

Shared Vision For Hillgrove High School

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*Keywords:*

## Vision Paper

### **Vision Statement:**

Hillgrove High School will "Provide all students a quality education which promotes, integrity, self-discipline, personal initiative, and academic excellence in safe supportive environment" (Hillgrove High School, 2014). It is the responsibility of all stakeholders to support the integrity and self-discipline of learners by supporting collaborative learning that is combined with responsible digital citizenship. All stakeholders will be included in learning process by utilizing quality research proven resources to promote teaching and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These initiatives will be met by offering training and support to all staff holders and combining that with a robust wireless network that is capable of supporting web 2.0 tools and supporting BYOD initiatives.

### **Rationale:**

Technology is a critical component of Hillgrove High School's commitment to, "deliberate success." The school will create a digital learning environment that addresses all the ISTE Essential Conditions (ISTE) of technology integration. The integration of technology in students collaborative teaching and learning is much more than just giving students computers. According to the educational columnist Nick Sutton, "simply giving a child a computer will not automatically guarantee academic improvement" (Sutton, 2015). Technology initiatives must be combined with intensive research driven teacher professional learning.

Along with intensive and meaningful professional development built around the ISTE standards (ISTE) and Essential Conditions, Hillgrove will also concentrate on the safe and responsible use of technology. This responsible and safe environment begins with integrating intensive digital citizenship classes into the curriculum and vision of the school. The inclusion of digital citizenship will allow Hillgrove students to become truly responsible citizens of the digital age.

According to the Hillgrove's Technology Survey (Hoeh, 2016), distributed to the staff, bring your own device (BYOD) initiatives and adequate training were considered growing concern among the staff. Although the school does utilize BYOD, the staff indicated that there needs to be a more robust infrastructure to support it along with intensive teacher training. The staff also indicated that they believe they receive adequately training, the research calls into question the usefulness of professional development. The school will utilize needs assessments to target the individual needs of teachers and address those areas with intensive professional development. BYOD will be in the area where teachers will gain useful 21<sup>st</sup> century collaborative teaching and learning skills.

### **Diversity Considerations:**

A true 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment needs to be a true democratic place where everyone feels included to participate, collaborate, learn and grow. The entire learning community needs to address technology-related diversity issues that exist within the school and the community. The serving of diverse communities is not just an issue for the school or educational community, but for all stakeholders and the entire community. The staff survey found that over 50% of the school staff identified equitable access as a weakness in the school.

This area needs to be addressed if the school is going to move forward and prepare students for the digital age.

The school will address equitable access for low SES students by offering BYOD classes and increasing the number of laptop carts and tablets available to students. Although 1:1 computer use is the ultimate objective in the long term, current economic conditions require that the school first expand their current technology availability until 1:1 can become a reality. The school and district currently offer collaborative educational tools such as Microsoft Office 365 for free to every student. Leveraging the current available software to the entire community with training will be a major focus for the school and the district. The school will also team with local companies and support initiatives that offer high speed internet access to low income students, such as Comcast's, Internet Essentials program (Comcast, 2016).

Gender groups will be supported by offering programs that highlight the diversity in technology. After school clubs and organizations will be setup that target groups that previously not felt included in technology. The school will collaborate with the community by bringing in guest speakers, instructors and highlighting the diverse populations that exist within the technology field.

Special education and special need students will be addressed by offering learners with assistive technology that addresses their individual needs. Special needs students will receive instruction and technology that support their Individual Educational Program (IEP). Technology will be integrated into the curriculum with the collaboration of special education and general education teachers to make meaningful integration of technology into the classroom. Lesson plans will be created and submitted with the intentional integration of assistive technology.

## **Stakeholder Roles**

### **Administrators' Role:**

The role of the administration is to support teachers by offering quality relevant research-based initiatives that will drive the school vision forward. The Essential Conditions setup by ISTE (ISTE) will be a major motivator in school wide administrative decisions. These decisions will be made with consideration for good pedagogy and teacher development. The administrators will work actively with all stakeholders to support the school vision. Technology itself is not a replacement for good teaching and teachers need to be supported from the top down in order to make the vision of digital age learning a reality in the school.

### **Technology Coaches/Specialists' Role:**

The role of the technology specialist is to support district and school initiatives that integrate technology into the classroom. The technology specialist will coordinate with the district, administration and teachers to offer meaningful and relevant training for the entire staff. Along with offering training, the technology specialist will model true 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning skills. The specialist will help to support instructional technology learning that is authentic, collaborative and supports the district and schools' vision of digital age learning. Just handing teachers technology and expecting them to excel at it is a strategy that destined for failure (Beglau, et al, 2011). The specialist will be available throughout the planning and implementation process to guide teachers and administration throughout the technology integration process. The technology specialist will also investigate new research backed instructional technology tools and trainings that keeps technology instruction and learning relevant.

**Teachers' Role:**

The teacher will be actively engaged in the integration of instructional technology into teaching and learning. The teacher will be an integral part of the vision as they support and execute the shared goal for the classroom. The educator is the key to proper implementation of the shared vision, according to Russel and Sorge,

"[W]e have found that the teacher is the most important ingredient for success when using technology. It is not the computer hardware or software. Good teaching comes first and technology second" (1994, p.8).

In order to support good teaching and keep the teachers first and technology second. All teachers will receive ongoing and relevant support from all stakeholders as they help to drive the school's and district's vision forward. The teachers must commit and support the vision and as such must be a part of process throughout every stage. Without the complete support of teachers, the initiatives put forth from the vision will not succeed.

**Students' Role:**

The role of the student is to work with teachers as they explore, learn and collaborate with new instructional technologies. The student will work with the teachers as they explore new technologies and integrate new ideas and ways of doing things into their everyday instruction. The student will be challenged and forced to grow and expand their understanding of technology and its role in their daily lives. They must remain flexible and accept the fact that not succeeding does not mean failure. As the author John Maxwell stated, "Sometimes we win and sometimes we learn" (Maxwell, J. C., 2013).

**Parents' role:**

The parents must remain patient and actively involved in the education of their child. Parents are a key components to the success or failure of any educational initiative. The vision must be seen as just as much theirs, as their students and the school. Parents must be prepared for new ways of teaching and learning. They must accept that the 21<sup>st</sup> century digital age classroom does not look like classrooms from times past. In order to prepare students for the jobs of the future, the educational community must be committed to embracing that future. As Fisch and MeLeod put it, “We are currently preparing students for jobs that don’t yet exist . . . using technologies that haven’t been invented . . . in order to solve problems we don’t even know are problems yet.”

Parents must be willing to accept that with all great visions there are bumps along the way. No great plan is ever initiated without bumps along the way. It is the role of the parent to remain patient and resolute as the school moves vision and to become actively involved in that vision.

**Community Role:**

The community has an important role in the creation and implementation of the school vision. The community needs to be an active participant in order to make the schoolwide vision a reality. The community just like all other stakeholders needs to remember that the vision cannot be done alone and that the journey may have bumps along the way. The community needs to participate in the process, offering support along the way.

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