

Shared Vision and Rationale

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Shared Vision Statement

At Teaching Through Technology Middle School (TTTMS), part of Tech Central County Schools, it is a belief that technology should be used to engage students, expand educational opportunities, and create a culturally inclusive environment. At our 1:1 school, it is the expectation that technology not be used as a replacement medium but instead used further to expand inquiry-based learning and the available resources and materials. Technology will improve teaching, learning, and communication amongst students, parents, and teachers. TTTMS will provide a 1:1 environment and hot spot devices for home to lessen the digital divide and make technology available equally to all races and sexes.

Rationale

TTTMS is a 1:1 school with many resources to decrease the digital divide for our students. The SIP Plan for TTTMS states that teachers have been trained on using technology and are Microsoft Innovative Educators (MIE) certified. MIE focuses on Microsoft technologies and how to create a collaborative classroom where the teacher uses technology to enhance the class. According to the American University (n.d.), "the effective use of digital learning tools in classrooms can increase student engagement, help teachers improve their lesson plans, and facilitate personalized learning." To fully take advantage of these resources and our learners to experience their technology's entire value, teachers have continuously tried to use technology to connect content to the real world. Teachers described two main ways: Argument-Driven Inquiry (ADI) and

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Authentic Learning. American University (n.d.) also sums up why teachers stated they use technology, "they can also create more inclusive learning environments that foster collaboration and inquisitiveness and enable them to collect data on student performance."

ADI is utilized in Science across TTTMS. ADI is a similar strategy to 5E that has been used in the past and gives teachers a base to begin ADI. Students engaged in ADI labs "generate an argument in the direction of their own questions, to assert methods for finding answers to those questions, to assert methods for finding answers to those questions, and to design the research through group work" (Demircioglu & Ucar, 2015) Teachers showed student exemplars that showed how students collaborated and published their findings and arguments. ADI fully supports the shared vision to drive inquiry-based learning.

In conversations with my peers in PLCs and grade-level meetings, teachers discuss how they connect class content to the real world. They all described using Authentic Learning. According to Stenger (2018), "Authentic learning experiences help students understand the relevance of what they're learning and how they can apply their skills in the professional world." Teacher leaders stated they enjoy Authentic Learning because students show their creativity, learn critical thinking skills, and are engaged and motivated to create a great product.

Diversity Considerations

TTTMS has 1644 students, and 55.7% have Free/Reduced lunch. 37.9% of the students are Hispanic, 6.5% African American, and 51.5% are white. These are the three main ethnic groups. "Fourteen percent of the school population are students with

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disabilities, and 3% are on a 504 plan. Pyramid of Intervention (POINT) plans has been developed for 19% of the student population as they are on tiers two and three, indicating the need for specialized instructional interventions. 17% of TTTMS' students are in English as Second or Other Language (ESOL) Program." (Cherokee County School District, 2020) To decrease the digital divide among our diverse population and students who have a disability, are economically disadvantaged, and/or are English language learners, TTTMS will provide a laptop to each student. TTTMS will have a Chrome cart and iPad cart for each grade level. Teachers can check out when student laptops are in repair. Also, mobile hot spots, Kajeets, will be available for checking out in the media center for any student without internet at home.

Teachers have noted that females have less experience using technology and are less motivated to use it. Teachers have stated that all genders seem to be using technology equally, but females are not as comfortable as their male counterparts in closer examination. TTTMS' teachers will utilize "multimedia tools like presentation slide shows, audio tracks, and video clips to motivate interest and enrich class engagement and enhance understanding of course material." (Jaiswal, 2020) According to Ring (2008), "another challenge to getting girls interested in technology is breaking down the stereotype of tech-related jobs, which girls often imagine to be geeky, highly technical, and isolating." Teachers are trained to create gender-neutral lessons and how to incorporate technology to attract female usage and engagement with the technology. TTTMS will deploy a variety of web 2.0 tools that, according to Jiswal (2020), will "enhance learners' awareness, motivate them in adopting different e-learning strategies, and help them build higher-order

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thinking and creativity skills while constructing knowledge." TTTMS will "undertake a variety of strategies both in and out of their classrooms to engage young women in technology." (Ring 2008)

Stakeholder Roles

Administrators, Academic Facilitators, and Instructional Lead Specialists must support teachers and encourage them to experiment with research-based strategies supported and enhanced by technology. When doing walkthroughs and formatives for TKES, administrators should use the shared vision as part of their evidence.

Opportunities for further training and to view examples of classrooms meeting the vision should be available at any time.

Teachers will be responsible for teaching digital citizenship and the importance of using and learning technology safely and responsibly. Teachers will choose age-appropriate apps and materials to use with their students that all students from all backgrounds can connect with. How they use it will determine their students' engagement, expand the student's opportunity to learn, and create a culturally inclusive environment.

Students must become digital citizens and understand that technology in school has a specific purpose, learning. They must learn how to stay safe and access the programs used at TTTMS. Students will create products to showcase their education and collaborate with their peers and community leaders to develop them.

Parents and Guardians of TTMS students serve an essential role in our vision. TTTMS will work with them to educate on the importance of the internet at home and resources available from TTTMS to support their student. They must be cooperative with

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TTTMS and encourage technology for learning. TTTMS will provide opportunities to learn how to observe their student's learning management account and stay engaged in their learning.

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