North LaFayette Elementary Shared Vision & Rationale

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North LaFayette Elementary Shared Vision Plan and Rationale

Vision Statement

Our county does not currently have a technology vision. However, as described in the mission of Walker County Schools, the purpose of education is to make sure that our students are: Ready for College, Ready for Work, Ready for Life. It is the vision of North LaFayette Elementary School that all students are equipped with the knowledge and technology devices necessary to develop life skills, improve communication, enhance critical thinking skills, and make instruction more engaging, effective, and efficient. North LaFayette will integrate technology into curriculum in all content areas. We will also focus on improving and updating our media center. We will begin to focus our technology usage on the ISTE technology standards. These standards will also be differentiated for use with students with disabilities, as well as meet the diverse learning needs of students with low socioeconomic status and different gender groups. Teachers will be provided professional development training opportunities to focus on the growth of this vision.

Rationale

"A vision helps them explain what the school system is all about in an all-encompassing statement and gives them a tool to support the organization and it's

initiatives, " (Vidal & Casey, 2014). The rationale for this shared vision stems from the collaboration of a range of individuals: PE teacher, three fifth grade teachers, District Technology Coach, a principal, and vice principal. Through teacher observations and feedback from teacher surveys, we have decided that this vision plan is necessary for the future integration and success of technology usage in our school. We decided to begin by looking at our county mission statement, which is that we have our students "Ready for College, Ready for Work, Ready for Life." From that mission, we were able to deliberate about the different resources that we have at North LaFayette, and how our vision should be focused on the usage of these technologies for the success of our students. According to the U.S. Department of Education, it is important that all programs responsible for pre-service teacher training prepare all students to effectively select, evaluate, and use appropriate technologies and resources to create experiences that advance student engagement and learning (Advancing Educational Technology, 2019). Based on the observations and feedback from other teachers, we decided that a present need in our school would be teacher professional development with these technologies and resources.

Our students need to be developing life skills to be able to be successful in the adult world. They will need basic word processing skills, lessons on the proper and safe use of technology, basic spreadsheet usage, and using Microsoft Powerpoint for presentations. When students are older, they will have to be using these applications in high school and college for classes, but also, most adults these days pay their bills online as well. By using our Literacy Lab as a training facility for these skills, our students will be able to learn and improve on these necessary skills.

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Students will also be able to improve communication if they are able to use technology to present information. This would be a great way to use the green screen to make commercials or announcements for other students to watch. Also, by using technology devices, students can use Adobe Spark, Seesaw, or other applications to be able to communicate with their parents on how to do some of the things they are learning to do at school. For example, parents would love the opportunity to have students walk them through how to solve math problems in today's classrooms.

Students also need to work on their critical thinking skills. Our school media center desperately needs to be updated and improved. In order for our students to create morning announcements or other visuals, green screen technology is needed. Also, with integrating STEM activities into our media center, our students will be able to problem solve, collaborate with other students, and be creative with their learning. Another station that is needed should be focused on coding as well.

By using the technology devices and resources that we have available, students will be able to work through programs to make instruction more engaging, effective, and efficient. North LaFayette will purchase instructional programs for our students to use in all content areas.

Diversity Considerations

North LaFayette Elementary is located in rural Northwest Georgia in Walker County. North LaFayette is a Title I traditional public school. The school has 450 students ranging from Pre-Kindergarten to fifth grade. The ethnic diversity of this school is made up of: Asian students (1%), African American students (4%), Hispanic students

(3%), Multi-Racial Students (6%), and Caucasian students (86%). The school has 220 boys and 230 girls. Of those students enrolled, 13% receive Special Education services, 2% who receive ELL services, 19% who are in the Early Intervention Program (EIP), and 10% gifted students (Georgia School Reports, 2018). 63% of students at North LaFayette receive free and reduced lunch/breakfast rate.

Students of low socioeconomic status (SES) make up a large majority of our school. We have access to technology at school, but students still do not have equal access to technology at home. The shared vision will focus on allowing extra time in our media center for students/parents to use technology, have tutoring opportunities, or be able to watch students create instructional videos for parent homework support. Local business partners can also support the technology access outside of school time. Extra time for accessing technology can be before school, after school, during lunch/recess, or a weekly night when the media center can be open as a resource.

Gender specific issues may also be a problem in schools/districts today. Our school has a monthly "club time" in which teachers sponsor clubs regarding different interests. Girls can participate in a Girl Power Club where they are able to blog about different things going on in their lives, collaborate with other students on how to handle those issues, and then respond to others. The boys can participate in coding clubs, or Minecraft-centered technology games. Both genders should have equal opportunities to meet with their gender groups to work with technology and channel their interests.

Stakeholder Roles

District Office Coordinators

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Our county does not currently have technology coaches employed. We do have technology assistance from professionals one day per week in each school. With the support from the Director of Instructional Technology, these individuals will be able to help with technology issues that may arise in regards to this plan. We will focus on strategies that will be effective for all learners, with no indifference to ability to learn, race, gender, or socioeconomic status. Our district coordinators need to also be prepared to hire and support personnel for technology coaching positions as they come available. These coaches would be able to provide training and expertise to staff to support our vision.

Administrators

Our administrators are currently in transition with the knowledge that they have with technology in the classroom. They are very invested in this shared vision plan because of their deficit in technology integration. While they have never taught in an innovative classroom, they do realize the value of technological strategies in instruction. Administration will be involved in professional development process of the teachers. The administration will also support our librarian in the upcoming changes that will be necessary to update and improve our media center into an innovative maker's space.

Teachers

Teacher involvement is a key element in the success of this shared vision. Our teachers will be trained on using the ISTE standards, and how to integrate those standards into their lessons each day. Teachers that adopt a positive attitude about the integration will have support from other stakeholders as well. Teachers will strive to keep an open

line of communication with students and parents, and encourage students to create

instructional videos to communicate expectations to parents.

Our media specialist will be working on using the ISTE standards to create

activities that focus on the 4 C's of technology integration: creativity, collaboration,

critical thinking, and communication. The media center will be updated and improved to

include maker's space opportunities, as well as offer open technology time for students

and parents during breaks throughout the day.

Parents

Parents will be encouraged to support the vision of North LaFayette. They will be

able to visit the school library during set hours to use technology to aid in instructional

supports for their child. Parents will utilize the resources that the school has available in a

collaborative effort to help their child be more successful.

Students

Students will also do their part to help with the vision of North LaFayette

Elementary. They will use the technology and resources that we have provided, as well as

encourage their parents to attend open technology hours when they need extra time to

work with the resources. Students will also understand that their economic status will not

effect the access that they have to technology, nor will their gender. The students will

learn about the ISTE standards, and why they are important in the continued success with

technology in education today.

Community Members

Community members, such as the local library, will be able to allow parents and

students to use the technology that they have available in order to be able to access the

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internet for instructional purposes. The members can also help encourage communication

of importance of technology integration in our school system. Community members will

also be asked to join our B.E.A.T partner organization. This is an organization in which

partners can work collaboratively with the school to donate, offer suggestions, etc.

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