***Effective Leadership***

* ***What leadership skills will help to promote technology integration in your school?***

It is very important to show respect to all of the teachers no matter what their skill level may be. By showing respect to the teachers, I feel like I will earn their respect in return, and they will be willing to ask for my help and guidance for their technology needs in their classrooms.

Another skill that I feel is really important to help promote technology integration in my schools is patience. Many of the teachers with very basic Mac skills seem to get frustrated with technology easily. Therefore, if I can show patience while I am teaching them new things, they will be more willing to show patience. In turn, they will be more willing to put in the effort to try new things no matter how hard they may seem at first.

* ***What are your strengths/weaknesses as a leader?***

**Strengths-** Currently, one of my biggest strengths as an Educational Technology Specialist is that I just came from the classroom. Many of the teachers like that I have been in the classroom because I can relate the technology that I am teaching to classroom ideas. So by giving them ideas, they feel like the technology is applicable and actually something that they can use in their classrooms.

In addition, I believe another one of my strengths is the ability to adapt different technologies to the different classrooms needs. For example, with a program like Pixie, I have had students do projects with the phases of the moon (6th Grade), animal habitats (4th Grade), and tame/wild animals (2nd grade). Teachers like knowing that these different programs can be related to many parts of their curriculum.

**Weaknesses-** In my job, the teachers expect me to be able to fix everything that may happen to go wrong with their computers. I am not an amazing fix-it person. So, currently I think that that may be one of my biggest challenges and weaknesses as a leader. Fortunately, I am not afraid to ask for help. I am willing to get the help I need in order to answer the teachers’ questions. On the other hand, I think that the teachers like seeing that I don’t know everything, and that I am not afraid to admit that I don’t know everything. It makes me a real person and not just somebody from “The District.”

* ***What challenges do you foresee?***

One of the biggest challenges that I have found so far is the teachers who are already good at using technology. They seem to have an attitude that they already know it all and that there is nothing I can do to help them incorporate new technologies into their classroom. They seem to think that they are smarter than me. It seems that when a training is mandatory, they are playing on the internet so they don’t have listen to what I have to say. Although I am sure these teachers do know a lot, it would be nice for them to listen to the presentation so they can help other teachers, when I ‘m not there, who may need help in the future.

Another challenge that I foresee in the future is that I will get out of touch with the classroom and will not be able as in tune with the curriculum as I am now. Just coming from the classroom allows me to relate to the teachers problems, successes, stresses, and worries. After a few years, I might forget what they are going through. Many of the teachers trust me because I was a classroom teacher. I have heard many complaints from teachers about how the EdTechs and other district personnel don’t know what it is like to be a teacher.

* ***Who are the stakeholders that need to be involved?***

There are many stakeholders that need to be involved. First, the EdTechs are vital. The EdTechs are a team. It is important that we stick together and learn as much as we can from each other so we can continue to help the teachers.

Other people that need to take stake in the process are Principals, EBL department, Achievement Coaches, and the Teachers. Without all of us working as a team, we will not be able to align technology with the curriculum to enhance the learning of all students.

* ***What information is needed to understand about the school/district culture?***

Our school district is very, very into technology. In fact, we have the biggest technology department in the entire state. Therefore, it is important for teachers to continue to learn more about how they can incorporate technology into their curriculum.

Our district offers many professional development classes. It offers everything from the Mac Basics classes to the Technology endorsement and many classes in between. It also will give credits for professional development towards a lane change. This can be a very good incentive for teachers who are looking for a raise while still trying to learn more about technology.

***Professional Development***

* ***What should the professional development look like in your building?***

One thing that I have quickly learned about teachers is that they don’t have enough time in the day to go to professional development that can’t/will not apply directly to their lives. So, I guess what I am saying is that whatever professional development I am providing, I have to make sure to make it meaningful to the teachers. It has to be something that they can take and use quickly and efficiently.

* ***What type of professional development will you be comfortable leading?***

So far, I have really enjoyed teaching teachers professional development using the iPad. Many of the teachers have just received iPads. within the last little while, and want quick tips or ideas of how to use them in their classroom. I love being able to help them come up with unique ideas to help them implement this new technology.

* ***In what areas will you need help?***

Many types of technology I feel very confident in, but clickers are not one of them. I still do not feel like I could take clickers into a classroom and make them work. I think I need a little more practice and support before I help other teachers use them in their classroom.

* ***What types of informal Professional Development do you believe would help your staff?***

Although, I provide formal trainings for teachers that they are welcome to attend, the trainings that I enjoy the most are the informal trainings where I see an app that can apply to a certain curriculum, and I go to the teachers and explain it to them. I think the teachers like that too. I has definitely helped me build a relationship with them because they feel like I am individualizing what I am teaching to fit their needs. Teachers love using the technology, but many times they just don’t know how to make it apply to their classrooms. I like taking that challenge and figuring out how I can apply technology to anything they are learning.

***Educational Research and Innovation***

* ***What innovations are you most excited about and why?  What is their application to learning?***

I think the iPad is one of the best current inventions for the classroom. It can be used in so many different ways to do so many different things. The best thing about the iPad is that it is very universal. It can be used for whole class instruction, small groups, or individual use for a variety of subjects.

The iPad has apps that are applicable to every subject. While some of the apps are paid, there are many that are free. This is a real benefit to teachers. Teachers don’t get paid enough to continually buy materials for their students. By using free apps, the students are able to continuously stay engaged, even though very little money is put forth from their instructor.

* ***How will you stay current on educational research and innovation?  How will you share this knowledge with teachers in your building?***

The best part of my job is the opportunity to stay on top of new technologies. Our Technology Department has meetings every Thursday where we can discuss new and upcoming technologies. We also have many different companies come in and do trainings for us. This allows us the ability to learn the technology, then take that knowledge back to the schools and train the teachers.

* ***What technology tools will you use to effectively improve productivity and student learning? What technology tools will be the easiest to promote in your building?***

Like I stated before, I think the iPad tool for the classroom. It allows students to learn new information with very little guidance. In fact, many students use the iPad more effectively than their teachers. So, why not promote the use of this device to enhance productivity and creativity.

* ***What technology tools will be most challenging?***

Currently, our district is on an online assessment kick. Every computer time is being used for one type of assessment or another. Therefore, the computer lab is a very challenging technology tool. The computer lab in many schools was renamed to “creativity lab.” Yet, it is hard to promote any sort of creativity in these labs when they are always being used to assess students with multiple-choice tests. In all of my Master’s classes, we talked about alternative forms of assessment; finding different ways to assess students besides multiple choice tests. Unfortunately, there is no time for this.

***Contributions***

* ***How will you contribute to the effectiveness, vitality and self renewal of the teaching profession and of their school and community?***

The teaching profession as a whole is one large PLC. Teachers are continually borrowing, using, and “stealing” ideas from other teachers using books, magazines, wikispaces, blogs, etc. As my beginning mentor teacher used to tell me, “Why reinvent the wheel?” The greatest resource teachers have is each other, but it needs to be a give and take relationship.

 As part of my school PD’s, I always try to give 5-10 minutes at the end for teachers to discuss they have with the tool I just presented. It helps give the teachers ideas of things they can use in their classroom. I try to make every PD I teach meaningful for the teachers. I don’t want them to feel like it is just something else the “have to” do. I want them to think that it is something the “want to” do in their classrooms.

* ***In what ways will you give back to the education profession and larger learning community? (Grants, Online Lesson plans, Flipped Classroom Lesson, etc.)***

There are a few ways that I try to give back to my community. First, I send out a “Quick Tip” to the teachers at my schools about once every other week. These tips can give them ideas of a new app, website, or activity that they can use in their classroom. I have gotten a lot of positive feedback from teachers about the tips. I also love sending these out because it gives them a chance to ask me questions, so I can continue to help them.

 Many teachers are undecided when it comes to integrating technology into the classroom. They feel like they don’t know what they would do with it if they did have it. I have been working really hard to give teachers possible project ideas. Being able to see the possibilities, gives them the hope that they will actually use it, and now they are beginning to come to me asking how they can get it. Since the beginning of the year, I have worked with a lot of teachers to guide them through the grant writing process. In fact, some have already been funded. In addition, I have teachers that put in for the Foundations Grant as well. Many of these teachers have not put in for grants in the past because they didn’t know what to do with the technology once they got it.

 Another way I am giving back to the community is by teaching at UCET. I taught my first session last year, and had over 45 people attend. I am excited to teach again this year with exciting new material.