The plan calls for a continued shift in instruction to allow for the hands-on, student-centered approach that effective technology use can provide. The district's technology vision continues to support our instructional framework described above. It also draws on standards from the International Society for Technology in Education (www.iste.org). They are:

1. Empowered Learner

Students leverage technology to take an active role in choosing, achieving and demonstrating competency in their learning goals, informed by the learning sciences.



2. **Digital Citizen**

Students recognize the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of living, learning and working in an interconnected digital world, and they act and model in ways that are safe, legal and ethical.

3. **Knowledge Constructor**

Students critically curate a variety of resources using digital tools to construct knowledge, produce creative artifacts and make meaningful learning experiences for themselves and others.

4. **Innovative Designer**

Students use a variety of technologies within a design process to identify and solve problems by creating new, useful or imaginative solutions.

5. **Computational Thinker**

Students develop and employ strategies for understanding and solving problems in ways that leverage the power of technological methods to develop and test solutions.

6. **Creative Communicator**

Students communicate clearly and express themselves creatively for a variety of purposes using the platforms, tools, styles, formats and digital media appropriate to their goals.

7. **Global Collaborator**

Students use digital tools to broaden their perspectives and enrich their learning by collaborating with others and working effectively in teams locally and globally.



Following the district’s strategic plan, ISTE standards and district policy, the technology plan calls for dynamic growth in the next four years. The list below illustrates the district’s approach to each component of the technology policy.

- **Shared vision**

For the digital transformation to be successful, staff and students must have a vision for how technology can transform the classroom environment. The ASD superintendent, director of teaching and learning, principals and instructional coaches received a grant to visit Mooresville, NC, in summer 2017. Mooresville SD is a national leader in its digital transformation efforts. The team read *Unstoppable Momentum* (Michael Fullan/Mark Edwards) and *Every Child, Every Day* (Mark Edwards), two books that outline how to build a vision around technology integration. Specific learning opportunities are being built into professional learning with the school board, superintendent, principals, instructional coaches and staff to develop a shared

vision. The district is also using the book *Learning First, Technology Second* (Liz Kolb), as well as developing a plan to allow teachers to visit Mooresville to deepen the vision. It's important to note that a central part of our vision around this work is that technology does not replace effective teaching or teachers; rather, it is a tool that can greatly enhance the learning process for our students.

- **Empowered leaders**

ASD tech leadership includes all administrators and instructional coaches, as well as a digital learning team consisting of teachers and support staff. The digital learning team will support district decision-making related to tools and online resources at the ground level. Teacher voice is an important component in achieving classroom success with this initiative.

- **Systematic technology implementation plan**

With the technology levy in 2014, the district completed an initial implementation plan that included student and staff devices across schools. The student-to-device ratio is two students per device in kindergarten through second grade, and one student per device in grades 3-12. The new levy will allow the district to implement the following replacement cycle:

2017-2018	Devices for third grade
2018-2019	Devices for teachers and instructional para-educators
2019-2020	K-2 devices
2020-2021	Deploy half of grades 4-12
2021-2022	Deploy half of grades 4-12



In addition, infrastructure will be improved to a 10GB system, with upgrades to: firewall, core switches, wireless, web filters, phone system, cabling, classroom audio, interactive panels, server, storage and data center.

- **Consistent and adequate funding**

The 2018 technology levy provides about \$2 million per year for infrastructure, personnel, digital resources, and professional development. As technology is not funded by the state as part of basic education, these local funds allow the district to achieve the board's vision for technology integration.

- **Equitable access**

Equitable access for students, teachers, staff, and parents is a priority for ASD, especially as it relates to the ability for all students to access the Internet at home. A goal of the new strategic plan is to remove obstacles in allowing all students to access the Internet outside of school. In addition, the district is developing plans for para-educators with specific

classroom assignments to have access to devices to enhance their ability to support student learning.

- **Skilled personnel to select and effectively use technology resources**

A critical part of the district’s digital transformation is the role of the instructional support specialists or “tech coaches.” The district has four designated staff members to support technology integration in classrooms, in addition to two other instructional specialists (not funded by the technology levy) in literacy and math. These leaders support teachers in designing and delivering lessons that draw on technology to deepen student inquiry in alignment with the ISTE standards.



- **Ongoing professional learning**

ASD prioritizes professional learning as a vital means to achieve growth. The technology levy has resources dedicated to professional development, including summer training and time built into the school year. The district also sends representatives to state and regional instructional technology conferences each year, as well as the embedded professional learning that teaching staff do with instructional support specialists.

- **Technical support and continuous assessment for maintaining, renewing, and using technology resources**

ASD has an effective seven-person team supporting technology infrastructure. The technology levy allows the team to purchase the hardware necessary to keep the network, servers and other infrastructure running effectively. The team’s monitoring includes outside audits by specialists, including a November 2017 comprehensive review of the district’s wireless system.

- **Curriculum framework**

The ISTE standards provide the curriculum framework that is aligned with and supports digital age learning and student work. Instructional specialists work with teachers on implementing these standards through their coaching. In addition, the digital learning committee will review online materials and tools to support the curriculum framework.

- **Student-centered learning**

Student-centered learning remains central to the district’s instructional framework, strategic plan and our digital transformation effort. Often referred to as student “voice and choice,” student-centered learning continues to be a focus of both instructional coaching and teacher evaluation in our school system.

- **Engaged communities**

ASD will partner with the community to achieve the full potential of the digital transformation. Strategic plan goals include launching an Innovation Expo to highlight student work, uniting with partners to assure Internet access at home for all district students and communicating actively with parents/community about successes and areas for growth with our technology initiative.

- **Support policies**

The school board is committed to developing an ongoing revenue stream to support the digital transformation. The strategic plan calls for ballot measures in 2018 and 2022 to renew the technology levy to update infrastructure/hardware and support continued staffing and professional development.

Accountability is built into the strategic plan.

Accountability measures include:

- a) An annual growth goal related to technology at each school, with results reported to the superintendent and board
- b) Staff survey results related to professional learning in technology
- c) Annual reports to the board on the deployment of new technology and maintenance of the system
- d) Student survey feedback



Conclusion

The role of technology in the district’s overall improvement process is important, as evidenced by its place in the new strategic plan and the vision presented in this document. We live in a fast-changing world, and we know that many of the jobs our students will obtain have yet to be created. Our new strategic plan calls for innovation, creativity and relevance in learning – all attributes that tech-infused instruction can support. Anacortes has come a long way in the first phase of its technology plan in schools, with devices in student and staff hands and a willingness to use technology to shift instruction. This new plan draws on best practices from across the country and globe to support teachers and students to deepen this effort. It creates a sustainable roadmap for future growth and success.