



2023-24 Educational Technology Needs
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2023-24 Educational Technology Needs Assessment

Blount County Board of Education

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A. Network Infrastructure and Equipment

Please respond to each question.

1. Describe your current network utilization rate for Internet and WAN. Indicate specific locations where utilization is an area of concern, especially if it is 75% or greater.

Current WAN/Internet traffic bottlenecks 95-98% utilization between 8AM and 9:30AM daily, and also again between 1PM and 2:30PM during the active school year.

2. How often do you monitor network traffic?

A. Weekly

B. Monthly

C. Once every 3-4 Months

D. Only When an Issue Arises

E. Less than 3 times per year

F. Never

3. Is there a district employee who has the primary responsibility of monitoring and managing the network's usage, uptime, and performance? (i.e. Dedicated Network Administrator)

Yes

No

4. Identify the Ethernet cabling types currently used and installed in your entities. (Select all that apply.)

A. CAT5

B. CAT5e

C. CAT6

D. CAT6A

E. CAT7

F. CAT8

G. Unsure

5. What fiber optic cabling are you using for internal backbone connections? (Select all that apply.)

A. Multimode OM1

B. Multimode OM1

C. Multimode OM3

D. Multimode OM4

E. Single Mode OS1

F. Single Mode OS2

G. Unsure

6. Do you have both wired and wireless network connections in each learning space/classroom?

A. Yes-in all

B. Yes-in some

C. No-no learning space has both

D. Unsure

7. Indicate the frequency a bottleneck (speed, throughput, etc.) is experienced in the district.

A. Almost Always

B. Often

C. Sometimes

D. Never

E. Unsure

8. What is the age of the current infrastructure equipment? Indicate general age based on the date of installation for major components. (Example: Core Switch-4 yrs old)

Core Switches are 7 years old, while all Primary Virtual Machine host are 2-3 years old.

WiFi Access Points were replaced 2 years ago.

9. Is the LEA in a current WAN contract with a vendor other than Alabama Supercomputer Authority? If so, how many years do you have left on the current contract?

Yes

No

COMMENTS

10. What is the current, available Category 2 budget for E-Rate for the FY 2021-2025 budget cycle?

\$420,000.00

11. Describe the LEA's sustainability plan for network infrastructure equipment up to five years. Does the LEA plan to use E-Rate funds for any purchases in this plan?

Blount County plans to use E-Rate funds to upgrade network switches in the 25-26 school year. We will also look at replacing our current Wifi infrastructure using E-Rate funds during the 28-29 school year.

12. What are the barriers the district/schools are currently facing for improving the current network infrastructure, uptime, and/or availability?

Manpower, and accomplishing the installation and configuration within current time constraints.

13. Is the current infrastructure scalable to meet future needs/demands?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure**

B. Cybersecurity

Please respond to each question.

1. Did you receive your 'Approved' cybersecurity funding letter? Please upload a copy of the email/letter received.

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Unsure

COMMENTS

2. Are all employees assigned at least one lesson using cybersecurity training software within 30 days of beginning work?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Unsure

3. Did the district conduct at least two phishing tests in 2023-2024 with employees?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Unsure

4. Have you, or a security company, performed a vulnerability assessment for your network within the past 12 months?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Unsure

5. Has a complete incident response plan been developed for the school system in the past 12 months?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Working on it currently
- D. Unsure

COMMENTS

6. Has the data governance policy been updated within the last three years with an alignment to cybersecurity best practices included?

- A. Yes
- B. No

C. Working on it currently

D. Unsure

C. Technology Integration

Please respond to each question.

1. What evidence can be provided to show that teachers are implementing the Computer Science (CS) standards and incorporating Digital Literacy into their curriculum?

Lesson Plans, Walk-Throughs, and Classroom Observations

2. What resources are teachers utilizing to teach the Computer Science and Digital Literacy standards? (Example: ALEX, ATIM, AVL, AMSTI, district database/resources)

- A. ALEX
- B. ATIM
- C. AMSTI
- D. District Database/Resources
- E. Other (comments)

COMMENTS

A+ College Ready and our STEAM lab, APLUS Computer Science Curriculum, UTEACH Content for AP-CSP, Alabama ECS content, Bootstrap Algebra Content, PebbleGo, PebbleGo Next, Code.org/Scratch programming

3. What integration model(s) is being used in your district (SAMR, TPACK, TIM, etc.)?

- A. SAMR
- B. TPACK
- C. TIM
- D. Other (comments)

COMMENTS

4. What plans do you have in place to prepare for the advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in your district?

AI is still currently being researched for all utilization purchases.

5. Do you have technology coaches within your district? Describe the model that is in place for your district.

A. Yes

B. No

C. Unsure

COMMENTS

6. What role does your media specialist have in supporting tech integration?

Our Media Specialist provides professional learning on tools and lesson strategies to implement DLCS. There is also a dedicated space in the LMC for student creation--photography, videography, podcasting and editing--that is available to all students and teachers in the school. Virtual Field Trips, Live Surgeries, Virtual Meeting Area. Reinforces Digital Citizenship and Media Literacy

7. What types of technology are provided for special needs students (assistive technology), EL students, and gifted students? How is accessibility in digital learning addressed for students with special needs?

Ipads, Chromebooks, Interactive touch panels. A variety of programs that are specific to student need - example Touch, Type, Spell. Larger laptops, voice over, and text to speech. Dyslexia fonts for those students that need it, and specialized apps for those who require it. ACCESS Virtual Classes, AP-CSP, Advanced Courses.

8. How do you prioritize tech integration tools that are purchased and used in your district? How do you use a tech integration tool inventory to help establish funding priorities and equitable access across the district? What productivity tools do **all** students use to complete work and interact with fellow students and teachers?

Schoology, McGraw Hill, and Savvas digital curriculums and textbooks are used by all students in an interactive fashion. Tech integrations purchases are planned on per school basis by a local school committee.

9. What percentage of teachers and students are using technology integration tools to implement DLCS standards?

According to the Technology Survey 50% of our teachers are using technology tools to implement the standards.

10. What type of learning management system (LMS) is provided for schools and what features are provided for learning? Is it optional or mandatory for teachers?

We currently utilize the Schoology LMS and is an option for our teachers.

11. Are you considering using drones in education? If so, please briefly explain the plan for use, training, and licensing.

A. Yes

B. No

C. Unsure

COMMENTS

Yes, we are using Drones as a STEAM rotation where all students will rotate to that station and fly the Drones. They code them according to the curriculum set out in the software and website provided. Some school's extracurricular activities also utilize student led drone A/V footage.

12. Please provide at least one example of how technology is integrated in elective classes.

All students use Chromebooks for individual classroom work, they also use interactive panels as part of their learning in each classroom.

13. How are students included in your technology planning process?

Our Media Specialist solicits input from our students as well as teachers utilizing student test data to plan the direction of future purchases on a school level.

D. Digital Equity

Please respond to each question.

1. Please upload a copy or insert the link to your technology inventory.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1HRE2a8PiLcNlyPr5r36c17-EW1fqzv_La5_396STS7I/view?rm=minimal#gid=726276840

2. How are technology resources distributed to schools, students, and staff in the district? What data and metrics are currently used to inform decision making, including resource allocation?

Technology resources are purchased by individual schools. Schools monitor local inventory, student test data, CIP, and the 5 year strategic plan

3. Do all schools in the district have access to strong, reliable, wireless internet?

Yes

No

Unsure

COMMENTS

4. Is there an area or community within your district which lacks access to high-speed internet? If yes, are the schools in that community also affected?

Yes

No

Unsure

COMMENTS

5. What community-use internet options are currently available outside of the school day in the district? (Select all that apply.)

A. After School Programs

B. Bus Wi-Fi Access

C. Public Library

D. Parking Lot Wi-Fi

E. Hot Spots

F. Other

COMMENTS

6. Based on the current technology inventory, identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.

Due to end-of-life devices, and device removal, funds are not available to replace on a 1:1 basis at all schools. Current staff cannot maintain workload in a timely manner.

Each classroom and general meeting areas have 100% wifi coverage and access to a physical network drop.

7. According to Digital Equity Survey data, what percentage of students indicated a lack of reliable internet at home?

- A. Less than 10%
- B. 11%-25%**
- C. 26%-50%
- D. 51%-75%
- E. 76-89%
- F. Greater than 90%

8. According to Digital Equity Survey data, what percentage of staff members indicated a lack of reliable internet at home?

- A. Less than 10%**
- B. 11%-25%
- C. 26%-50%
- D. 51%-75%
- E. 76-89%
- F. Greater than 90%

9. According to Digital Equity Survey data, what percentage of students have a dedicated device for at home use?

- A. Less than 10%
- B. 11%-25%
- C. 26%-50%**
- D. 51%-75%
- E. 76-89%
- F. 90-99%
- G. 100%

10. According to Digital Equity Survey data, what percentage of staff have a dedicated device for at home use?

- A. Less than 10%

- B. 11%-25%
- C. 26%-50%
- D. 51%-75%
- E. 76-89%
- F. 90-99%
- G. 100%

11. How does the district maintain and/or repair devices? Does the district pay to have devices insured? If so, what category of device?

Blount County does all in house repairs for Chromebooks, PCs, and I pads. We use local funds to cover these costs.

12. Does the LEA currently have a way to extend filtering to student issued district devices for off campus use?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

COMMENTS

Securly

13. What partnerships or collaborations have been established and/or could be established with community organizations, businesses, or other stakeholders to support digital equity initiatives?

The Blount County Education Foundation.

14. Describe current supports provided to parents and the community for the use of digital tools, digital literacy, and broadband adoption. What additional support is needed?

Federal Programs utilize a Parent Advisory Committee to address current and future needs.

15. Select and/or describe any barriers related to digital equity (availability, affordability, and/or adoption). How can these barriers be addressed?

- Availability
- Affordability
- Adoption
- Other

COMMENTS

Esser funds have been depleted and now local funds must be used in a strategic manner to meet the needs of local schools.

E. Professional Learning

Please respond to each question.

1. How are new teachers made aware of technology resources that are available to them and their students both at the district and school levels?

New teachers attend TIP. They also are required to work with school mentors to train and demonstrate current technologies. Local school STCs provide additional PD opportunities.

2. How do you ensure new teachers successfully use educational technology resources provided by the school/district?

New teacher mentor

Assigned time with school/district technology leader

Catalog of online professional learning

Other (Describe)

COMMENTS

3. What standards are curriculum leaders in the district using to design and facilitate professional learning? (Examples: [ISTE](#), [Cognia Performance Standards](#), [NSQ](#), [SETDA](#), [CoSN](#), etc.)

Cognia

4. How is professional learning structured at your school/district?

During the school day

eLearning

Scheduled professional learning day

After school

After school with a stipend

Summer

Summer with a stipend

TEAMs

Other

COMMENTS

5. What data is used to determine the technology professional learning needs of the school and district? (Select all that apply.)

- Surveys**
- Classroom observations**
- Informal conversations**
- District Improvement Plan / Strategic Plan**
- School Data Meetings**
- Other

COMMENTS

6. What were the results of the data used in question five above? (strengths/needs)
According to the 23-24 Tech Survey, 95% of teachers were provided with a sufficient number of learning opportunities to help successfully integrate technology in the classroom.

7. Who, in the school and/or district, provides the majority of professional learning related to technology for teachers? (Select all that apply.)

- School-based instructional coaches
- District-based instructional coaches
- School library media specialists**
- Teacher leaders**
- Administrators**
- Technology Coordinator**
- Technology in Motion**
- Other

COMMENTS

Technology Integration Specialist, STC's

8. What structures are in place to provide for the implementation of professional learning?

- Substitute teachers funded by the school**
- Substitute teachers funded by the district**
- Title funding**
- Collaborative planning during the school day**
- Alternative schedule**
- Other

COMMENTS

9. How do you provide professional learning opportunities for individual teachers, small groups, or other stakeholders beyond the initial training?

- Coaching**
 - Series of professional learning
 - Other (Describe)

COMMENTS

If 'Other', please describe in Comments section below.

10. How do district personnel request professional learning and support?

- Informal conversation**
- Email technology leader(s)**
 - Request form
 - Interest Survey
 - Other

COMMENTS

If 'Other', please describe in Comments section below.

11. What professional learning for instructional tools and resources have you provided to your district?

- **Student monitoring (GoGuardian, Linewize, LAN school, etc.)**
- **Formative assessment (EdPuzzle, Kahoot, Jamboard, Padlet, Google Forms, etc.)**
- **Interactive whiteboard / panel**
- **Student engagement (Nearpod, Discovery, etc.)**
- **Online instructional programs (textbook supplemental materials)**
- **Virtual meetings (Zoom, Google Meet, etc.)**
- **Computer science / programming (code.org, Scratch, Microbit, robotics, Java Script, Python, drones, etc.)**
- Online libraries (MackinVia, MyOn, Epic, etc.)
- Other

COMMENTS

If 'Other', please describe in Comments section below.

12. How do you ensure professional learning is timely and relevant?
PD opportunities are provided on current and emerging technologies.

13. How is professional learning documented?
Powerschool PD

14. How do you obtain feedback from participants/facilitators measuring the impact of professional learning? What insights have you gained from this feedback?
Powerschool PD Evaluation

15. What support is provided to professional learning facilitators to ensure effective professional learning experiences?
Professional Development Center that provides Chromebooks, Interactive Panels, and local staff to assist facilitators.

16. Describe the strengths and needs of administrators in the district for effectively supporting technology integration. Does the district provide local PLUs to support technology integration?

98% of school principals support and promotes integrating digital resources and tools in the classroom.

Yes PLUs are provided.

17. How does the technology coordinator and/or district level technology team ensure continued professional development and growth? How many hours of role specific professional development does the technology director and/or network administrator receive annually?

6-12

18. How are the learning needs of the technology department met, including yourself, network and technical staff, and integration coaches?

Online training, AETC, FETC, and ISTE.

19. Does the technology department provide professional learning to data managers, school registrars, district support staff and/or office personnel for technology related topics? If not, how is this provided?

As needed per school

Attachment Summary

Attachment Name	Description	Associated Item(s)
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