

21st century teaching and learning is technology rich. Technologies are used to allow students to communicate and collaborate beyond classroom walls and to provide varied opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery. Students in classrooms today are digital natives. They have been using technology for as long as they can remember. It is our responsibility as educators to indulge students with the technologies they have already become accustomed to using, and to teach them how to use these tools to learn and to grow.

Educational Technology Leadership includes the vision for the use of technology to transform learning environments and to prepare them for expanded results. “Current systems of education were not designed to meet the challenges we now face. They were developed to meet the needs of a former age. Reform is not enough; they need to be transformed.” (Robinson, K. *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative*, p. 49). Information is easily accessible; students and teachers are always connected. This presents great challenges and great rewards for educational technology leaders. A vision for leadership includes teaching students how to actively and safely navigate a digital world to be a creator as well as an educated consumer.

Current challenges in education call for transformational leadership. Embrace of educational technology may involve facilitating the change of an organization’s culture. “A leader’s job often includes changing people’s attitudes and behavior.” (Carnegie, D. *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, p. 248). Change and transformation is what it will take to lead learning organizations to create missions that are filled with a commitment to empowering students, and teaching them how to use 21st century technology tools for learning by engaging them in the process of inquiry and applying knowledge. A transformational leader leads by example, creates connections and encourages creativity and innovation. I believe that those who are empowered and supported will adapt to change. “A leader is one who sees more than others see, who sees farther than others see, and who sees before others do.” -- Leroy Eims (Maxwell, J. 2007. p.37).

My vision is to begin leading educational technology initiatives in my district and in the community, that provide students opportunities to employ educational technology tools to demonstrate higher order thinking skills, creativity and innovation. In my classroom, I will continue to engage students with mobile technology and related technology tools to expand opportunities for critical thinking, collaboration and communication.

Short term, I intend to join 2 additional educational technology organizations, become an active tweeter (engage in the public educational technology conversation) and prepare a workshop that may be presented at the NJAET Conference in the Summer of 2018. I would also like to present the idea of a cyber camp in the township where I live. Long term, as I develop my expertise and leadership skills, I would like to lead distance learning efforts for a learning organization. This may include: facilitating change, facilitating workshops, learning new tools and systems and/or supporting the adaptation and implementation of educational technology tools.

I believe there is much to explore in educational technology and too often educators and students alike find roads are blocked. Technology tools continue to advance and students must be exposed and encouraged to the extent that they can compete in a global world and win. This requires technology leadership dedicated to student outcomes as the most important measure and working to bridge the gaps of educational technology tool use in learning environments.

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