Increasing the usage of Microsoft Office tools through staff and student development

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CAPSTONE PROJECT PROPOSAL

Cobb County School District is the second largest district in the metropolitan Atlanta area and the 24th largest in county. The school district consists of 112,708 students, with 5,952 teachers serving over 114 schools. The student population consists of; 39% white, 31.5% Black, 20.3% Hispanic, 5.2% Asian, 3.6% Multiracial with less than 1% American Indian and Pacific Islander. The county boasts a graduation rate of 81.4% and offers such high school magnet programs as; International Studies, Engineering & Biotechnology, Performing Arts and International Baccalaureate (Cobb County School District, 2016).

The district has recently made a large investment into equipping both educators and students alike with innovative 21st tools. Under the moto, "One Student, One Goal, Student Success", County Superintendent, Chris Ragsdale, Dr. Angela Bacon (Chief Technology Officer) and Cristin Kennedy (Director of Instructor Technology) have pushed the county into the 21st century. The district has lead the way by purchasing Microsoft Office 365 and Office 2013 for not only every teacher but also every students as well. This software package is available to all teachers and students free of charge and includes such programs as; PowerPoint, Word, Excel, OneDrive, Skype for Business and OneNote.

For the purpose of this project, the staff and students will be the stakeholders along with the district. The project has received permission from the Cobb County Instructional Technology Department.

STATEMENT of PROBLEM, NEED AND RATIONALE

The large investment in Microsoft Office was done to address the needs of the 21st century learner and fill the technology gap that exists in today's schools. According to the

research study, *Defining 21st Century Readiness for All Student: What We Know and How to Get There,* by Helen Soule, and Tatyana Warrick, "our education system is failing to adequately prepare all students with essential 21st century knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in school, career, life, and citizenship" (Soule and Warrick, 2015, page 179). The study found that teachers need a solid 21st century training in order to better prepare their students for the jobs of future. The study goes on to state that, "The challenge of creating authentic 21st century learning opportunities rests in the hands of education communities and its many stakeholders" (p.185). It is the role and duty of stakeholders to better equip the students for the jobs of the future.

Along with equipping students for the jobs of the future, instructional technology and Office 365 offer benefits to the classroom as well. Integrating instructional technology into the classroom and classroom instruction can increase student motivation, learning efficacy, curiosity and creativity (Liu, S. H., Tsai, H. C., & Huang, Y. T. (2015). If students are not motivated and actively engaged in instruction, they are not learning to their full potential. Instructional technology and Office 365, helps students collaboratively engage in instruction.

This project is focused on increasing the usage of Microsoft Office tools through staff and student development. The staff development process will empower teachers to use Microsoft Office Suite to innovate instruction and increase student collaboration. The project will also encourage students to utilize the Office suite of software by signup for the free program. The project will encourage teachers to promote the use of Office 365 tools in the classroom and incorporate the suite into daily instruction. The project will utilize school wide staff development as well as, one-on-one and small group. As a Technology Training Integration

Specialist, I will implement the project as part of district training initiative. The Training

associated with the project will incorporate several different forms as I attempt to work with

demanding schedules of the educators I serve.

OBJECTIVES/DELIVERABLES

- Based on the goals and directions of the county and the needs of those in the

  educational field, I plan to deliver staff development and support by;

- This Capstone project will increase teachers' comfort with using Microsoft Office Suite

  of software as an educational tool.

- This Capstone project will increase teacher created lessons that utilize Microsoft Office

  using sound research based pedagogy.

- This Capstone project will increase and extend the use of Office 365 and Office 2013 to

  staff and students.

- This Capstone project will increase student usage and signup for Office 365.

PSC STANDARDS

Standard 1: Visionary Leadership

Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to inspire and lead the

development and implementation of a shared vision for the effective use of technology to

promote excellence and support transformational change throughout the organization.

Element 1.1 Shared Vision

Candidates facilitate the development and implementation of a shared vision for the use

of technology in teaching, learning, and leadership. (ISTE NETS-C 1.B)

Element 1.2 Strategic Planning

Candidates facilitate the design, development, implementation, communication, and

evaluation of technology-infused strategic plans. (ISTE NETS-C 1.B)

Standard 2: Teaching, Learning, & Assessment

Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively integrate

technology into their own teaching practice and to collaboratively plan with and assist other

educators in utilizing technology to improve teaching, learning, and assessment.

Element 2.1 Content Standards & Student Technology Standards

Candidates model and facilitate the design and implementation of technology enhanced

learning experiences aligned with student content standards and student technology

standards. (ISTE NETS-C 2.A)

Element 2.3 Authentic Learning

Candidates model and facilitate the use of digital tools and resources to engage students

in authentic learning experiences. (ISTE NETS-C 2.C)

Element 2.4 Higher Order Thinking Skills

Candidates model and facilitate the effective use of digital tools and resources to support

and enhance higher order thinking skills (e.g., analyze, evaluate, and create); processes

(e.g., problem-solving, decision-making); and mental habits of mind (e.g., critical

thinking, creative thinking, metacognition, self-regulation, and reflection). (ISTE NETS-

C, 2.D)

Element 2.5 Differentiation

Candidates model and facilitate the design and implementation of technology-enhanced

learning experiences making appropriate use of differentiation, including adjusting

content, process, product, and learning environment based upon an analysis of learner

characteristics, including readiness levels, interests, and personal goals. (ISTE NETS-C,

2.E)

Element 2.6 Instructional Design

Candidates model and facilitate the effective use of research-based best practices in

instructional design when designing and developing digital tools, resources, and

technology enhanced learning experiences. (ISTE NETS-C, 2.F)

Standard 3: Digital Learning Environments

Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to create, support, and manage

effective digital learning environments.

Element 3.2 Managing Digital Tools and Resources

Candidates effectively manage digital tools and resources within the context of student

learning experiences. (ISTE NETS-C, 3.C)

Element 3.3 Online & Blended Learning

Candidates develop, model, and facilitate the use of online and blended learning, digital

content, and learning networks to support and extend student learning and expand

opportunities and choices for professional learning for teachers and administrators. (ISTE

NETS-C, 3.C)

Standard 4: Digital Citizenship & Responsibility

Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to model and promote digital

citizenship and responsibility.

Element 4.1 Digital Equity

Candidates model and promote strategies for achieving equitable access to digital tools

and resources and technology-related best practices for all students and teachers. (ISTE

NETS-C, 5.a)

Standard 5: Professional Learning & Program Evaluation

Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to conduct needs assessments,

develop technology-based professional learning programs, and design and implement regular and

rigorous program evaluations to assess effectiveness and impact on student learning.

Element 5.1 Needs Assessment

Candidates conduct needs assessments to determine school-wide, faculty, grade-level,

and subject area strengths and weaknesses to inform the content and delivery of

technology based professional learning programs. (ISTE NETS-C, 4.A)

Element 5.2 Professional Learning

Candidates develop and implement technology-based professional learning that aligns to

state and national professional learning standards, integrates technology to support face-

to face and online components, models principles of adult learning, and promotes best

practices in teaching, learning, and assessment. (ISTE NETS-C, 4.B)

Element 5.3 Program Evaluation

Candidates design and implement program evaluations to determine the overall

effectiveness of professional learning on deepening teacher content knowledge,

improving teacher pedagogical skills and/or increasing student learning. (ISTE NETS-C,

4.C)

CAPSTONE DESCRIPTION

This Capstone project calls for the development and implementation of a school and

countywide staff development plan. For the initial phase of the project, teachers will be the

recipients of staff-wide development training sessions (Table 1). This phase incorporates staff

development trainings at various levels. The levels consist of school wide staff developments,

small group development trainings and one-on-one staff developments. The purpose of these

trainings is to get the teachers more comfortable with the software and how it can be utilized in

the classroom.

Table 1

Deliverables and Project Objectives

Deliverables	Project Objectives
Staff Development Presentation	Increase teacher knowledge and understanding of Microsoft Office products.
Training videos available on Streaming Cobb	Increase teacher knowledge through online tutorials.
Pamphlets for promotion of materials	Increase awareness of Microsoft Office products to the educational community and increase signup.
Signup sheets	Promotional material intended to increase student signup for Microsoft Office products.
Survey to gauge usage and understanding of MS Office	Determine effective teacher use of technology and comfort with Microsoft Office products.

The second phase of the project will include additional training materials such as

pamphlets, training videos and documentation (Table 2). These materials were created, edited

and distributed with the aide of the Cobb County Instructional Technology department. The

materials will be brief in nature and only cover specific operations. The materials utilized will be

vetted through the county for accuracy and quality.

The second phase of this project will incorporate classroom training sessions and the promotion of Microsoft Office products to the educational community. In this phase, I will work closely with teacher to introduce the products to the students and encourage them to sign up for their free copy of the software suite.

EVALUATION PLAN

A series of instruments will be used to collect data qualitative and quantitative data, in accordance with the project timeline (Table 2). The data collected will be used gauge the effectiveness of the study and determine attainment of the objectives. Before beginning the staff training sessions, a survey will be distributed out to the staff to determine the baseline on the comfort level of Microsoft Office Products (Appendix A). The survey will utilize the Likert Scale to determine the staffs comfort level. Once the project nears completion, a similar survey will go out to determine the effectiveness of the staff development. The survey results that indicate greater comfort with Microsoft Office tools, collaboration and increased staff and student utilization will indicate that objectives have been obtained.

Table 2

Project Timeline

Month	Project Item/Activity	Hours
July	Begin developing materials, (training materials, handouts, presentations etc.)	20
August	Implement materials (school-wide training, small group, one-on-one training, administer first survey, collect and analyze).	25
Sept. – Nov.	Continue staff training; promote Office products (modify and improve training materials to meet demands, promote Office 365 to students and families).	30
December	Wrap up training (complete staff development trainings, collect and analyze post survey on Microsoft Office, collect and analyze country and school data on Microsoft Office signup.	25

The second part of the evaluation will determine if the staff development, training materials and promotion has increased student Office 365 signup. The second instrument will utilize district wide data on office 365 signup by students. Before starting the project, county and school data on Office 365 sign-up will be reviewed and used as a benchmark. Once the project is completed, the same data will be generated again and reviewed. Access to the internet along with a personal computer and additional tools will be required to analyze data (Table 3). The results that indicate an increase in signup for Office 365 by students will be considered a success and that objectives have been met.

Table 3

Digital Resources

Resources	Resources Attained	Accessibility
Computer with internet access	Yes	Readily accessible
Microsoft Office 365	Yes	Readily accessible
Microsoft Office 2013	Yes	Readily accessible
Survey software	Yes	Readily accessible
Video editing software	Yes	Readily accessible
Video hosting	Yes	Readily accessible

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<mark>Appendix A</mark>

Sample Survey: Created using Microsoft Form from Office 365.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-x3OL5-ROEmquMR_D8kYLWi2Gjs-GIdCnF1LJdCnxllUQVRBM1BPTTlZR0tJVTg4VVpGM0ExSEdUNi4u

Needs Survey

I would like to provide you with meaningful technology integration training that will

enhance your Digital Age Classroom. Please share your needs.

1. Last Name, First Name

2. Room Number

3. Subject

4. Rate your level of comfort with integrating technology within the classroom. 5

means we can co-empower (teach others) 1 means I really need your assistance

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

5. How comfortable are you with using Office 365 tools? 5 means Very Comfortable

(don't need assistance) 1 means Not Comfortable (need assistance)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

6. Would you like to co-teach a lesson integrating technology? ** This means I will help plan and team up to execute the lesson(s)!

○ Yes

○ No

7. What kind of hardware and/or software do your students currently use in your classroom?

[   ]

8. What hardware tools would be interested in receiving training on?

☐ Document Camera

☐ Interactive Whiteboard

☐ Slate

☐ iRespond

☐ Simplicity Touch

☐ Room Pro

9. Would you be interested in an optional training on the following? (Place a check mark by interests)

☐ Ipad Apps

☐   Office 365 for teachers (OneDrive, OneNote, Sway, Forms, PowerPoint, Excel)

☐   Office 365 for students (OneDrive, OneNote, Sway, PowerPoint, Excel) for students?-

---ALL CCSD STUDENTS HAVE AN OFFICE 365 ACCOUNT WITH STUDENT LOGIN

☐   Student response systems as an assessment tool such as iRespond Now, Socrative,

Kahoot, Quizizz?

☐   Blogging

☐   CCSD hardware tools available at your school

☐   Digital Work Flow

☐   Student Progress Monitoring

☐   Digital Citizenship/Literacy

10. Other training

[ ]

11. Please rank your comfort level on the following Web 2.0 products 1 =

uncomfortable 5= very comfortable OneNote

★★★★★

12. Outlook

★★★★★

13. Sway

★★★★★

14. OneNote

★★★★★

15. PowerPoint

★★★★★

16. Excel

★★★★★

17. Thoughts, concerns, questions comments.