NJASA Technology Committee Executive Summary 2026-2027

September 25, 2026 | 9:30-11:00 AM | Virtual Meeting

EXECUTIVE SNAPSHOT The committee relaunched as a statewide technology leadership and advisory forum, while retaining TECHSPO as a major responsibility. Members surfaced common pressures around screen time, AI, cybersecurity, aging infrastructure, assessment demands, data privacy, and constrained budgets.

Committee Direction

Co-Chairs Ray González and Evan Abramson framed the Technology Committee as more than a TECHSPO planning body. With statewide representation across district types and sizes, the committee will serve as a forum for sharing effective practice, identifying emerging issues, developing practical resources, and informing NJASA leadership and policy discussions.

Members supported an action-oriented approach across the five scheduled meetings, including stronger collaboration with other NJASA committees when technology intersects with curriculum, professional development, legislation, special education, leadership, district operations, and statewide advocacy. The NJASA-NJETA partnership will remain central to connecting superintendent leadership with technology directors, coaches, and other practitioners.

Statewide Technology Leadership Priorities

Despite differences in district size and configuration, members reported substantial overlap in the issues currently demanding leadership attention:

- Screen time, digital wellness, and growing community scrutiny of classroom technology use.
- Artificial intelligence, including governance, instructional use, grading, student use, and data privacy.
- Cybersecurity, phishing, student data protection, and increasing operational risk.
- Aging devices, infrastructure replacement, rising platform costs, and budget constraints.
- Online assessment volume, student motivation, and connecting assessment results to instruction.
- Vendor management, multilingual-family access, expanded records requests, and staffing/capacity challenges.
- A shift from simply providing technology toward intentional, purposeful classroom implementation and stronger professional learning.

TECHSPO '27 Planning

- **Call for Proposals.** Approximately 46 proposals had been received as of the meeting, compared with 186 last year. Members were asked to promote the Call for Proposals through county roundtables, district technology and curriculum teams, NJETA, professional networks, and social media. The October 2 deadline will be monitored for a possible extension.

- **Program Balance.** The conference should continue to serve leadership, instructional/EdTech, and technical audiences. Members cautioned against allowing AI to overshadow practical technology operations, infrastructure, classroom implementation, and technical learning.
- **Proposal Review.** A streamlined, AI-supported review process was demonstrated to help readers organize and select proposals efficiently while preserving the focus on school district practices rather than vendor presentations.
- **Keynote.** The committee favored a dynamic speaker with broad appeal rather than a keynote focused exclusively on AI. Desired themes include technology, education, leadership, digital wellness, and broader national trends. A preferred target of $10,000 or less was identified, with sponsorship or negotiation considered where appropriate.
- **Technology Excellence Awards.** The committee supported creating a new TECHSPO recognition program for districts and individuals. Potential categories include innovative districts, education/superintendent leadership, technology leadership, technology coaching, and technical staff. Evan Abramson will develop an initial framework and nomination criteria.

Personal Internet-Enabled Devices: Early Experience

Across participating districts, implementation of personal Internet-enabled device restrictions has been largely smooth, particularly where K-8 cell phone restrictions were already established. The more complicated questions involve smartwatches, parent expectations for emergency communication, staff modeling and compliance, after-school activities, transportation, and enforcement.

District approaches include lockers and backpacks, device settings, locking cases, and technology-based phone-control solutions. Several members reported increased student conversation and engagement when phones were removed from the school-day environment.

Emerging Priority: Intentional Technology Use & Screen Time

One of the clearest priorities for future committee work is the growing debate over student screen time and the intentional use of technology in schools. Members expressed concern that legitimate questions about excessive or ineffective technology use could evolve into overly broad calls to eliminate classroom technology.

The committee discussed developing or curating a balanced research base and practical resources that district leaders can use with boards, staff, and communities to distinguish between passive or excessive screen exposure and purposeful technology use that supports teaching and learning. A shared repository of research, district practices, and examples was identified as a potentially valuable statewide resource.

Additional Opportunity: Job-Alike Networking

Members discussed strengthening peer connections for technology leaders working in similar district contexts, particularly small Pre-K-8 systems with limited staffing and capacity. NJETA is already developing related meetups for technology coaches and leaders, creating an opportunity for alignment with the committee's statewide work.

Action Items & Next Steps

- Promote TECHSPO '27 proposals through county roundtables and professional networks.

- Monitor proposal volume and determine whether the submission deadline should be extended.
- Recruit volunteers for proposal review and the Technology Excellence Awards subcommittee.
- Develop the initial awards framework and nomination criteria.
- Continue keynote exploration.
- Begin assembling balanced research and district resources around screen time and intentional technology use.
- Continue exploring job-alike networking and shared-resource opportunities.

UPCOMING MEETINGS | October 29, 2026 • February 12, 2027 • April 16, 2027 • June 2, 2027