DEVELOPING AND MANAGING DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS
Assignment 3: Designing a Prototype for a Distance Learning Program
Johanna Amaro
Matthew Farber
Charlene Mason
Jennifer Serviss

Mission Statement

Technology planning for distance learning is framed around 21st Century learning skills. Planning for technology in the Denville Township School District is focused on multiple stakeholders: teachers, administrators, parents, and students. It is designed to not only meet, but to exceed recommendations by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, of preparing Denville's students to be global citizens ("P21," 2015). The plan also meets the Common Core State Standards initiative with the goal of career and college readiness.

Vision Statement

Denville Township Schools will be preparing its students to be 21st Century citizens. The district's distance learning plan is guided by the vision to align with the Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework. As a result, Denville students will engage in autonomous, self-directed distance learning, while promoting digital citizenship on its platforms. The vision of the distance-learning plan exists as guidance for the future. Denville has two K-5 schools and one middle school, grades 6-8. Market analysis, faculty-related and student-related issues, quality awareness, and evaluation of the distance-learning plan are each described in the following sections. This plan serves as a resource to guide the thoughtful consideration of distance learning implementation. The objective is to support the goals and objectives of meeting the P21 Framework, supporting student autonomy with self-directed learning, and promoting digital citizenship at each grade level.

Planning Distant Education

Activity	Description
Leader of Distance Education	A qualified administrator will be hired for the position "designated with responsibility for providing leadership, direction, oversight, quality control, and accountability for course programs" to held the title of distance education administrator (Simonson, Smaldino & Zvacek, 2015, p. 281).
Business Plan	Community members will be surveyed before implementation of the program to inquire about the different benefits of the program such as being able to teach during snow days, homeschooling, bedside instruction, and teacher professional development. The survey will inquire the need for students to be allowed and engaged in learning experiences that are more advantageous when involved in sports and other activities that prevent them from being present in class.
Content Readiness	A district wide assessment will take place to determine if existing resources can be utilized to develop and support courses. New courses will not be developed; however, current courses will be modified to accommodate blended learning teaching.
Institutional Readiness	Existing core teachers that "exhibit characteristics that will facilitate effective teaching at a distance" will be designated to teach the blended learning courses (Simonson, Smaldino & Zvacek, 2015, p. 297).

Faculty Readiness	Turn-key training will be provided by teachers. Topics will include, but are not limited to, course management system, assistance in creating blended learning activities, and any support needed for successfully teaching blended learning courses.
Student Readiness	Teachers will ensure that students obtain the proper level of readiness to participate in a blended course. SmarterMeasure Learning Readiness Indicator will be used as "readiness check" in order to assess student's abilities and aid in creation of courses and/or individual lessons. Support will also be provided in the form of training seminars on how to navigate the system, how to communicate with teachers and/or staff members. All students participating in blended learning courses will participate in a survey to determine their commitment, self-discipline and time management skills (Simonson, Smaldino & Zvacek, 2015, p. 300).

Market Analysis

The goal of the distance-learning program is to prepare students with the necessary technical skills that enable them to become strong candidates in a career or in a university. To ensure that the implementation of these new technologies meets this need and provides a quality online distant learning program, surveys will be conducted that focuses on the satisfaction of all participants in order to gain an understanding of the effectiveness and quality of the new online distance program for market analysis. These surveys will be administered online using Google Forms and emailed to all stakeholders at the end of each course. Qualitative and quantitative data will be used to measure the

effectiveness of the program and analyzed. The purpose of this type of data analytics is

to build on the synergy and strengths that exist between the qualitative and quantitative

data (Gay, Mills & Airasian 2006). These surveys will analyze three main components of

the online distance program:

1. Culture - attitudes and beliefs that all stakeholders have toward the implementation of the new technologies.
2. Technology - determines whether hardware, infrastructure, technical support and tools are being utilized effectively.
3. Training - determines effective training methods have been put into place to ensure a quality distance learning education.

The cultural component of the market analytic tool, will determine the attitudes of

the implementation of the new technologies in the school district. Analyzing this critical

component throughout the survey will better gain an understanding of perception of all

stakeholders which is important to the effectiveness of the online distance learning

program. The analysis of this data will determine whether the technologies will need to

be addressed or re-evaluated by the committee members that consist of all stakeholders.

The technology component will determine whether hardware, infrastructure,

technical support and technology tools are being utilized effectively. The results of this

component will determine if any upgrades in hardware will need to be administered to the

infrastructure of the school.

The training component will determine the needs of the teachers for successful

implementation and verify that quality designs of courses that are being used. The results

of this will provide feedback on teacher needs and allow the committee to determine

future Professional Development that will be executed.

At the end of each course students, teachers and parents will be surveyed to obtain

feedback on the effectiveness of each course and be able to provide feedback to the

committee members. The data will be analyzed during the committee meeting and the needs will be addressed. The goal is to ensure that the program is meeting the needs of all stakeholders and supporting the P21 Framework. Ensuring that all stakeholders have input with the implemented online program determines the quality and success, which is essential for student success in career or college readiness for Denville students.

<div align="center">Faculty-Related Issues/Policies</div>

Although Denville's curriculum is rich in collaborative, authentic assignments utilizing a multiplicity of instructional technology, the idea of the flipped classroom or learning beyond the classroom are concepts not specifically covered under the Board of Education's governance - their policies and practices. A cursory look at the policies specifically related to academics and technology use uncovers some shortcomings in policies that apply to both faculty and students. The chart below highlights policies that must be revised for immediate institutional readiness. Additional policies, particularly in the Academic Program (2000 section) and those related to labor-management, legal, and student support should be reviewed carefully to include specifics for the inclusion of blended learning into the existing District's programs.

Policy #	Content	Revision to include	Responsibility
2230	Course Curriculum Guides	Inclusion of online material/assignments	Board Committees for Program & Instruction and Technology
2360	Use of Technology	Expanded to include acquisition of licenses, Digital Millennium Copyright (DMCA)/Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act implications	Board Committees for Program & Instruction and Technology
2361	Acceptable Use Policy (Student)	Update to include support of access but reservation of rights based on online conduct	Board Committees for Program & Instruction and Technology
3224	Evaluation of Staff	Requirements/Rubric for "out of class" participation	Personnel Committee and Teachers' Union officers
3240	Professional Development	Inclusion of training for blended/online learning	Board Committees for Program & Instruction and Technology
3321	Acceptable Use Policy (Staff)	DMCA/TEACH Act inclusion	Board Committees for Program & Instruction and Technology
5770	Pupil Right of Privacy (Student)	Specify information to be collected through participation in blended learning activities	Board Committees for Program & Instruction and Technology
7523	School District Provided Technology Devices to Pupils (Student)	Provisions for access	Board Committees for Program & Instruction and Technology

For instructors, and, in some cases students, intellectual property rights to materials created, resourced, referenced, or archived in online platforms have become a hot-button item. In Denville's K-12 environment as in other districts of the similar demographics, intellectual property is generally looked upon as inclusionary to one's job and property of the district that holds the employment contract. With the advent of blended learning and future plans for online course development, focused legal consideration needs to be given to this issue.

Student-Related Issues

In addition to policy revisions that affect the Board of Education's responsibilities vis a vis student participation in blended learning coursework, student readiness must be guaranteed. The blended learning experience requires independent learning on the part of students and the district needs to provide training and support so that students can work effectively whether individually or in groups. Students who may be native to social media or gaming affordances of technology may require guidance in navigating the LMS. New policies need to be written to ensure these services are provided. Assessments such as SmarterMeasure Learning Readiness Indicator need to be employed to ensure compliance with procedures.

Quality Control

Denville's Board of Education will contract with Quality Matters for assistance with design, professional development, and evaluation of blended courses for middle school students. The move toward creating blended learning opportunities and offering more online courses in the future in a new venture for this district and continued delivery of best practices is critical for student learning outcomes and taxpayer satisfaction in their

investment in education. Quality Matters has produced a rubric (https://www.qualitymatters.org/node/2722/download/StandardsfromtheQMK-12SecondaryRubric,Second%20Edition.pdf) to ensure that the highest standards in education are met in the development of online programs. The QMK-12 rubric also integrates P21 skills, an integral part of the vision for Denville Public Schools. The District contact for this is to be the Superintendent. This also complements one of the superintendent's Merit Goals for the upcoming school year: "Create and implement a curriculum enrichment program for Denville students in conjunction with MHRD (Morris Hills Regional District) to market the program. Sign up students Evaluate program 6/30/16 Qualitative goal with 2% impact."

<div align="center">Evaluation</div>

Denville Township Schools will have integrated Edmodo, BrainPOP, and Google Apps with its current technologies (e.g., student information systems, mobile devices, printers and copiers) and its wireless infrastructure. Hardwired systems will be utilized for the networked copiers and printers. It will match other school's subscription services (e.g., NoodleTools citation machine, EBSCOHost database subscription), as well as cloud-based student management and online lesson planning. The technology coordinator will be responsible for monitoring the evaluations, reporting to the building principals and the superintendent. The evaluation system for distance learning described in the table below:

Telecommunication services, hardware, software and other distance learning services	· Analytics reporting faculty and student use of use of BrainPOP, Edmodo, and Google Apps. · Administrator review of teacher use of distance learning applications, which detail instructional instruction.

	· Responses of Google Form questionnaire from students and faculty to assess implementation, as well as future needs (e.g., professional development). · Monitor use of BrainPOP, Edmodo, and Google Apps on school servers.
Effective integration of distance learning technology to enable students to meet Common Core State Standards	· Reports provided by student and teacher use of BrainPOP, Edmodo, and Google Apps. · Student performance on PARCC assessment. · Student artifacts from teachers and students. · Teacher lesson plans using distance-learning applications, aligned to Common Core.
Effective integration of distance learning technology to enable students to meet P21 Framework	· Reports provided by student and teacher use of BrainPOP, Edmodo, and Google Apps. · Student performance on teacher-generated assessments that involve skills in the P21 Framework. · Student artifacts from teachers and students that involve skills in the P21 Framework. · Teacher lesson plans using distance learning applications that involve skills in the P21 Framework.
Effective integration of distance learning technology to enable students to promote digital citizens	· Analytics provided by student use of BrainPOP, Edmodo, and Google Apps. · Student artifacts from teachers and students that involve digital citizenship. · Teacher lesson plans using distance learning applications that involve digital citizenship.
Effective integration of distance learning technology to enable students to be autonomous, self-directed learners	· Analytics provided by student use of BrainPOP, Edmodo, and Google Apps about content accessed not required by the class or the teacher. This data will be triangulated with teacher lesson plans.

References

Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. W. (2006). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications*. Upper Saddle River, N.J: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

Quality Matters. (n.d.). Retrieved February 21, 2015, from https://www.qualitymatters.org/

Quality Matters. (2014, September). *Quality Matters Overview* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved February 21, 2015, from https://www.qualitymatters.org/applying-rubric-15/download/QM_Overview_for%20Current%20Subscribers_AE2013.pdf

Simonson, M. R., Smaldino, S. E., & Zvacek, S. (2015). *Teaching and learning at a distance: Foundations of distance education* (6th ed.). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.