Vision for Digital Learning

Shelby Eastern Schools is committed to digital learning as a means of strengthening, broadening, and deepening students’ learning through the effective use of technology. We believe digital learning individualizes and personalizes learning to ensure all students reach their full potential to succeed in college and/or a career.

Shelby Eastern Schools’ Action Plan

CURRICULUM INSTRUCTION and ASSESSMENT

Through a more flexible, consistent, and personalized approach to academic content design, instruction, and assessment, teachers will have robust and adaptive tools to customize the instruction for groups of students or on a student-to-student basis to ensure relevance and deep understanding of complex issues and topics. Providing multiple sources of high quality academic content offers students much greater opportunities to personalize learning and reflect on their own work, think critically, and engage frequently to enable deeper understanding of complex topics. Data are the building blocks of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments—all of which are key elements in a system where learning is personalized, individualized, and differentiated to ensure learner success.

DIGITAL LEARNING CHALLENGES

- Shelby Eastern Schools has not yet integrated 21st Century Skills and deeper learning competencies into all curricula. Support materials, information resources, professional development, and pilot programs have not been developed.
- Shelby Eastern Schools does not assess and report student attainment of 21st Century skills.
- There may not be a deep understanding of personalized learning for students or the research on this topic. The possibilities that technologies and social media bring to advance such learning with students may not be understood.
- We leaders may not have yet recognized the key role that technology and social media will play in empowering students to personalize their own learning.
- Current policies instructional guidance/resources, and/or professional learning opportunities may not be supportive of or may serve as barriers to personalized learning.
Shelby Eastern Schools has not yet researched, documented, and communicated the value of authentic learning in K-12 education. A framework for rich, authentic work has not yet been developed.

Shelby Eastern Schools has not yet revised curriculum, instruction, and assessments that align to and support collaborative and authentic learning.

We leaders may not yet have established a culture of digital innovation that promotes pedagogy-driven, digital transformations in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

We leaders may not have worked in tandem with key stakeholders to plan, build, and sustain a digital learning environment where technology and digital resources are seamlessly aligned with curriculum, instruction, and assessment as integral to the learning process.

Shelby Eastern Schools may not yet have established expectations and supports for building technological competence and digital citizenship required of students if they are to leverage technology to deepen their learning.

We leaders have not yet established a data culture where everyone is expected to use research, data, and evidence-based reasoning. Teachers are not yet using data to guide their instructional and content-related choices.

We leaders have not established protocols for using technology to collect, analyzing, access, secure, and analyze diagnostic, formative, and summative data to guide teaching and learning.

How are students actively involved in using data to self-assess?

**Strategies to Close Gap**

- **Skill Selection Process** - Have a group of key stakeholders review the 21st Century Skills/Deeper learning competencies that best align with our goals and identify those that are, or should be, top priorities for Shelby Eastern Schools. Use the enGauge Model for examples, Select five to seven skills and/or competencies that align with your our strategic plan and mission as the top priorities. Create a framework that defines these skills and competencies and the instructional practices known to develop each skill.

- **Build a Case for Priority Skills, then Build Scenarios** - Align 21st Century Skills/Deeper learning with curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional learning, resources, and budget priorities. Then build scenarios for how
teachers will integrate 21st Century Skills/Deeper learning into the classroom, connecting them with specific curriculum objectives and content-areas if appropriate. Each scenario should provide a clear picture of how the skill will be taught in concert with curriculum objectives. Once a few scenarios are built for each skill, content area, and grade level that describe the desired instructional results, use the back mapping process to determine which students, teachers, principals, parents, and other stakeholders will be needed for the vision to become reality.

- **Assessment for Everyone** – Curriculum map Shelby Eastern Schools set of 21st Century Skills assessments into curriculum and instruction. Consider how Shelby Eastern Schools’ NWEA assessments, and other benchmark assessments, assess the skills.

- **Be Informed** – Use the Teacher Technology Team to investigate and study needed professional development. Use research from journals, and online publications from educators to explore many points of view. Seek out other resources that support personalized learning. Identify concrete examples of how they are utilizing new technologies and social media to advance opportunities for personalized learning. Synthesize the findings from all of the sources to prepare briefing papers for various audiences (i.e., teachers, parents, students, administrators, community groups) to build awareness toward professional development goals for Shelby Eastern Schools.

- **Experience Personalized Learning** - Experience the concept of personalized learning, 21st Century digital readiness of students, and the impact of these topics on schools and students through iNacol, CoSN, the Alliance for Excellent Education, and the If possible, participate in a personalized digital learning through a university to learn about this type of learning firsthand.

- **Define Our Perspective Personalized Digital Learning** – Continually share the concept of personalized digital learning and share that with faculty, staff, parents and community. Address critical question, such as “what does this mean for my child?” Begin meeting with teachers and students about their needs to commit to personalized digital learning. Share opportunities and gauge interest in digital learning opportunities.

- **Develop a Common Vision with Stakeholders** - Collaboratively develop a vision that supports authentic, collaborative learning. The stakeholder group must include local business and community leaders, as well as educators from all levels. Discuss specific goals and expected outcomes that will move Shelby Eastern Schools toward achieving the vision.

- **Review Our Online Learning Data** - Identify possible data sources to inform our understanding of current access to online and personalized learning for students.
• **Share the Compelling Reasons with Teachers** - Identify new opportunities that collaboration and digital learning provide for students. Meet with teachers monthly to demonstrate how their current practice could be revised using digital learning. Create transparency by requesting feedback and then troubleshoot issues with faculty members. Answer critical questions for a variety of stakeholders, such as “How does this impact my classroom?” and “What does this mean for my child?”

• **Identify Pedagogical Gaps and Training** - Gather information related to current instructional practices and pedagogies through conversations with teachers and administrators. Identify gaps between the pedagogies that are currently used and those that could be used. Start to identify leaders within Shelby Eastern Schools, training materials, or professional development providers that can bridge any gaps in skills for teachers as they transition from current to digital learning.

• **Model Behavior** – Use the Teacher Tech Team to model best practice examples related to the use of learning-enabling technology and technology integration models:
  - Ruben R. Puentedura’s SAMR and TPACK, www.hippasus.com
  - University of South Florida’s Technology Integration Matrix (TIM), www.fcit.usf.edu
  - Daniel Krathwohl’s A Revision of Bloom’s Taxonomy

• **Proactively Problem-Solve** - Identify potential barriers, and solutions for integrating learning-enabling technology across curriculum and instruction. Attend informative conferences and meet with leaders from districts who have successfully implemented a digital learning environment to determine how others have addressed barriers and what solutions have proven effective in a variety of contexts.

• **Policy and Procedures Supported by Finances** – Review our current financial capacity and drive the transition to digital learning. Identify another school system’s budgetary practices and funding sources and assemble multiple, concrete examples of budgetary options and funding streams that support the digital learning environment.

• **Find Out What They Know** - Identify gaps in the knowledge of staff at all levels of the organization related to using data to inform instructional decisions. Model the use of data in this process by conducting interviews or surveys with instructional staff.

• **Plan Backwards** - Complete data maps for integration of formative and summative data with grading policies and practice.

• **Continue Learning** - Continue to explore examples of digital assessments and engage classroom teachers in discussions about those examples and
provide ample time for teachers to practice both administering assessments and interpreting data.

- **Needs or Wants?** - Identify teacher and student needs related to participation in digital assessments. Work with the Teacher Tech Team to identify budget needs and critical questions that need to be addressed prior to finalizing a plan.

- **Parents as Partners** - Identify mediums for parents to gain access to data related to their child. Trouble-shoot any issues of equitable access.

**Professional Learning**

Technology and digital learning can increase professional learning opportunities by expanding access to high-quality, ongoing, job-embedded opportunities for professional growth for teachers and administrators. Such opportunities ultimately lead to improvements in student success and create broader understanding of the skills that comprise success in a digital age. Digital Professional learning communities, peer-to-peer lesson sharing, and better use of data eliminate the confines of geography and time. These ever-increasing resources offer teachers and administrators the opportunity to collaborate, learn, share, and produce best practices with colleagues in school buildings across the country. Digital leaders collaborate, model and are transparent with their own learning.

**CHALLENGES FOR PROFESSIONAL DIGITAL LEARNING**

- District policies, practices, and culture do not encourage or support personalized professional learning among staff. As a result, teachers, and administrators are not taking ownership for their own professional learning. Embedded daily use of technology and social media is the exception rather than the rule. Professional growth toward these targets is limited.

- The accountability for professional learning is beginning to shift away from seat time to performance-based, competency-based achievement of professional learning targets.

- The district is not yet providing the digital structures that encourage and empower educators to personalize their professional learning. District leaders must personalize their own professional learning and model the use of technology tools.
Educators working in your district share ownership and responsibility for their own professional growth via our new evaluation rubric. The task now is to expand and tune our readiness in this area.

**Strategies to Close Gap**

- **Create a Representative PD Team** - A professional Development team should examine current professional development practices in the district. Insure that the team follows a model of shared leadership and members have the appropriate leadership skills or characteristics such as diversity of thought, the ability to think outside the box, tact, and resolve.

- **Research Options for Professional Learning** - Review current models of practice from other districts. Ask questions to guide next steps such as:
  - What gaps in professional learning exist that cannot be closed by in-house resources?
  - What are district expectations of teachers regarding professional learning such as time outside the school day or job embedded?
  - What percentage of a teacher's professional learning should be district provided versus teacher selected?
  - Are districts taking ownership for their own professional learning? Consider how access to on-demand, social professional development (e.g., Twitter, Classroom 2.0, and edWeb.net) could provide learning opportunities to fill these gaps.

- **Research Innovative Approaches** - Identify the research base for personalized, professional learning that is job embedded and outcomes-based. Use traditional research methods and social media to conduct a search to identify meaningful, new approaches to professional learning. Investigate resources such as New Teacher Center, National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF), National Education Association (NEA), American Federation of Teachers (AFT), Twitter feeds, EdCamp, follow bloggers, edWeb, Connected Educators, etc.

- **Assess Needs Regarding Staff Capacity to Implement New Approaches** - Survey all staff, on what is already known regarding the goals of digital learning and the areas in which they are willing to lead colleagues in learning. The survey should focus on addressing the professional learning needs of staff as well as the priorities of the teacher for his/her classroom. From an analysis of the results, identify our policies, practice and expectations that may hinder teachers’ pursuit of professional development opportunities. Determine if those policies should be altered to provide incentives for education professionals to engage deeply in personalized learning progressions.
• **Reach Out to Colleagues Inside and Outside the District** - Conduct interviews with administrators, and teachers who are already using digital learning and social media for their own professional growth. Ask questions such as:
  
o How does your district credit or recognize education professionals with what they learn independently through technology?
  
o How does the district provide the time and resources to personalize and differentiate professional learning?
  
o From which data are the goals for the professional learning developed?

• **Explore the Personalized Learning Landscape** – Identify opportunities and challenges with implementing systems that use data to improve learning outcomes. Include deeper learning which requires students to think, question, pursue, and create—to take ownership of their learning. Investigate to determine:
  
o Are these approaches all the same, different, or related?
  
o How do these models inform the vision for professional learning in your district?
  
o How will these strategies inform district expectations of teachers, or shift the role of the teacher in the classroom?

• **Analyze Options, Strategies and Tools** - Investigate strategies for professional learning associated with online learning, and social media. Consider a reward system for professional learning.

• **Check Out the Technology Toolshed** - Investigate a range of options that technology and social media bring to professional learning. Review current models of personalized professional learning. Consider how access to on-demand, robust digital resources, apps and technologies, collaborative tools, online communities of practice, and social media (e.g., Twitter, Classroom 2.0, edWeb.net) opens new opportunities for learning and sharing among educators. Conduct a needs assessment as to what technologies, tools, and social media educators in the district are already using, and what they would like to learn more about. Analyze results, document strengths and gaps for future action.

• **Using Technology to Assist with Reflection** - Investigate technology solutions that can track teacher attainment of professional development goals as opposed to tracking hours. Preview at professional digital portfolios where teachers can reflect on their learning and how it will improve their instruction. The digital portfolio would have the capability to be shared with peers or supervisors as needed.