

Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg

Tech Planning for Schools



Purpose of Tech Plan

- Way to plan for the effective use of administrative and educational technologies in support of the entity's:
 - Mission
 - Vision
 - Goals



Who **MUST** complete a tech plan

- Any entity that is currently receiving or plans to apply for:
 - E-rate funds
 - Act 183 eFund grant
 - Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) funds
 - Any other state or federal programs that require an approved technology plan
- NOTE: if you are part of a consortium and the consortium lead is receiving funds on your behalf
 - you must have an approved plan

Tech Plan Due Dates and Effective Years

- Due date is September 30 (approximate)
- Tech plans are submitted on September 30 for 2 reasons:
 - To guarantee the “written” requirement for E-Rate is met
 - To allow time for the review process
- Tech plans should be written for the coming fiscal years – July 1 – June 30
- Your approval letter will indicate the effective years of your plan (eg, July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2013)
- Remember: Tech plans can be amended any time during their approved years

Basic Tech Plan Requirements for E-Rate

- **Tech plans must:**
 - Be created before Form 470/RFP posting
 - Cover all 12 months of the funding year
 - Contain all components
 - Contain a sufficient level of detail to validate the funding request
 - Be approved before services start (typically July 1)
 - Be approved for not more than 3 years

Tech Plan Components

- Mission, Vision and Shared Values (from strategic plan)
- Needs Assessment
- Goals and Strategies (and Activities)
- Budget
- Professional Development
- Evaluation

Mission, Vision and Shared Values

- These sections are pre-populated from your school strategic plan
- Most cases these will not need to be modified
- They should be the official mission, vision and shared values for your entity

Needs Assessment

- A narrative to assess what will be needed to improve education:
 - Telecommunications services
 - Hardware
 - Software
 - Any other services
- Provide an overview of your existing technology
 - How it is currently used
 - How effective is it
 - What are the deficiencies (how can it be improved)
- Based on existing technology, describe new technology needs

Consider the following:

- What developments in technology have emerged that you can take advantage of to improve education for your school or community?
- How do you identify potentially useful new technologies (e.g., attending conferences, reading publications, and networking with peers)?
- What strengths and weaknesses, related to technology, have been identified by staff, students or parents? (utilize district and community wide staff, student and parent/community member surveys)

Goals and Strategies (and Activities)

- Existing goals for strategic plan will be available
 - As much as possible, use over-arching goals of entity
 - Identify specific strategies and activities related to technology
- **Strategies** will identify the methods you will use to attain the goal and are based on research or best practices
- **Activities** should detail the specific telecommunications services, hardware, software or other services you will be using
 - Simply – who will do what and when
 - Allocate appropriate resources and assign a timeframe

Consider the following:

- What goals have you identified in your strategic plan?
- What accompanying strategies and activities have already been identified to reach those goals?
- What additional strategies and activities are needed to attain these goals?
- What specific telecommunications and information technologies (such as access to the Internet, access to remote databases, distance learning, etc.) are useful in helping you reach those goals?
- What are the specific resources (e.g., trainers, selected curricular software, Internet access, links to subscribed databases, etc.) that you plan to help reach your goals for improved teaching and learning?

Example #1

Goal -We will utilize innovative technology to engage our students and increase student learning

- **Strategy #1** – Establish a reliable and scalable school district network infrastructure to support our education technology initiatives.
 - *Complete necessary infrastructure upgrades including but not limited to interbuilding switches and mail server.*
 - *Standardize all equipment and software for ease of troubleshooting and upgrades and tracking.*
 - *Implement a System Update Server to automatically push out and install operating system and other software updates and patches.*
 - *Implement new anti-virus server to automatically push out and install definitions in a timely manner.*
 - *Design and implement proper power, temperature and backup procedures for school district data center.*

Example #2

Goal -We will utilize innovative technology to engage our students and increase student learning

- **Strategy #2** – Implement education technology resources to enhance the educational experience of our students.
 - *Implement technology integrator positions that will assist teachers in developing lessons that utilize the technology to the fullest extent.*
 - *Survey school district personnel on technology comfortability and current technology skillsets.*
 - *Implement distance learning tools such as video-conferencing units, blogs, wikis and moodles.*
 - *Establish professional development schedule to train teachers on proper use and integration of educational technology resources.*
 - *Research and determine conferences for teachers to attend to share best practices and learn new ways to integrate technology into curriculum.*

Budget

- Your plan should include a realistic budget for the 3 years it will cover
- Budgets can be projections
 - Budgets should be based on reasonable expectations of receiving funding and incurring expenses
- Budget figures should be entered for any acquisition of services or goods
- NOTE: services or goods that are purchased with E-rate or eFund require a secondary funding source
- REMEMBER: Budget should span the coming three fiscal years (if creating a new plan)

Professional Development

- Professional Development activities should be included in your Action Plan (Goals and Strategies)
 - To delineate specific professional development
- In this narrative include an overview of the professional development that you indicated (in your Action Plan) will be implemented to ensure that staff know how to use technologies to improve education

Consider the following:

- What are the specific resources, strategies and activities that you plan to implement to ensure that all of your staff is ready to use and maintain technology?
- Who will be in charge of facilitating the professional development activities?
- Are there in-service slots set aside for technology-related professional development?
- Will the professional development be required for all that use it, or is it optional? If optional, what incentives exist to encourage teachers to pick up these new skills?
- What models of professional development would work in your organization to train your staff?
- Do you have the resources in house to train these staff members or do they need to go to outside providers, or a combination of the two?
- What financial and time resources exist to keep the staff up to date in learning about new technologies?
- What professional development opportunities are available from outside sources (such as service providers, courses at institutions of higher education, conferences, courses delivered via distance learning or over the Internet; courses sponsored by your state education or library agency)?
- What professional development opportunities and resources exist for your professional staff (i.e., teachers or librarians) to ensure that they can not only use the new technologies, but to use them to deliver improved teaching and learning or improved library services?
- What classes or seminars are available to your staff on an ongoing basis within your organization?
- Can your staff meet with others who are already further along in implementing technology in another school or library?
- What professional development is available from service providers?
- What professional development opportunities are available from outside sources (such as service providers, courses at institutions of higher education, conferences, courses delivered via distance learning or over the Internet; courses sponsored by your state education agency)?

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Your plan must include a monitoring process to ensure technology implementation and integration are occurring appropriately.
- Your plan must include an evaluation process that enables the LEA to determine progress and efficacy of the plan implementation.

Consider the following:

- Who will be responsible for monitoring activities? (e.g. Technology Coordinator, Professional Development Coordinator, etc)
- How will activities be monitored? And how often?
- How will you determine technology integration is occurring appropriately? (e.g. is technology used regularly to enrich curriculum?, is the technology used right for the task?)
- How will you determine technology implementation is appropriate for your identified needs?

Consider the following:

- How will you determine if the plan was successful in meeting the goals (e.g., interview/survey staff, patrons, other stakeholders; measuring progress made towards the benchmarks you set out in your goals; observations)?
- What goals and strategies of the plan were you able to meet? To what extent?
- Were there any unexpected outcomes or benefits to having the technology in place?
- What goals and strategies of the technology plan did you not meet? Why? Are there ways to overcome these barriers?
- What is the plan for meeting unmet goals and strategies?
- Are there other needs that have emerged since you last wrote/revised your plan? If so, what are they?
- Are there any goals and strategies that are no longer relevant to your situation and should be deleted from the plan?

Information for Audits

- Most audits request approval letters and tech plans (among other information)
- Approval letters and archived approved plans should be maintained by school and Diocese

Questions...

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