Charter for the Technology for Learning Task Force

Project Purpose

The purpose of the Technology for Learning Task Force (TLTF) is to review the current level of technology available in the district, determine the connections of technology and student learning opportunities and recommend a needs based plan (with timeline) for closing the gap between our reality and the vision.

Background

For many years, the district has worked hard to cobble together funding to support the district technology plan. Grants, levy monies and general apportionment funds have been used to provide a base level of technology for students and staff. In the fall of 2009, the school board decided that the need for appropriate and stable funding was called for in order to provide the needed learning opportunities for students to be able to thrive in the 21st century. They decided that a district technology levy that was specifically designated to provide the necessary funding should be put before the voters. On February 9th, 2010 a vote was taken on a three-year dedicated levy for technology. This vote proved not to achieve the required approval percentage. This failure to garner the appropriate community support has sparked the need for this community led task force. A full review, analysis and report on the needs of the technology in the district and the gap between our current reality and our vision is now being sought out in order to provide a broadly supported direction in which to proceed.

Connection to the Board's Ends Policies

Even though the superintendent has initiated the Technology for Learning Task Force, the board's Ends and the Executive Limitations given the superintendent by the school board are the anchor principles for this work. The following board policies are central to the work of the TLTF:

Ends-1, District Mission:

The mission of the La Center School District is to create a supportive learning environment that empowers students to reach their fullest potential. We will do this in partnership with families, the community, employees and students to develop life-long learners who can thrive in a rapidly changing, more technologically advanced and diverse society.

Ends-3, Personal Skills Development:

The Board expects each student to develop the personal skills to be a successful learner in a complex and rapidly changing world. Accordingly students will be able to integrate current technology as part of their learning efforts.

EL-1, Expectations of Superintendent:

The Superintendent shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, condition, procedure or organizational circumstance which is unlawful, unethical, unsafe, disrespectful, imprudent, unfair, inequitable, disruptive, undignified or in violation of law, Board policy, or collective bargaining agreements.

EL-3, Treatment of Parents, Students and the Public:

With respect to interactions with stakeholders (parents, students, and the public), the Superintendent shall not fail to appropriately involve stakeholders in an advisory capacity in

important issues which impact them directly; nor fail to provide to district advisory groups, such as those formed for curriculum, facilities, and levy/bond matters, a formal charter document advising each such group of its purpose, organization and functions.

EL-7, Budget Planning:

Financial planning for any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the Board's Ends policies, risk fiscal jeopardy to the district, or fail to be derived from a multi-year plan. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not present to the Board a recommended budget which fails to adequately describe major budget initiatives and funding sources.

Limitations of the Task Force

The TLTF is a community led, staff assisted, student focused group that is authorized to do the work necessary to make a comprehensive learning focused technology recommendation to the superintendent. The superintendent has the final responsibility to balance the recommendation provided by the TLTF with all other academic programs and services that are required as part of a comprehensive K-12 educational program.

District Technology Vision

Our technology vision is anchored upon the concept that we must provide learners with the tools needed to increase the Flow of Information around them (in-flow and out-flow of information) as they learn. This means to us that technology must provide increasing access to information in support of their learning, but also to provide the opportunity for learners to share back information into the broader network as well. In other words, the learner needs to become part of the network of information both as a user as well as a supplier to fully tap into their innate need/desire to learn. We believe this expansion of the in- and out-flow of information is central to the development of life-long learners who are prepared for a life of learning in the 21st century.

TLTF Organization

Two community members serving as co-chairs for the group will lead the TLTF. The membership of the task force will be comprised of educational stakeholders that must include students, parents, teachers, support staff and community members. It is expected that a minimum of ten stakeholders will be selected by the co-chairs to serve on the TLTF with at least one person from the above five groups being represented.

Staff Liaison

In addition to the above task force make-up requirement, the district will provide one staff member who will serve as the TLTF liaison to the district.

Essential Questions to be Addressed

As a core responsibility of the TLTF, the following essential questions need to be addressed in the course of the task force's work:

Essential Question-1

What technology related outcomes should every student obtain in order to prepare them for living and working in the 21st century?

Essential Question-2

What is the current level of technology available to students and staff throughout the district?

Essential Question-3

What are the various technological solutions for bridging the gap between our current reality and what students need (if one exists)?

Essential Question-4

What would be the barriers to implementing the necessary technological strategies recommended? This should include consideration of necessary stable funding sources, staff readiness, curriculum adoptions, training needs, infrastructure and facility requirements, technology support needs, etc.

Essential Question-5

What funding mechanism options are available to provide necessary and stable funding for both the short-term and long-term needs of the recommended technology strategy?

Essential Question-6

What is the recommended timeline for implementation and full development of the proposed technology strategy?

Deliverables

A final written report shall be given to the superintendent. This report will make recommendations (i.e. policy, funding, solutions, implementation, timelines, etc.). When appropriate, recommendations should include pros and cons of the proposal.

Suggested Timeline

The final report should be presented to the superintendent no later than January 15th, 2011.

Communications

In order to keep the school board, superintendent and the broader community informed of the progress of the TLTF, the following communications will be asked for:

1. All TLTF meeting minutes will be made available on the district website.
2. At least two school board presentations by the TLTF co-chairs will be made. One of these will be a mid-work progress report and the second will be a presentation of the TLTF's final report.
3. At least one meeting a month should occur with the superintendent and the co-chairs.
4. The final TLTF recommendation will be made available on the district website.

Available Resources

The TLTF will be provided up to $750 to cover substitute costs, travel and other miscellaneous expenses. Expenditures must meet district policies and procedures.

Reference Documents

1. La Center School Board Policies.
2. La Center School District Policies and Procedures.
3. Washington State K-12 Essential Academic Learning Requirements & Grade Level Expectations.