

Anchor Assignment #4: Examine Tech Equity

By: Levent Erdogan

Contextualization:

In the following memo/action plan, I have outlined areas that I feel should be addressed in the school, based on my interview with my Director of EdTech.

These areas include:

- 1) Digital Citizenship (ISTE Standard 2b);
- 2) Data Management and Privacy (ISTE Standard 3d)
- 3) Professional Development of Faculty (ISTE Standard 1a)

These are areas of concern that have been directly impacted by the pandemic. With each, I have outlined some reasons why I feel these are below standard, and I have included some strategies for future growth.

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Dear <Name of Head of School>,

I am excited to be writing to you today to provide my recommendations for improving school culture and how tech is used within our school. I had an excellent meeting with <Name of Director of EdTech>, our Director of EdTech, and I was pleased to hear about so many excellent things happening in the school with the power of EdTech. That being said, I do have a few suggestions of areas of improvement and growth as we move forward and into a post-pandemic teaching environment.

My main three areas of concern are:

- Digital Citizenship training with students and parents
- Data privacy practices
- Professional development opportunities for teachers

Digital Citizenship

From my interview with <Name of Director of EdTech> this appeared to be an area of concern and has been directly impacted as a result of the pandemic. From our conversation, I discovered teachers have been focussing less in this area, and more on trying to cover their basic curriculum content, mainly because many teachers have lost so much contact time with students and have had to prioritize what to teach. This is not a fault of our teachers and staff, rather, a unique circumstance of the pandemic.

One element that I have appreciated learning about how the school has handled the pandemic is that leaders in the school have prioritized student and faculty well-being over

curriculum, and making sure everyone is healthy, both physically and mentally. Rather than trying to achieve all that we had been able to achieve prior to the pandemic. Though, now that students are slowly beginning to come back and teachers have had time to become accustomed to their new routines, I feel it is important for us to begin to address the topic of Digital Citizenship once again, since students are spending so much time on their screens and issues have surfaced as a direct result.

My recommendation is to revisit our previously used lessons in this area, but make sure to update these presentations with new areas of concern developed throughout the pandemic. I feel we should also work towards creating adapted Digital Citizenship lessons for the online teaching environment as well, and find activities to suit this platform, since the situation is still volatile and we do not know whether or not we will be online, or in person, this coming September. Therefore, I suggest we prepare for both scenarios.

I also think that when teachers return in August, we take some time with teachers to readdress some of the bigger concerns, and highlight issues we've been having over the pandemic, then ensure all faculty and staff are on the same page before we roll out our plan. Taking the opportunity to hear faculty concerns will be an integral part to this process and I feel this should not be overlooked.

In addition to these suggestions, I feel providing ways to engage our parents in the community to help support their understanding of what their children are using would also support digital citizenship outside of the school, while we aren't with our students. This would be an important part of addressing problems we may be having with our students, whether it be in-person workshops or online.

Data Privacy

This was an area of concern that I discovered during my interview and it seemed that there was no one specifically in charge of ensuring data privacy for students, nor has there been someone managing the collection and destruction of data. Even though it seems that the responsibility has been placed on teachers to ensure they are adhering to proper Data Privacy guidelines while handling students' data, I strongly feel that having someone to oversee this would help the school avoid accidental privacy breaches in the future.

After assigning a designated staff member to oversee this, this person can also provide staff support and information on best practices. This person can also oversee the destruction of collected data and document actions taken by the school to provide inspectors when they request this information for accreditation.

Professional Development

It is obvious with the pandemic it has been very difficult for teachers to continue with their professional development goals. I did appreciate hearing that prior to the pandemic there were regular days where teachers would lead "demo slams" or "micro-PD" sessions with other teachers, however, this has all stopped since the pandemic began. Now that things are slowly getting back to normal, I would like to suggest the school revisit our professional development goals.

As a part of this plan, I would suggest two opening session themes. I would recommend we start by having teachers demo "*1 Thing That Has Worked Through The Pandemic*" to share their success stories with others. Since online learning is still so relevant and fresh in our minds, I feel this would be a great start to kick off our regular PD sessions once again. Following this, I'd like to suggest a "*Tools I'd Like To Try*" session, where teachers share an idea they've had, but haven't had a chance to implement. Teachers can share the tool, with a small amount of research or a few reasons why they think they'd like to try it, then open up for conversation with other attendees in each session. This can be relevant as there has been a large influx of

These two topics alone could last a number of sessions and I predict would be a great kickstart for getting our faculty motivated to continue with their professional development once again.

I hope these suggestions have been helpful and I appreciate the opportunity to audit the use of tech within our school. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warm regards,
Levent Erdogan