Piedmont Community Charter School

Technology Plan

2018-2020

Piedmont Community Charter School - CFA

Technology Planning Committee/MTAC

Member	Job Title/Position
Jennifer Purdee	Head of School
Ernie Bridges	Secondary Academic Director
Holly White	Elementary Academic Director
Darrell Allen	Technology Director
Casey Reese	Instructional Technology Facilitator

Table of Contents

Piedmont Community Charter School Technology Plan

2018-2020

Mission Statement

The mission of Piedmont Community Charter School - A Challenge Foundation Academy is to be a tuition free K-12 school that offers a superior college preparatory educational option for this community and its families.

The Core Values of Piedmont Community Charter School - A Challenge Foundation Academy are:

Academic: We provide a challenging college preparatory curriculum in an environment of high expectations complemented by artistic and extra-curricular activities.

Character: We instill and expect compassion, integrity, honesty, personal responsibility, and respect for self and others.

Community: We instill individual responsibility and a commitment to serve by respecting the diversity of others and valuing the relationships that unite us as a school community.

Piedmont Community Charter School

Technology Strategic Priorities

2018 - 2020

Piedmont Community Charter School - A Challenge Foundation Academy (PCCS-CFA) maintains a 1:1 student-laptop ratio in grade 3-12, as well as for faculty and instructional staff. Students grades 4 and higher have the opportunity to take the laptops home to complete assignments, homework, projects, and for research. The laptop provides students access to the most current information available through the Internet as well as multimedia tools, which supplement materials presented in textbooks and by teachers.

PCCS-CFA prioritizes the method in which we engage our students with technology to get results and add value to a rigorous curriculum. As technology is integrated within our instruction, digital content becomes a vital resource for students and teachers.

Ongoing training is available in our school through our instructional technology facilitator, teacher leaders, and outside sources. This digital conversion has made PCCS-CFA a regional leader when it comes to availability of technology and support to increase access to richer, more interactive content, preparing us to meet the following criteria:

- **Statewide Shared Services Model**

- **Universal Access to Personal Teaching and Learning Devices**

- **Access to Digital Teaching and Learning Resources, Including Digital Textbooks**

- **Model of Technology-Enabled Professional Development**

- **21st Century Leadership for Your LEA/Charter**

Strategic Priority 1: A Statewide Shared Services Model

Current Status and Moving Forward

PCCS-CFA has investigated and invested in upgrading servers and infrastructure. We are moving toward more virtualization and cloud-based resources. The district provides each school 100 Mb of bandwidth from the school to the Technology Department. PCCS-CFA utilizes the North Carolina Research and Education Network (NCREN) connection, provided by the School Connectivity Initiative, to carry digital traffic from the district to the Internet. These initiatives have provided more than adequate bandwidth to support district needs.

In 2015 this was upgraded to 250 Mb. This increase in bandwidth gives our students faster downloads, additional streaming capabilities of online content, and better access to the vast variety of digital resources we currently use.

In June of 2012, PCCS-CFA successfully made the switch from a local email server to Google Apps for Education. This allowed us to turn off this local server, reducing our power costs and burden on the cooling system. Additionally, the WAN manager no longer has to spend a majority of his time updating and managing our email servers. Google Apps for Education has a guaranteed up time of 99.9999.

The North Carolina Education Cloud has continued to assist PCCS-CFA with cloud based filtering and firewall services which were instituted in the fall of 2011. No longer will all computing, storage and management have to be handled in a PCCS-CFA facility. As the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) continue to modify and update policies and procedures relating to e-Rate, the shared-services model will enable PCCS-CFA to take advantage of

continuous monitoring and facilitate e-Rate filings. This support from statewide initiatives has allowed the district to shift funds from

from infrastructure to instructional needs.

Strategic Priority 2: Universal Access to Personal Teaching and Learning Devices

Current Status and Moving Forward

1300 MacBook Air laptop computers have been deployed to every 3rd through 12th grade student and all licensed staff across PCCS-CFA. Our universal access extends into all Gr. 3-12 classrooms, and with grades 4-12, students are able to take their laptops home providing them with a device which enables them to research, study, create, and submit assignments, regardless of availability of a home computer. The elementary campus is equipped with an Apple computer lab with 30 desktops providing the younger students with an opportunity to access technology. There they learn how to utilize our digital tools on a weekly rotation and classroom teachers appreciate the flexible access for projects, enrichment, and digital learning. The fact that our students have consistent access to technology makes learning relevant and meets their individual needs.

Additional classroom technology includes mounted projectors for instruction, connected document cameras, as well as iPads for K-3 testing. Title I teachers are assigned iPads for small group instruction, assessments, and student learning. iPads are also provided for administrators which allows for a seamless observation process.

Going forward, PCCS-CFA intends to maintain its allotment of MacBooks for the 2018-2019 school year, as well as continue web-based subscriptions for digital resources.

Strategic Priority 3: Statewide Access to Digital Teaching and Learning Resources

Current Status and Moving Forward

As digital learning competencies are put into effect for North Carolina teachers and administrators beginning in 2019, PCCS-CFA prioritizes access to digital teaching and learning resources to maximize effective classroom instruction.

PCCS-CFA has researched an abundance of digital resources in order to implement web tools that would best meet the needs of our teachers and students. These resources include online textbooks, and subscription-based remediation and enrichment tools such as IXL, MobyMax, Renaissance Learning, Edgenuity, LearnEd, and Schoolnet. For the 2018-2019 school year, high school juniors will gain access to Quesbook, a personalized online test-prep tool for the ACT. Additionally, free online learning resources such as Google's G Suite, ReadTheory, Newsela, ReadWorks, and NCWiseOwl have been vetted to classroom teachers who find meaningful ways to integrate the content into their instruction.

Digital textbooks allow content to be paperlessly accessed from home. There is no need to worry about damaged or lost print copies. The McGraw-Hill ConnectED math textbooks for grade 6 and up that were selected by math teachers and administrators were implemented for the 2017-2018 school year. The online textbooks delve further into the content than the print versions, offering embedded tutorial videos which make the lessons more interactive. Through Pearson Successnet, K-5 teachers use *enVision* as their digital math textbook. Its interactive and streamlined interface makes it an efficient and effective resource for our students and teachers.

A committee of administrators and teachers are constantly evaluating the effectiveness of these resources and seek to implement those that will most benefit student learning. A team will meet at the end of each school year to reflect on the most valuable tools as well as look into new products to enhance learning and instruction.

Strategic Priority 4: A Statewide Model of Technology-Enabled Professional Development

Current Status and Moving Forward

PCCS-CFA acknowledges the significance of professional development for its educators and makes it a priority. With full time IT technicians housed at both campuses, as well as an instructional technology facilitator, PCCS staff have access to technology support throughout the school day. Having this support staff in place has made for a more confident digital transition for teachers, administrators, and students.

The technology facilitator meets with teachers weekly to address any technology needs and conducts trainings on-demand, as needed to support instruction. In 2016, teachers in grades 6-8 received a formal Google Classroom workshop, as well as one-on-one support for their adaptive learning program, Edgenuity. Math teachers in grades 6-8 participated in a demo of their new digital math textbooks from McGraw-Hill. Teachers in grades K-5 were given one-on-one setup support for their Pearson Successnet digital content, as well as Compass Learning by the technology facilitator. Teachers also received training and support in using Schoolnet benchmark assessments to prepare for state testing. PCCS-CFA places a great deal of importance on the accessibility of support staff who can be available to meet the teachers' needs when it comes to enhancing instruction with technology resources.

Online assessments give teachers the ability to receive immediate feedback about their students' understanding. PCCS-CFA utilizes online versions of the MAP Growth assessment, NC Check-Ins, mClass, and easyCBM. The diagnostic tools and reports help teachers inform instruction and provide valuable data for differentiation.

PCCS-CFA administration embraces the innovative improvements that technology and digital resources can bring to the classroom experience. Staff are surveyed each year about tools and support that they feel would best meet the needs of their students. A confident staff who feels supported translates to strong, cohesive values that are reflected in our student achievement.

Strategic Priority 5: 21st Century Leadership for All Schools and Districts

Current Status/Moving Forward

Providing our students and staff with the knowledge, support, and tools to succeed is a primary focus for PCCS-CFA administrators. PCCS-CFA is dedicated to supporting digitally enhanced instruction by ensuring adequate facilities, infrastructure, and funding. E-rate funds are leveraged to most efficiently enable access to our network and devices. Administration has established a culture and environment conducive to effective instruction by promoting best practices with regard to school technology.

North Carolina's College & Career Promise initiative allows eligible high school students to enroll in college level courses, tuition-free. Most of the program's classes transfer credit to their college transcripts. Our online learning students have available to them a dedicated classroom, staffed by an active on-site facilitator who maintains regular communication with those parents and students about their performance. This involvement has propelled the program to become successful in the 2017-2018 school year. Thanks to our 1:1 laptop allotment, more PCCS high school students are taking advantage of this incredible opportunity than ever before. 46% of PCCS juniors and seniors are currently enrolled in CCP classes, earning credits toward their college degree. PCCS is proud of the 21st century learning culture that continues to grow and thrive, aligning with our core values of academics, character, and community.

In 2015, PCCS was chosen to pilot the Proof of Concept study which went on to become the North Carolina Check-Ins assessment for grades 4-7. A paper and pencil version of the test was made available, however, PCCS chose to administer the assessment entirely online due to our universal access to digital devices. Additionally, 3rd grade teachers created grade level

benchmarks using Schoolnet, a subscription-based service for developing standards-aligned assessments. Utilizing online assessments allow teachers to receive instantaneous data which allows them to inform instruction.

All certified teachers are required to attend conferences, workshops, and online professional development opportunities through NCEES, HomeBase, and professional organizations. Moving forward, PCCS-CFA is excited to partner with Apple and Google for more professional growth opportunities for staff. Administration encourages feedback through a professional development needs assessment. This tool enables administrators to make informed decisions on meeting the needs of staff going into the following school year and promotes a cooperative culture between administrators and faculty.