

# Woodbridge School District

2016 - 2019 Technology Plan

Beyond the Walls of the School:  
Empower Continuous Personal  
Learning

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## Essential Question

How do we promote personal learning, creativity, and innovation among the BRS community?

## Abstract

The Woodbridge School District has always put learning first. As a primary tool in the lives of students today, technology allows our students to expand their knowledge and communicate their thinking. Therefore, students should always have access to their work. This technology plan is aligned with the educational standards, expectations, and goals of our students, teachers, staff, and administrators.

To promote personal learning, creativity, and innovation among all members of the Beecher Road School Community, the District supports the needs of the faculty and staff to encourage and nurture students to become independent lifelong learners. All facets of this technology plan are interconnected. Success depends upon all members of the BRS Community working together in concert towards the Shared Vision. Each constituent plays an interconnected and necessary role in the plan to promote independent lifelong learning.

The Technology Plan Committee focused on five areas to foster innovative growth in the District. Implementation of each of these components is critical to the overall success of the plan.

1. **Professional Development** to ensure that all faculty use technology effectively in the classroom.
2. **Digital Workflow** to provide a seamless link between students, teachers, and resources.
3. **Storing and Presenting Student Work** to create a portfolio for students, teachers, and parents to monitor student progress.
4. **Home/School Connection** to continually improve the critical communication links between parents and educators.
5. **Infrastructure and Hardware** to ensure that all students and educators will have access to a comprehensive infrastructure for learning when and where they need it.

The Woodbridge School District continues to strive to use technology in innovative ways to promote learning for all members of the Beecher Road School community.

## Preface

Technology plans at Beecher Road School for the past two and a half decades have focused the district on leveraging the power of technology to enhance creativity, learning, and productivity. Balanced use of technology has provided many options in the continuously growing toolkit for both students and faculty while students and teachers alike learn to make personal choices from traditional and digital tools.

The following initiatives have led Beecher to its current position in technology:

- The *Mobile Computing for Faculty* initiative put a laptop in the hands of every teacher, giving them access to resources, student data, and communications both during school and at home.
- The *SmartBoard* initiative brought interactive digital resources and tools to the front of each classroom for focused instruction.
- The *Mobile Technology for Students* initiative placed iPads into the hands of all students in the classroom, bringing access to digital resources and tools to the places and times when needed most, instead of providing access only at scheduled times in a computer lab.

The previous technology plans have, by necessity, included a primary focus on the acquisition of hardware in quantities adequate to make equal access feasible. The current technology plan now focuses on professional development to optimize the use of these technologies by students, teachers, and administrators for both learning and for managing all the details needed to expand our rich learning environment and programs. At the same time, the plan seeks to insure that the district will continue to replace hardware and provide for services that take advantage of new developments and improvements in our world.

## Defining the Needs of the Learning Community

The District held two open forums to gather information about the community's thoughts on the use of technology in the District as well as feedback on possible directions to head towards in the coming years. In both forums, a set of guiding questions were created to foster conversations on four topics of interest.

- *Mobile Technology: Potential impact on student learning both in and outside of school*
- *Digital Responsibility: Students connecting with the online world*
- *Digital Media: Sharing school news and students work*
- *Digital Communications: Connecting school and home*

At a Superintendent's Parents Academy, parents commented that younger students benefited from a balance between digital and hands-on learning. Parents recognized the important part that technology plays in their children's lives and supported the effective and efficient use of technology as a tool and resource. Parents were concerned about and

asked for resources on how to keep children safe online. With their child's privacy and safety in mind, parents were not eager to share student work with the outside world, but rather keep it limited to specific people.

Digital communications is an area where many parents felt the teachers and district are doing well. Parents felt teachers kept them well informed of the day-to-day activities in the classroom. Newsletters and updates from the school administration were helpful in gathering a larger overview of what was going on in the District. Parents noted a disconnect though with what was happening in some content areas, in one case technology, and how it was being used throughout the day and school.

At a forum for faculty, the sentiments voiced echoed those of the parents. A balanced approach of hands-on and digital resources was discussed. Primary teachers voiced their concerns about excessive screen time outside of school. Intermediate teachers gave many examples of enhanced projects as a result of the use of iPads. Teachers also expressed concern over the rapid rate of change in technologies and how it was hard to keep apace. Teachers requested more professional development before implementation of new technologies with students. Teachers acknowledged that digital workflows were the future but are a shift for both students and teachers.

## Guiding Principles

To promote personal learning, creativity, and innovation among all members of the Beecher Road School Community, the District must support the needs of the faculty and staff to encourage and nurture students to become independent lifelong learners. All facets of this technology plan are interconnected. Success depends upon all members of the BRS Community working together in concert towards the Shared Vision. Each constituent plays an interconnected and necessary role in the plan to promote independent lifelong learning.

### **(1) Independent Lifelong Learning**

The Beecher Road School Community works together to prepare our children to pursue knowledge and learning throughout their lives to become responsible, caring and contributing members of an ever - changing and diverse global community. In the best interests of our children, we are committed to implementing appropriate technology tools and resources to promote:

- Collaboration among students
- Innovation and creative expression
- Responsible and ethical citizenship
- Productive communication

### **(2) Engaging Environment for Teaching and Learning**

In order to foster student Independent Lifelong Learning goals, faculty and staff create an engaging learning environment and facilitate the use of appropriate technology, providing the necessary ingredients:

- Provide a wide range of resources
- Teach and Foster
  - Independent Lifelong Learning
  - Creativity
  - Collaboration
- Embrace learning styles and differences

### **(3) Community for Professional Learning**

In order to create an Engaging Environment for Teaching and Learning, faculty and staff develop their own learning and understanding through professional development and personal use of technology tools and resources.

- Professional development
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Data management
- Personal use and self learning

### **(4) Organization for Effective Change Management**

In order to foster a community of professional learning, the District supports faculty and staff use of technology that includes:

- Fostering community for professional learning
- Community collaborative
- Cohesive communication
- Inclusive and consistent professional development
- Inclusive and consistent data management
- Open for growth/change

### **(5) The Power of Technology**

In order to organize effective change management, the District leverages the power of technology to assess and evaluate the strengths and needs of the District, community, and constituents through;

- Fiscal management
- Teacher evaluation
- Personnel management
- Interdistrict (BOWA) communication and collaboration
- District policy
- Town/community support and communication

### **(6) Shared Vision**

The Beecher Road School Learning Community establishes a Shared Vision that leverages the power of technology to foster Independent Life-long Learning.

## Components for Successful Plan Implementation

To promote personal learning, creativity, and innovation among the BRS community, the Technology Plan Committee has focused on five areas to foster innovative growth in the District. Each component and its positive implementation is a critical component of the overall success of the plan.

### **Professional Development**

Professional development must provide equal opportunities for individuals to gain and improve the knowledge and skills essential to their positions. A successful professional development program ensures that all stakeholders have a voice at every stage of planning, implementation, and evaluation. Throughout this Technology Plan, the school will undertake the following actions:

- ❖ Provide a wide range of professional development opportunities including frequent opportunity for faculty to self select (whole group, grade level/small group, individual) programs (On-going)
- ❖ Define the areas of need for each constituent group (Year One)
- ❖ Assess the technology needs of the District staff staff, office, TAs) (On-going)
- ❖ Collaborate with the Professional Development committee to target times and common areas of need (On-going)
- ❖ Evaluate best methodologies for delivering professional development to each constituent group (On-going)

### **Evaluation:**

- Assess the current technology needs of the District staff through a self-assessment
- Survey the staff to determine effectiveness of technology use and proficiency in targeted areas and new initiatives
- Review professional development surveys and scheduled opportunities in conjunction with the District Professional Development Committee
- Deliver professional development around the identified needs. Additional support can be provided as needed to small groups and individuals

### **Digital Workflow**

At Beecher Road School students are provided with multiple opportunities to create original pieces of work to express their ideas and talents. In using technology, those creative expressions can be captured and shared with an authentic audience. To take advantage of mobile technology and digital resources, during the next four years, Beecher Road School will undertake the following actions:

- ❖ Encourage the use of technology to capture each individual's creative expressions. This could include the retention of digital projects or the photographic imaging of non digital projects (On-going)
- ❖ Assess the needs for a digital workflow between teachers and students (Year One)
- ❖ Implement a consistent methodology for digital transfer of materials between students and teachers (Year Two)

- ❖ Provide training and class lessons for teachers and students for the effective and efficient use of using the new system (Year Two, On-going)
- ❖ Implement an efficient means of sharing digital information between students, teachers, classrooms, and districts (Year Two)
- ❖ Implement a means for parents to input and edit student/family demographic data (Year Two, On-going)

**Evaluation:**

- Survey, both faculty members and students, through a variety of means to evaluate the current status of digital workflows in place
- Develop a methodology and create a style guide to ensure consistency of work transfer.
- In conjunction with the District Professional Development Committee, professional development will be scheduled around the implementation of the new system.

**Storing and Presenting Student Work**

To display the innovative and diverse works created by students, Beecher Road School will undertake the following actions:

- ❖ Expand systems for sharing student work within the school (On-going)
- ❖ Assess the need for a student digital portfolio (Year One)
- ❖ Evaluate a variety of products and processes for creating and maintaining a multi-year digital portfolio (Year Two)
- ❖ Implement a consistent methodology for naming and adding items to the portfolio (Year Two)
- ❖ Provide training and class lessons for teachers and students for the effective and efficient use of using the new system (Year Three)
- ❖ Research different products and select a product that will store and present student work, to meet our teachers' and students' needs, while abiding by our high privacy and security standards
- ❖ Schedule professional development in conjunction with the District Professional Development Committee to implement the new program
- ❖ Provide additional support as needed to classroom teachers as co-taught lessons for students

**Evaluation:**

- Evaluate the most effective way to store and present student work, the team will first assess the type of content students create and the most effective way to display each project
- Survey both faculty members and students to see how student work should be viewed year-to-year and note any advantages that this workflow provides teachers
- Develop a methodology and create a style guide to ensure consistency of work



## **Home/School Connection**

In order to foster collaboration, deepen mutual understanding, and enhance communication over the next four years, Beecher Road School will undertake the following actions:

- ❖ Evaluate the needs for a teacher/parent portal (Year One)
- ❖ Evaluate the effectiveness of current communication systems (Year One)
- ❖ Increase the use of the District website to share information about the school (On-going)
- ❖ Increase access to student work outside of the school (On-going)
- ❖ Analyze current policies and review permissions necessary to create a secure digital environment for student work to be shared with parents (On-going)

### **Evaluation:**

- Evaluate the effectiveness of communication between school and home to identify areas of improvement, ensuring school accomplishments and parent needs are clearly communicated
- Review current analytics of the District website, including: web traffic, reviewing areas of interest and popularity
- Evaluate the ease of accessing work outside of the school as well as assess the needs of our students and families

## **Infrastructure and Hardware**

Beecher Road School will undertake the following initiatives to ensure that all students and educators will have access to a comprehensive infrastructure for learning when and where they need it, over the next four years:

- ❖ Complete the first phase of the 1:1 mobile device initiative in grades 2-6 (Year One)
- ❖ Begin the five year replacement cycle of 1:1 mobile devices (Year Two , then on-going)
- ❖ Develop a three year technology plan (Year Three)
- ❖ Maintain capacity and flexibility of infrastructure for mobile technologies (On-going)
- ❖ Maintain up-to-date mobile technologies (On-going)
- ❖ Plan for/ anticipate the adoption of emerging technologies (On-going)
- ❖ Evaluate and replace aging infrastructure components as necessary (On-going)

### **Evaluation:**

- Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the District's technology through an annual review of system logs, maintenance records, system specifications, and requirements for compatibility and scope
- Analyze the functionality of District hardware and infrastructure