

Comprehensive Needs Assessment – Technology

During the 2013-2014 school year, we piloted Office 365 (McAnally) and Google Apps for education (McCall and McAnally). These programs provide cloud based storage, email, and unified messaging to students from home. Both of these pilots also have built in web applications that offer word processing, presentations, and spreadsheets.

Aledo ISD employs one Instructional Technology Specialist to facilitate the effective use of educational technology district wide, and to provide ongoing staff development for technology integration. Aledo ISD contracts with Dallas County Schools to provide a Director of Technology, a Systems Administrator, a Network Security Engineer, and four Help Desk Technicians to manage and maintain technology services across the district.

Every classroom has a teacher presentation system that includes a laptop, projector, document camera and interactive board. In addition, computer labs and mobile labs are available at each campus. The technology has converted old mobile lab laptops (COWS that are 5+ years old) into thin clients allowing old legacy equipment to be reintroduced into the classroom. This would require turning a mobile lab into a permanent lab for campuses that are able to allocate a separate classroom for the lab. Handheld response systems have been purchased to enhance classroom instruction and progress based monitoring. Various campuses purchased iPads for instructional purposes.

During the 2013-2014 school year/summer, teachers had opportunities to attend trainings for iTeach (K-2), Tech Tools for Differentiation, Tools of Engagement, Take it to the Next Level, SMARTBoard Basics, SMARTBoard Intermediate, School Fusion Beginners, School Fusion Intermediate, Webmasters Training, Excel Basics & Tricks, Google Forms, Outlook Basics, iPad Basics, Evernote App Overview, Apps for All Ages, Apps for Higher Level Thinking, Twitter for Beginners, Websites for 21st Century Classroom, Teaching the Text Generation (Tech Tools in Writing), iPads K-4, Tech It Up a Notch, Apps for Balanced Literacy, and BYOD Activities.

High school students can receive dual credit through Weatherford College via distance learning classes at Aledo High School. In 2013-2014, the following courses were offered: Government 2305 (97 students), Economics 2301 (102 students), English 1301 (102 students), and English 1302 (96 students).

The district technology plan was reviewed and updated in the 2013-2014 school year by a committee consisting of central office and campus administration, teachers, technology personnel, parents, and community members. The new plan covers the years 2014-2017.

The “Teacher Average” report from the 2013-2014 STaRChart indicates the district total average for all 24 responses was 15; however, we are still in the developing and advanced tech level.

Strengths:

- Teacher access to presentation system (laptop, projector, document camera, and interactive board)
- Aledo ISD Technology / Security Center
- Help Desk for Technology Work Orders
- School Fusion has provided a mainstream website across the district and all campuses
- Centralization of printers at most campuses
- Virtualization of desktops and servers
- Aledo ISD app is updated regularly and provides stakeholders with an instant communication system
- Parent Link system is utilized for administrators to send mass messages to parents via text, voicemail, and/or email
- Parent Link app for administrators to allow access to student and parent info instantly
- Summer professional development provides staff development with opportunities to receive training to integrate instructional technology
- Instructional technology specialist provides training opportunities and support
- Help desk technicians are campus-based which has minimized the delay in response time for technical issues
- PDAS app available for administrators to use for teacher appraisals and Dana Center walk throughs

Needs:

- Continuation of Technology Staff Development
- Access to files, programs, and network from home for teachers and students
- Curriculum guides and resources for educational technology integration aligned with Technology Application TEKS (K-12)
- Distance learning alternatives to allow students to participate in virtual environments and/or simulations
- District-wide student email
- Additional access points to strengthen Wi-Fi access at all campuses
- Wi-Fi access to all stakeholders (students, teachers, staff, and parents) at all campuses
- Online baseline technology assessment for teachers and staff
- Online advanced technology assessment for teachers and staff
- Set a minimum number of mandatory instructional technology trainings
- Raise minimum teacher webpage requirements (requirements beyond profile information and schedule)
- Access to training for parents to learn and access School Fusion and parent portal options
- Additional technology and instructional technology staff
- Student device refresh
- Network refresh
- Wireless printing capabilities
- District Server infrastructure refresh
- Teacher presentation refresh (SMARTboard/projector/document camera)
- Physical security refresh (access control and security cameras)
- Voice over IP phone system
- Wired infrastructure refresh
- Two-way communication between classrooms

In-Progress

- Continuation of district, campus, and teacher website improvement through professional development as well as guidance and maintenance from campus and district webmasters
- Google Drive and Microsoft 365 Pilot programs for student unified communication system and automatic cloud-based back up system, as well as collaborative learning environments
- Technology integration curriculum development beginning with the elementary English/Language Arts Year At Glance (YAG)