

District School Board of Hardee County

District Technology Plan

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Dennis G. Jones
Superintendent of Schools

Rocky Kitchens
Deputy Superintendent of Operations

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DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Woody Caligan

Julie Farr

David Green

Judy Hinerman

Brenda Holton

Louise Jones

George Kelly

Todd Markel

Sharon Ussery

Kim Williams

Section 1

District Technology Plan Mission Statement

The mission of the School District of Hardee County is to promote the effective use of technology to implement the Sunshine State Standards to improve performance of all students.

The District has adopted the Vision Statement and Technology Goals of the State of Florida: As our society progresses into a global economy, which is increasingly dependent upon information, a critical component of education is the equitable and universal access to technology, media and information resources.

The effective use of technology impacts student performance by enabling students to access and analyze information, solve problems, collaborate with others, and effectively communicate their thoughts and ideas, thereby emerging as self-directed, self-motivated lifelong learners, productive members of the workforce, and contributing citizens. Moreover, the effective use of technology promotes accountability by increasing the teaching and learning productivity of students and educators and contributing to the efficiency of administrators and staff.

Goal 1 All students and educators will have equitable and effective access to technology during and beyond the school day.

Goal 2 An infrastructure that supports all students will provide state-of-the-art voice, video and data access to the point of learning.

Goal 3 In order to enhance the impact of technology on student performance, all educators will master and model educational technology standards as established by the Department of Education. See Addendum

Goal 4 All educators will receive “just-in-time” support.

Goal 5 All students will become proficient users of technology.

Goal 6 Schools will be accountable for the effective utilization of technology resources by educators and students.

Section 2

General Introduction/Background

Hardee County is a small rural county located in central Florida. The population in the last census was 26,938 with 18,037 living in unincorporated parts of the county. Hardee County was recently designated as an Enterprise Zone by the governor. Hardee County has been experiencing increasing unemployment, declining student enrollment, and continued poverty. These issues combined with attempts to maintain a strong education program, have placed a strain on the district's financial stability and jeopardized its ability to offer quality public education to all our students. According to statewide economic ratings, Hardee County ranks number one in poverty rate, number three on the average annual unemployment ranking and fourth in employment instability.

District Profile - The Hardee County School Board has eight schools:

School Name	Location	Number of Students
Hardee Senior High	Wauchula, Florida	1344
Hardee Junior High	Wauchula, Florida	1056
Hilltop Elementary School	Wauchula, Florida	414
Wauchula Elementary	Wauchula, Florida	552
North Wauchula Elementary	Wauchula, Florida	520
Bowling Green Elementary	Bowling Green, Florida	414
Zolfo Elementary	Zolfo Springs, Florida	562
Pioneer Career Academy	Zolfo Springs, Florida	14

The Hardee County School Board is a majority minority school district with 56% Hispanic and Black non-Hispanic combined. The black non-Hispanic is 8% with 48% Hispanic the white non-Hispanic makes up 44% of the student population.

District facts: The Hardee County School Board has a high mobility rate and is the only district in Florida to do an alternate Survey 2 which takes place in December. The growth must exceed the October count by 5%. All of our elementary schools are Title One schools: therefore our Title One population is 53%. Our free and reduced lunch rate is among the highest in the state with a county average of 73%. The rates are as follows:

School Name	Location	Percentages
Hardee Senior High	Wauchula, Florida	54
Hardee Junior High	Wauchula, Florida	73
Wauchula Elementary	Wauchula, Florida	65
North Wauchula Elementary	Wauchula, Florida	72
Bowling Green Elementary	Bowling Green, Florida	90
Zolfo Elementary	Zolfo Springs, Florida	85
Pioneer Career Academy	Zolfo Springs, Florida	Alternative School 60

The pupil/teacher ratio for Hardee County PK- 3 is 1 to 16, 4 – 8 is 1 to 17, 9 -12 is 23.

The Superintendent is an elected position with five school board members, which are also elected. Hardee County has sixteen district administrators and fourteen school level administrators. The total classroom teachers are 333. Support personnel for the district totals 312.

2.2 Planning Process

The planning process is inclusive of all stakeholders in the system. These stakeholders include:

- Citizens
- Parents
- Students
- School and district employees
- Superintendent and Board members
- Civic agencies and institutions
- Educational institutions
- Business partners

The District Technology Committee provides the organizational leadership to produce the District Technology Plan and any revisions to it. The Technology Plan is reviewed by district and school committees prior to approval by the School Board of Hardee County and becoming part of the district strategic planning process.

Annual opportunities for input are also afforded to school and community committees and organizations including, but not limited to:

- Board appointed advisory committees for curriculum, facilities, and finance
- School-based committees for curriculum, facilities, and finance
- Hardee Education Association
- District Advisory Council
- School Advisory Councils
- School PTO's
- Florida Diagnostic Learning Resource Center (FDLRS)

2.3 Collaboration with Adult Literacy Service Providers

Adult literacy services are provided to district residents who are 18 years or older by the Adult Education Department of the Hardee County School Board. The Adult Education Department is connected to the district office via fiber through Hardee Junior High's server. Adult Education uses New Century software to re-mediate learning problems.

Section 3

Needs Assessment/Goals

3.1 Needs Identification Process

The District Technology Committee reviews the needs assessment information communicated by stakeholders. Instruments for gathering that input include but are not limited to the following:

- Florida DOE Technology Resources Survey
- District Technology Survey
- School Technology Surveys
- Grant Reports such as Enhancing Education Through Technology
- School Improvement Plans
- School Technology Plans
- Standardized test results from FCAT
- Principals' Survey from FloridaLeaders.net
- Internal inventory audits
- Expenditure reports from the Finance Department
- Florida Learning Alliance Evaluation Report

The leadership for the Needs Identification Process is provided by a subcommittee of the District Technology Committee and includes district MIS Information Technology, Instructional Technology, and Finance office staff members. This committee analyzes the data collected and uses the input to assess progress made toward District technology goals; to assess the integration of technology in all areas of the curriculum, ESOL, and special needs students including students with disabilities; to strategize how to incorporate technology and telecommunications into education in ways that improve student learning; to assess the training needs of personnel; to track the return on public investments in education technology; to help guide an understanding of how and under what conditions technology is an effective tool for learning; to provide input into policies, procedures, and guidelines needed to help employees, parents, and students use technology effectively; and to make a final determination of goals and objectives.

3.2 Identified Needs

The Needs Identification Process documented the following needs:

Telecommunications Services:

- Tel-Co provided circuits connecting school to district office and FIRN POP
- District owned wireless circuits connecting schools to district office and FIRN
- Fiber connections
- Wide Area Network bandwidth for additional data needs
- 56k connections
- Tel-Co Services for both local and long distance communications
- Centrex services provided in collaboration with Department of Management Services for discounted long distance rates

Technology Infrastructure

- Local Area Network bandwidth and backbone technology
- Network Operating Systems and server technologies
- Caching technology
- District and schools web presence
- Distance learning
- Satellite connectivity
- LAN and WAN monitoring capabilities
- Maintenance and obsolescence/replacements
- Appropriate Use Procedures and Guidelines
- LAN standards

Equipment/Hardware

- Student and employee workstations, portable computing devices, printer peripherals
- LAN and WAN equipment
- Web, Network OS, and caching servers
- Digital recording and editing equipment
- Establishment of District Minimum Hardware Standards
- Maintenance and obsolescence/replacement strategy
- State of the art equipment in media centers, including presentation devices (laptops, LCD/DLP projectors, wireless devices that is available to entire faculty).

Assistive Technology

- Identification of sources for assistive technology
- Appropriate placement of assistive technology
- Mechanisms for district awareness of current research and legislation

Educational Materials, Programs, Software

- Custom code for district software
- Administrative
- Instructional
- Pre-purchase evaluation process and guidelines
- Maintenance and obsolescence/replacement
- Purchasing and licensing

Maintenance

- Warranty and out-of-warranty repair procedures
- Emergency and inclement weather procedures
- Routine maintenance for cleaning, storage, and optimizing performance

Training

- Appropriate staff development for all district and school personnel
- Integration of technology training into Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDP)
- Varying modalities of delivery: workshops, online, university, vendor-provided
- Funding for stipends and substitutes, outside trainers, training labs, training materials and district trainers
- Methods to distribute “best practices” to district and school-based staff development personnel, including means of assessment/evaluation.

Support

- School-based support personnel
- District-based support personnel

3.3 District Technology Goals

Goal 1 All students and educators will have equitable and effective access to technology during and beyond the school day.

Objectives:

- Provide a ratio of one to one computer access, either desktop or laptop, to every student and/or teacher.

Goal 2 An infrastructure that supports all students will provide state-of-the-art voice, video and data access to the point of learning.

Objectives:

- Provide wireless technology from the district WAN to the school site LAN.
- Provide video conferencing for interactive learning within the district.
- Increase bandwidth at all schools as funds and technologies become available
- Provide communications services for local and long distance telecommunications

Goal 3 In order to enhance the impact of technology on student performance, all educators will master and model educational technology standards as established by the Department of Education.

Objectives:

- Provide Technology Resource Teachers at each school site to train teachers to better serve students.

- Assess teachers and administrators through various instruments, example: Surveys, District or State Assessments, ITSE standards adopted by Enhancing Education Through Technology program, etc.

Goal 4 All educators will receive “just-in-time” support.

Objectives:

- Each site will receive school-based assistance by Technology Resource Specialist.
- The district staff will monitor a helpdesk for both hardware and software needs. These requests will be handled on a priority system.

Goal 5 All students will become proficient users of technology.

Objective:

- Provide students with software packages, which will assist them in the world of work, and educational software packages, which will assist them in becoming better learners. Examples: Microsoft Office, Choices, Jostens, Accelerated Reader, New Century, Cisco, Atomic Learning – online, etc.

Goal 6 Schools will be accountable for the effective utilization of technology resources by educators and students.

Objectives:

- The Hardee School District Staff to include: appropriate district and school level staff (e.g., Coordinator of Instructional Technology, MIS Director, media specialists, etc.) will provide a comprehensive array of technology-related professional development and training opportunities.
- Proficient use of technology to increase student learning will be incorporated into the Individualized Professional Development Plan.
- Appropriate district and school level staff (e.g., Coordinator of Instructional Technology, MIS Director, media specialists, etc.) will provide the required support to promote technology as an effective tool for enhancing the delivery of curriculum content, analyzing assessment data, and facilitate student learning.
- Appropriate district and school level staff (e.g., Coordinator of Instructional Technology, MIS Director, media specialists, etc.) will instruct teachers on the available curricula internet sites which will assist to develop lesson plans in alignment with the Sunshine State Standards.

Section 4

Funding Plan/Budget

4.1 Major Funding Sources

The district utilizes a variety of funding sources toward meeting technology needs. Sources for both recurring and nonrecurring funds include those shown below. The funding plan is updated annually during the planning and budgeting process.

Recurring Fund Sources – subject to continued state and federal legislation

- Florida Education Finance Program
- Supplemental Academic Instruction
- Public School Technology Fund
- Teacher Training
- Workforce Development
- Instructional Materials
- School Recognition/Merit Schools
- Vocational Education Acts
- Job Training Partnership Act
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I, Title II and Title VI
- Public Education Capital Outlay

Nonrecurring Fund Sources

- Grants such as Enhancing Education Through Technology
- Programs such as E-Rate
- Community and business support
- PTO funds

4.2 Sufficient Budget for Acquisition and Maintenance

The identification of priorities for technology spending will occur through the annual planning and budgeting process. The School Board plans on budgeting by a priority list.

The following areas are considered in the budgeting process for acquisition and maintenance:

- All district schools are connected to the district's wide area network, and all schools have local area networks. All classrooms have access to the Internet through FIRN, which allows use of the Internet for classroom instruction. All administrative areas have adequate equipment and access to the wide area network and the Internet. All schools have T-1 connectivity accomplished by the district.

- The district uses the McAleer package for finance and human resources. McAleer is a Windows system, which runs on a Dell server purchased specifically for this software. McAleer users have received, staff development trainings, conducted by the finance department. The system is proficient in supplying the district with finance and human resources capabilities.
- The district uses the Genesis School package for the student database. Genesis is a windows based system developed by Heartland Data Systems/ESE, Inc., which runs on a Compaq server purchased specifically for this software. All data clerks have received new computers and have received training. Heartland Data Systems/ESE, Inc. and the MIS department assist all clerks with any technical questions or problems.
- The district presently utilizes GradeQuick as the district-wide gradebook program. This software application permits teachers to record grades, maintain attendance, and report descriptive statistical information for analyzing student performance. A server-based version of GradeQuick is currently being used to import grades into the district wide student data package at five school sites (Hardee Senior High, Hardee Junior High, Wauchula Elementary, and Zolfo Springs Elementary). The remaining school sites using a stand-alone version of GradeQuick (Bowling Green Elementary, North Wauchula Elementary, and Hilltop Elementary) will be upgraded to a server-based platform beginning in the 2006 academic school year. It is anticipated that the district will expand GradeQuick to include a web portal for grade processing and for community / parent viewing with secure passwords.
- The IEPlanner is PC based and soon to be server based. The ESE department has trained ESE teachers and staff to produce IEP's using this software package and forwarding them to the district office via e-mail.
- The district uses GroupWise to provide an e-mail system for all personnel. GroupWise is a Novell package, which runs on a Novell server. This system is available on every employee's desktop and is available through the web server. No additional needs at this time.
- The district has purchased site licenses for instructional and administrative software. These site licenses will continue to be supported if they remain a priority in the annual planning process.
- Training needs are met in a variety of ways. The Coordinator of Instructional Technology provides workshops and professional development opportunities; schools schedule their own training; district technical staff provides training; vendors provide specialized training. Additionally, district wide technology workshops are scheduled on an as-need basis. Online training is also available and personnel are sent to out of county workshops and conferences.
- The district currently employs a comprehensive assortment of staff to assist schools in the area of technology. The MIS department consists of an administrative director, three technicians that serve as both network managers and data technicians, one technology contact per school site (6 total), and a Director's Secretary who serves as additional technical resource when needed. Educational technology services (e.g., professional development) are provided by the District Coordinator of Instructional Technology.

4.3 FEFP Allocation

FEFP is shown in Appendix A. The Hardee County School Board allocates five dollars per un-weighted FTE to each school. An additional fifty cents per un-weighted FTE is allocated for staff development issues related to technology. This plan has been approved by the Hardee County School Board.

Section 5

Technology Acquisition Plan

5.1 Technologies Selected to Meet District Instructional Goals

All hardware purchases must comply with the minimum hardware standards established by the district and implemented by the district's MIS Department. All network equipment purchases must comply with the district's standards. School hardware and equipment purchases are determined by the goals of School Improvement and Technology Plans, the results of a school's technology assessment tool, the results of DOE's Technology Resources Star Chart Survey, and through consultation with the specific program allocating the funds.

5.2 Software and Other Technology-based Educational Materials Acquisition Plans

Instructional software for district acquisition is recommended and reviewed by district curriculum specialists, school technology committees, district administration (Director of MIS/Informational Technology and Coordinator of Instructional Technology), and school principals.

The Florida Educational Software Catalog is available for all stakeholders to consult. This online catalog (<http://www.itrc.uct.edu/doecat/>), maintained by Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Educational Technology, enables the district and schools to:

- Acquire software products in a variety of formats at substantial discount.
- Purchase without the need for an internal bid process from each district.
- Access associated information regarding quality, proper/intended use, and Sunshine State Standard coverage.

5.3 Acquisition Timetable

Acquisition of grade-appropriate, up-to-date technologies in sufficient quantities to accommodate student and staff needs for instruction and assessment will be determined annually through the needs assessment process.

Acquisition will take into account teachers' and other personnel's needs for training to use the technologies effectively.

5.4 Technology Acquisition Policies and Procedures

All technology purchase orders are reviewed to ensure their compliance with the district's acquisition policies and procedures. Purchasing decisions are reviewed in view of the following:

- Consistency and interoperability with the equipment in existing and planned local area networks and the wide area network.
- Upward migration to emerging technology standards; and
- Support and maintenance agreements.

5.5 Technical Guidance for Purchasing Decisions

The district Director of MIS, Coordinator of Instructional Technology, and other staff members are available to district and school personnel to assist them in making technology related purchasing decisions. Recommendations from vendors and consultants will also be used.

Section 6

Access

6.1 Policies for Equitable and Effective Access

It is the district's policy to provide equitable and effective access to telecommunications and other technologies to support teaching and learning. To this end, the following commitments have been made:

- Resources to support the Sunshine State Standards will be allocated on an equitable basis. Schools purchase software and equipment based on the goals and objectives in their School Improvement Plan.
- Teachers, parents and students will be provided access to the best teaching practices and curriculum resources through technology.
- Access will be provided for students with special needs including those students with disabilities.
- Access will be provided to external instructional service and programming providers such as public libraries, remote teaching sites, online products and other services.
- Access to information for decision-making by teachers and administrators will be provided. This information will include, but not be limited to, annual School Advisory Council Reports and State Disaggregated Achievement Reports. All personnel also have access to the wealth of information on the DOE and FIRN 2 websites.
- The Hardee County School District will continuously aim to provide all students, teachers, and administrators with access to digital content and information.

6.2 Acceptable Use Policy

The primary goals of district's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is two-fold: (1) preclude any inappropriate or illegal online activities and the deliberate or unintentional disclosure of information deemed sensitive (e.g., student records). A copy of the district's AUP appears in Appendix B. This document is available to all staff and reviewed annually and/or as the legal climate surrounding student confidentiality rights and other related issues change.

6.3 Technology Protection Measure

In an effort to prevent inappropriate online activities, the district reserves the right to block access to inappropriate websites and monitor Internet usage. The district presently uses 8e6 Technologies as its principal Technology Protection Measure. This program filters Internet access and protects against access by adults and minors of visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors.

8e6 Technologies benefits include: Real-time monitoring, ability to customize reports, large content database of URLs to ensure that students get necessary information from the Internet while protecting them from inappropriate material. For the purpose of CIPA (Children's Internet

Protection Act) certification, 8e6 Technologies provide the tools necessary to meet these federal requirements, which include content filtering for:

- Adult-oriented material,
- Extremist-militant material
- Racist or hate-oriented material
- Incitement of resistance to or insurrection against lawful authority (seditious material)

The district also uses the FIRN 2 Internet Content Filtering Software and adheres to the FIRN 2 Acceptable Use Policy.

Section 7

User Support Plan

7.1 Network Management and Support

Network management and improved support for end-users in classrooms and district offices are accomplished by district technical staff and supported by school-based personnel. The wide area network includes online interactive network management protocols. Built in HTML software on routers and switches provides information on port-level statistics and management. Switches and routers can be managed from any internal location. End-user management is accomplished with PCAnywhere software. With this software, technicians can control end-users computers to do software installs and repairs. Remote management software allows for faster repairs and insures maximum uptime. Zenworks has been purchased and will be available for remote control, repair and upgrades of instructional computers.

The district needs assessment continues to show a high priority for support for end-users. Technical support personnel will be added as funding resources allow.

7.2 District Support for Equipment Maintenance and Replacement

District technicians review equipment repair and usage records and make the decision on whether repair or replacement is the best option.

Section 8

Professional Development

8.1 Training for Increased Technology Use

The effective use of technology has led to new, innovative, and successful methods for delivering quality education. Consequently, technology will continue to remain an important variable in the future success of students. As technology becomes progressively more complex, professional development and training for faculty has shifted from an option to a necessity. School districts eager to include or expand technology in their curricula will find it essential to provide adequate support services and relevant resources for faculty. Moreover, technology must be promoted as a tool for increasing teacher productivity and improving classroom learning.

The Hardee County School District recognizes that the successful utilization and purposeful integration of technology into instruction is not only dependent upon the proficiency and confidence of faculty, but the quality of support and resources they receive. As a result, school and district-wide professional development activities are developed with close corroboration between the various program directors, school principals, and instructional personnel with

continued support from the Coordinator of Instructional Technology and Director of MIS/Informational Technology.

In order to promote technology as a tool for increasing teacher productivity and improving classroom learning, the Coordinator of Instructional Technology serves to offer training and professional development opportunities for instructional faculty from all academic disciplines, school administrators, and paraprofessionals. Guidance and support is also provided on effectively integrating technology into the classroom and curriculum. To achieve these goals and tasks, the Coordinator of Instructional Technology, with assistance and support from the Director of MIS/Informational Technology, performs the following functions

- Closely collaborates with administrators (principals, APs, and district-level), faculty, and staff to facilitate, promote, and support the pedagogical use of technology in the classroom.
- Develops, coordinates, and provides a comprehensive, technology in-service program to improve teacher proficiency with the use of technology as an instructional tool.
- Researches and evaluates new technologies to increase teacher effectiveness/efficiency and enhance student learning.
- Provides support to faculty regarding pedagogical and technology related issues--this includes the successful use and application of available technologies.

Technology related trainings and professional development opportunities provided by the Coordinator of Instructional Technology and MIS Department are aligned to ISTE National Educational Technology Standards (NETS).

Acquiring technology-based professional development activities that minimize teacher time away from the classroom is a priority. Trainings by the Coordinator of Instructional Technology, , FDLRS personnel, Community College personnel and others are primarily conducted during after school hours. In addition, trainings are available from various online sources.

8.2 Training and Technical Assistance Sources

The district Coordinator of Instructional Technology, Director of Student Academic Services, the Curriculum Director, MIS Director through the resources listed below.

- District and school personnel responsible for providing technical training and support.
- State Professional Development allocation.
- Outside consultants and vendor-provided training.
- Conferences and workshops such as the Florida Educational Technology Conference.
- Other programs and grants at the Heartland Educational Consortium, FDLRS, Title I Technical Assistance Center, and 21st Century and Enhancing Education Through Technology.

A list of ongoing trainings is available to teachers and other staff members at the district Staff Development Office, the district website, and on the Heartland Educational Consortium website.

Section 9

Evaluation

9.1 Process for Ongoing Evaluation

The district will evaluate the impact of technology on school curriculum and instruction and student achievement on an annual basis. The annual Florida DOE Technology Resource Survey / Star Chart will be examined along with other data available through various grant implementations such as EETT, FloridaLeaders.net and Florida Learning Alliance. This evaluation will include an assessment of how technology is:

- being integrated into the school curriculum.
- affecting student achievement and progress toward meeting the educational goals of the Sunshine State Standards.

9.2 Mid-Course Corrections

The Technology Plan will be updated as needed and annually. The District Technology committee meets periodically throughout the year and has the ability to make mid-course corrections in response to new developments and opportunities as they arise.

Hardee County School Board

Addendum to the District Technology Plan

The District Technology Plan is to be amended by accepting the goals and objectives of the Enhancing Education Through Technology Part 1 and the schedule/timeline of Professional Competency and Accountability Strands as outlined in this grant proposal.

This addendum applies to Goal 3 of the existing plan, which states, “In order to enhance the impact of technology on student performance, all educators will master and model educational technology standards as established by the Department of Education.”