Solon Schools Academic Standards Report

Technology – September 2016

Today’s students are digital natives and it is critical that their educational environment keep pace to support a blend of digital and traditional learning platforms and best practices. Throughout this year our Academic Learning Standards reports will focus on sharing the ways in which technology is supporting and fostering student learning in the Solon Schools.

Appropriate use of technology tools is critical for today’s students in mastering 21st century skills that best prepare them for success in college and the workforce. All of the technology initiatives in the district are developed to help students more readily collaborate and communicate with peers, engage in more relevant and creative assignments and projects, and demonstrate their understanding and mastery of content and skills.

For example, the new One2One initiative launched at the start of the school year provides access to personal computing devices for high school and middle school students at school and home. This “One2One” program directly supports the educational goals and objectives for improving student achievement outlined in the district’s strategic plan.

The devices students are using, Chromebooks, are familiar in our classrooms throughout the district. A Chromebook looks like a traditional laptop and uses Google’s Chrome operating system and cloud storage to connect students to the Internet wherever Wi-Fi is available. Using a Chromebook helps provide seamless integration with Google classroom, an online tool and learning environment students have already been using.

The One2One program started with grades 7-10 this year to ensure students have experience on their personal Chromebook prior to using them for state assessments. The Ohio Department of Education now requires students to take those assessments electronically. Juniors and seniors at the high school will use current building laptops and Chromebooks to augment their learning at school this year. Then next fall, the One2One initiative will expand to cover all students in grades 7-12. Students will keep their issued Chromebooks throughout the school year and summer for three years.

Similarly, students in the elementary buildings and Orchard also have frequent and ready access to technology throughout the school day to support their learning. For fifth and sixth graders, Chromebook carts are positioned throughout the building for all teams, creating access for all Orchard learners. Third and fourth grade students also use Chromebooks during the school day. Our second graders use student laptops, which are about the same size as a Chromebook. Kindergarten and first grade students use iPads in the classroom for exposure to online text and other learning activities.

Teachers work to integrate technology and created a blended learning environment that balances digital and traditional learning. For example, third and fourth grade students will plan their writing and use paper and pencil to create graphic organizers to begin their thinking and then compose their work using the Chromebooks. Among the advantages for students are:

* Increased achievement and student engagement
* Expanded learning and communication beyond the classroom
* Increased opportunity for authentic learning
* Better preparation for tomorrow’s workplace
* Students become more efficient producers and publishers

In conjunction with the One2One launch, each school is redoubling efforts to educate students about online safety and responsible digital citizenship and we will cover that topic in more detail in the next report.