

# District Technology Plan

July 2012 – June 2015



The School Board of Sarasota County

Sarasota, Florida

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Sarasota, Florida

Vision

The School Board of Sarasota County places learning at the center of its activities to enable all learners to lead productive, responsible and healthy lives.

Mission

The School Board of Sarasota County prepares students to achieve the highest learning standards by engaging a high quality staff, involved parents and a supportive community.

School Board Members

Caroline Zucker, Chair  
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# 1. MISSION AND VISION

The mission statement component of the plan should document the district’s overall focus and direction with respect to the incorporation and integration of technology into the educational program. The intent of this component is to provide a perspective on what the district considers to be vital and critically important in relation to technology use and improving student performance. This section of the plan documents important ideas or values associated with:

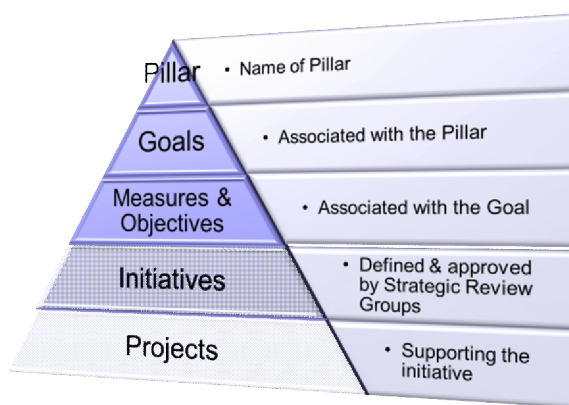
- 1.1 Promoting the effective use of telecommunications and information technology to implement the Sunshine State Standards to improve performance of all students.

## School Board of Sarasota County Mission Statement

“The School Board of Sarasota County places learning at the center of its activities to enable all learners to lead productive, responsible and healthy lives.”

The Strategic Plan for the district is a vision that adapts to today’s reality and tomorrow’s needs. It acknowledges changes in our economy, our workplace and our world. It treats every child as an individual, every educator as a professional and every parent as a customer. It requires total community support, while holding the school district accountable to the taxpayers. It represents a direction, a hope, a commitment to place every child on a path to succeed, and a promising future for an effective, efficient organization.

Five “Pillars of Excellence” provide that focus and the foundation for structure and strategies from which we build success. The five pillars are Quality, People, Service, Resources and Safety. Within each pillar, specific goals, objectives and measures have been defined for our district setting the framework for present day and the future. As a result, many initiatives and projects result in support



of these goal and objectives. All Technology Goals and Objectives are aligned with these “Pillars of Excellence”.

## Our Information Technology Vision

The Information Technology Vision of the School Board of Sarasota County is to provide technology-rich environments that empower learners with access to information through voice, video, and data technology for the purpose of processing and communicating information and ideas. This vision ensures that all students become lifelong, independent, productive learners and caring contributors to their communities.

Since technology is becoming an increasingly important tool for productive, high-performing workers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, students need to be interactively involved with technologies that enhance the educational experience and prepare them to live and work in a digital society. Throughout our district, schools continue to develop high performance, high technology environments where students learn to utilize information, solve real world problems, work cooperatively in multicultural environments, and use a variety of knowledge sources and effective communication skills to prepare to meet the future needs of our society.

The following principles will guide our leadership team as it reviews and enhances tactics to advance information technology in our schools:

- Provide Equal Access to Technology
  - We must provide equal opportunities for learning for all children across all schools and eliminate disparate investments in technology available to our students from school to school. We need to refocus the variable funds from parent organizations and grant funding away from additional computers and software toward collaborative libraries of materials that help teachers.
- Build Sustainable Capacity
  - We must create sustainable solutions that do more with the resources our community has. Instead of focusing on traditional, turf-based constraints, we must view technology resources as community assets to be used by all public service organizations.
- Strengthen Tools for Learning
  - We must provide technologies that our teachers, students and parents can depend on for high performance, equipping students for a technology-driven age. The School Board of Sarasota County has made great strides in developing and implementing a curriculum based on the Sunshine State Standards and Grade Level Expectations. Tremendous emphasis has been placed on utilizing student data and training staff to make data-driven decisions. District technology offers more dynamic access to critical data at the point of learning and provides tools to assist educators in more effectively

aligning instruction with the Sunshine State Standards and the needs of individual students.

- Empower Our Teachers
  - We must focus our investments on tools that integrate seamlessly into the art of teaching. We must invest in training our teachers, empowering them with tools that engage both student and teacher in this new model of instruction. Our educators will create a positive learning environment that encourages use of technology as an instructional, problem solving, and productivity tool that will enhance every area of the curriculum. Using present and emerging technologies, students will acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to achieve in a digital society and to adapt to technological changes as they occur.

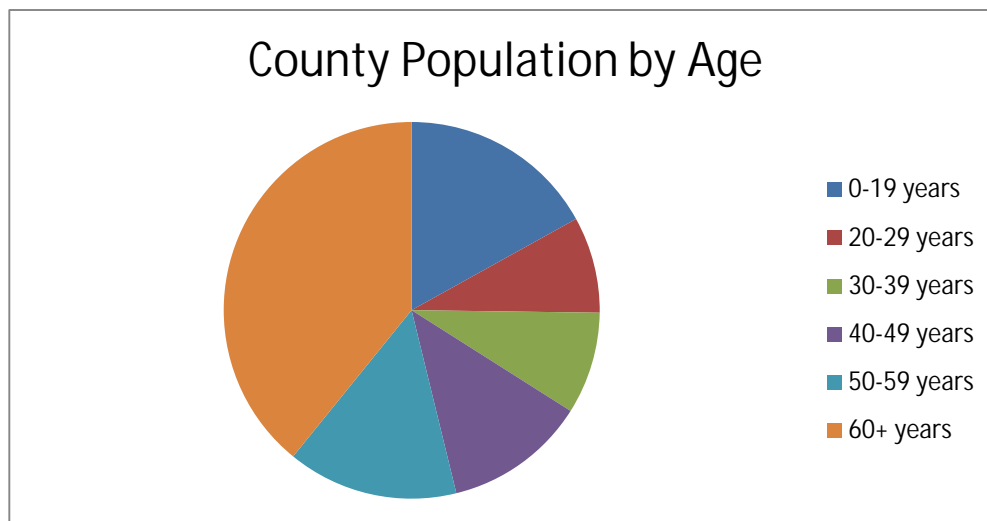
## 2. GENERAL INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The general introduction/background component of the plan should include, but not limited to:

- 2.1 District Profile – Provide relevant social, economic, geographic and demographic factors influencing the district's implementation of technology.
- 2.2 Planning Process – Provide a description of the technology plan development process to include but not limited to:
  - development of partnerships with community, business and industry; and
  - integration of technology in all areas of the curriculum, ESOL and special needs including students with disabilities.
- 2.3 Collaboration with existing adult literacy service provides to maximize the use of available technologies, training facilities, and project related resources.

### District Profile

- Sarasota County schools have earned a reputation for excellence. We are proud of the excellent education we provide for all Sarasota County students. The following data is sourced from the DOE and County Government Census Data for the 2011-2012 School year.
- Sarasota County Facts
  - Incorporates 625 square miles with 381,000+ residents
  - Population characteristic breakdown – Median Age 52.5



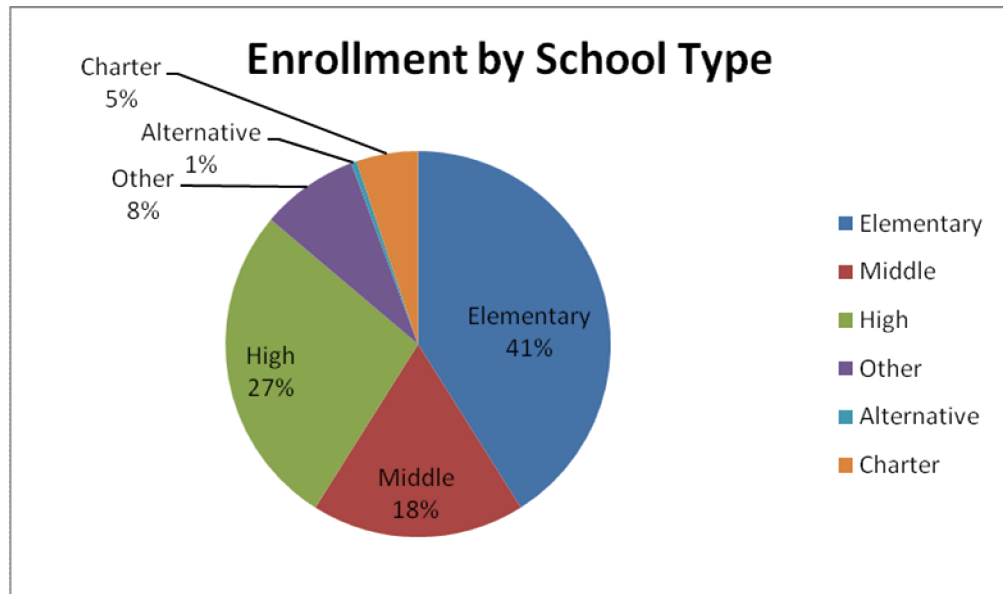
- Per Capita Income as of 2008 was \$55,856
- The March 2010 unemployment rate was 11.2%

- District Facts
  - The Sarasota County School District is geographically the 6<sup>th</sup> largest school district in the State of Florida, with 44 miles separating the northernmost school from the one furthest to the southeast.
  - Largest employer in Sarasota County.
  - Designated as an “A” district by the DOE, with 95 percent of elementary schools and 83 percent of all schools receiving “A” grades in 2008.
  - Among 15% of the US Districts to receive the “What Parents Want” award.
  - Offers a school choice program for students wishing to attend school outside their home attendance area.
- Staff Facts
  - Staff (4916 total)
    - Instructional 2,616
    - Support Staff 2,103
    - Administrators 197
  - Average salaries for Instructional Staff
 

▪ Guidance	\$55,960
▪ Librarian/Media Specialist	\$55,985
▪ School Psychologist	\$64,640
▪ Teacher	\$54,809
  - 56% of our teachers have obtained advanced degrees
  - One of the lowest ratios of administrators to staff in Florida.
- School Facts
  - As of August 2009
    - 23 Elementary Schools
    - 7 Middle Schools
    - 6 High Schools
    - 5 Special Schools
    - 3 Alternative Schools
    - 9 Charter Schools

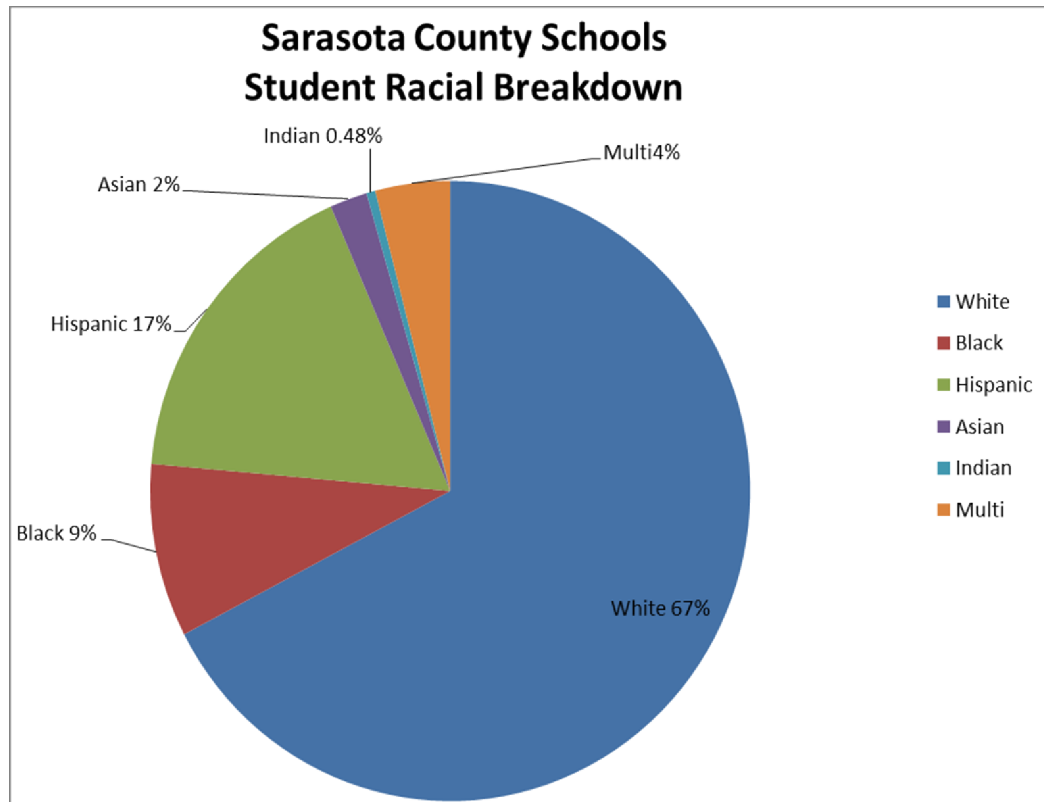


- Enrollment Breakdown by School type



- 20 schools have received the state Five Star Award for exemplary community involvement programs.
- All high schools organized around Small Learning Communities that help students connect to peer groups with similar interests and career aspirations.
- Each middle school offers exploratory courses; students select a major area of interest in eighth grade to help them plan for high school and beyond.
- Class Size Averages
  - Grades PK-3 18
  - Grades 4 – 8 22
  - Grades 9 – 12 25

- Student Facts
  - The population of 40,899 students in the diagram below.



- Student body represents 148 different countries
- 48.4 % of students are eligible for free and reduced lunch.
- Average reading scores for the district are 3 to 7 points higher than state averages in grades 3 through 10
- Proficiency rates in math are 5 to 14 percentage points higher than those for students statewide.
- Four Year Graduation Rate 85.4%
- Drop Out Rate 1.90%

## Process

The School Board of Sarasota County developed a technology vision on the foundation set by the principals of our Strategic Plan. This vision was presented to our Technology Oversight Committee, which is made up of representatives of all departments and schools.

The plan authoring team used this resource and a variety of other resources to align to the current district technology plan. During the initial phase of the authoring process, individuals responsible for the coordination of key areas of technology provided information to the district Chief Information Office for inclusion into the vision. They included representatives from media and instructional materials, ESOL, assistive technology, adult literacy, instructional management systems, instructional television, educational access cable television, curriculum integration, and school based personnel. Information provided was utilized to develop the foundation for the district technology plan and a correlating priority of technology needs.

The technology plan team took special care to ensure that the Superintendent's leadership team had consistent involvement in the development of this plan. The Superintendent reviewed the authoring team's final draft and provided additional input.

A draft of this plan was provided to School Board members for evaluation and comments. Following School Board approval in July 2012, the final District Technology Plan will be re-submitted to the Florida Department of Education.

### 3. NEEDS ASSESSMENT/GOALS

The needs assessment/goals component of the plan should include, but not be limited to:

- 3.1 A description of the information-based process used for determining district instructional and administrative telecommunication and technology needs.
- 3.2 Identification of key telecommunications services, technology infrastructure, equipment (hardware), assistive technology, programming, software, technical support, and training needs.
- 3.3 District Technology Goals:
  - Short-term goals listed in priority order; and
  - Long-term goals listed in priority order.

#### District Analysis

Annually, the Information Technology organization meets with all areas of our district and conducts research on all facets of district technology use.

That research detailed the following as district high priority needs:

- Bring Your Own Device (BYOD). Make technology resources available anytime, anywhere, across all of our schools and in the homes of our students.
- Make technology an aid and enabler that our teachers and administrators want to use.
- Integrate technologies into our curriculum to advance learning and help ensure our students are prepared for college or the workforce.
- Provide learning technologies to help parents participate more actively in their children's education.
- Move our technology team from reacting to problems and sudden needs to proactive planning in collaboration with educators.

Utilizing culminating information, district technology leadership summarizes and presents identified needs to the district Technology Oversight Committee and to the Superintendent. Further direction is sought from these individuals and prioritization is developed based on those inputs.

#### District Technology Goals

Sarasota County Schools has developed five objectives of technology. The objectives represent crucial initiatives identified through the needs assessment activities.

**OBJECTIVE #1: Empower Our Teachers:** Make technology an aid and an enabler that our teachers and administrators want to use.

**OBJECTIVE #2: Provide Anytime Access to Technology:** Make technology available anytime, anywhere, across all of our schools and in the homes of our students.

OBJECTIVE #3: Increase Home – School Connection: Provide learning technologies to help parents participate more actively in their children's education.

OBJECTIVE #4: Strengthen Tools for Learning: Integrate technologies into our curriculum to advance learning and help ensure our students are prepared for college or the workforce.

OBJECTIVE #5: Build Sustainability and Capacity: Move our technology team from reacting to problems and sudden needs to proactive planning in collaboration with educators.

## 4. FUNDING PLAN

The funding plan component of the plan should include, but not be limited to:

- 4.1 Identification of major sources of funding for district-wide technology needs. To the extent possible, funding sources should be categorized as recurring or nonrecurring and include real and projected dollar amounts for the technology plan period.
- 4.2 Documenting (to the extent practical) a sufficient budget to acquire, support, and maintain essential hardware, software, professional development opportunities, and other services needed to implement strategies identified for improving educational services.
- 4.3 Specifically identify the district's allocation and/or utilization of Public School Technology Funding (PSTF). The information provided under this plan component should:
  - describe specific district initiatives, projects or programs currently (or recently) supported with these funds; and
  - project how PSTF funding will be targeted over the plan period to help meet critical technology support needs of the district.

Sarasota County Schools uses a variety of funding resources for the advancement of technology throughout the district. Funding sources include general operating funds and district capital; state and federal grants; private grants from various foundations; agencies, individual donors, and parent groups.

School purchasing decisions are aligned to the annual School Improvement Plan. Technology purchases are budgeted as projects and approved as supporting the overall District Technology Plan. Although the School Board cannot pass a budget for more than one year, the long-range district plan for capital provides for several technology projects that are designed to enhance each school's technology capabilities with a design focus on effectively impacting student achievement.

The district is forecasting significant budget reductions for the future primarily due to the state of the economy and based on projections from the state. The following table details our out-year budget forecast for all Technology categories :

Project	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Computer Replenishment	\$ 3,150,000	\$ 4,200,000	\$ 5,350,000	\$ 6,300,000	\$ 6,300,000
District Wide Communications Support	\$ 350,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 275,000	\$ 250,000
Local Area Network Support	\$ 750,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 750,000
Computer Infrastructure and Apps	\$ 390,000	\$ 390,000	\$ 390,000	\$ 390,000	\$ 390,000
TERM Replacement	\$ 5,500,000				
Classroom Instructional Technologies	\$ 967,500	\$ 977,175	\$ 986,950	\$ 996,800	\$ 1,006,000
District Instructional Technologies	\$ 450,000	\$ 466,500	\$ 483,500	\$ 500,000	\$ 519,000
Totals	\$ 11,557,500	\$ 7,358,675	\$ 8,260,450	\$ 9,211,800	\$ 9,215,000

Establishing the level of technology resources currently provided to our schools has required a significant financial investment on the part of the School Board. Careful planning and the use of existing and new funding sources will be necessary to ensure that the technology resources and

training provided to schools keeps pace with advancing and emerging technologies. Adequately finding technology for education is a process of identifying and securing funding from multiple sources. Such sources include, but are not limited to:

- Title Funds (I, II, VI, VII)
- Job Training Partnership Act
- US Department of Commerce MTIA
- Universal Service Fund – FCC
- Corporate Foundations
- Private Foundations
- District Millage Referendum
- District Allocated Funding for Capital
- DOE Allocated Funding for Public School Technology
- DOE Allocated Teacher Training Funds

## 5. TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION PLAN

The technology acquisition plan should include, but not be limited to:

- 5.1 Identification of appropriate technologies to meet the goals of the district instructional program as identified by the needs assessment procedures.
- 5.2 District plans to acquire software and technology-based educational materials which are usable by students with the widest range of abilities to deliver technology-based instructional programs in support of the Sunshine State Standards.
- 5.3 Timetable for acquisition of grade-appropriate, up-to-date technologies in sufficient quantities to accommodate student and staff needs for instruction and assessment.
- 5.4 Appropriate technology acquisition policies or procedures that address the following areas:
  - consistency and interoperability with existing and planned technology deliver systems;
  - upward integration to emerging technology standards; and
  - support and maintenance requirements.
- 5.5 Provision for technical guidance to school and district personnel responsible for making strategic technology related purchasing decisions.

Identification of appropriate technologies have been based on recommendations from the Cabinet, Information Technology, Curriculum and School input. In the future, the Technology Oversight Committee will be comprised of members from each of these areas for review and recommending of technologies that reflect goals and philosophies of the District Strategic Plan.

Sarasota County Schools has initiated a centralized purchasing policy for technology resources used by our schools. Over the past year, the district has developed a plan and executed the first phase of a technology replenishment program that will put all schools on an equitable and current level with technology. This effort will allow the schools to experience a more thorough level of support, access to resources and coordination of training opportunities. The district has experienced significant savings opportunities as a result of this new program. Additional opportunities to further support our students will be planned for the future as identified in Section 3 of this document.

The district has negotiated and purchased several technology resources that support and individualize instruction (Successmaker, APEX, Rosetta Stone, Open BOOK, Compass, etc). Each of these applications address the Sunshine State Standards and emphasizes the individual needs of the student. Schools have aggressively made use of these district-negotiated resources. It is the district expectation that future negotiated purchases will be of a centralized purchase approach, this allowing for more equitable and high-impact resources for staff and student use.

Additionally, the district continues to place a strong emphasis on investment in online web-based applications and resources. Over the years, the district has invested in resources designed to offer staff, students and parents with dynamic access to information and research resources. The district will continue to monitor effective use of these resources and expects to continue to negotiate further partnerships in the future.



District staff annually evaluate all district technology-related need and commitments during the planning process for each fiscal year. These needs are identified in the budgets of capital funds and operating funds.

The district has developed and will continue to refine policies and procedures for all technology purchases as the years progress that are consistent with the District Technology Plan. In order to insure the best support is provided to school and district personnel for technology related decisions, a final review of decisions is made by the Information Technology department before finalizing the purchase. Technology needs are defined and communicated so that Information Technology can advise where necessary, any modifications or additions that may be required.

## 6. ACCESS

The access component of the plan should include, but not be limited to, district policies or procedures to address

- 6.1 Equitable and effective access to telecommunications and other technologies to support teaching and learning by:
- providing for the equitable distribution of resources to support achievement of the Sunshine State Standards;
  - providing access for teachers, parents and students to the best teaching practices and curriculum resources through technology;
  - providing access for students with special needs including those students with disabilities;
  - providing appropriate access to external instructional service and programming providers, such as public libraries, charter schools, remote teaching sites, home school connections, online products and other services; and
  - providing access to information for decision-making by teachers and administrators.
- 6.2 District acceptable use policy for access to all systems including Internet/World Wide Web that:
- protects the confidentiality of students;
  - protects intellectual property rights, licensing agreements and legal/ethical standards for sharing of resources with other educational entities; and;
  - maintains the integrity of systems, programs and information resources.
- The policy must address the following issues:
- access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web;
  - the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
  - unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking", and other unlawful activities by minors online;
  - unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and
  - measures designed to restrict minor's access to materials harmful to minors.
- 6.3 A Technology Protection Measure is a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access. It must protect against access by adults and minors to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or – with respect to use of computers with Internet access by minors – harmful to minors. It may be disabled for adults engaged in bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

All public school sites and educational support facilities throughout Sarasota County are interconnected by a high-speed fiber data network. Currently, the network is aggregated to the central school district data center using the high speed fiber network.

Each school is equipped with a Local Area Network (LAN). LAN are 100Mb switched to the desktop. All classrooms throughout Sarasota County are equipped with ActivBoards, teacher and student workstations. Every classroom has access to the district's Wide Area Network, providing connectivity to the Internet. All school sites have at a minimum 2 computing labs that utilize a range of educational software resources and deliver computer based assessments. In addition, each teacher workstation provides access to electronic mail and administrative resources that include student demographic and academic performance data as well as tools for attendance, grade collection and data analysis.

Most all traditional school sites are equipped with internal television broadcast studios, providing for televised distribution of daily announcements, programs produced by the school and local cable television broadcasts.

Access to electronic library card catalogs is provided using Mandarin/SIRS software on a network of computers in each school's media center. The system also provides Media Specialists with a system for checkout and inventory of books and equipment.

Individual departments providing electronic access to information work cooperatively with the Department of Pupil Support Services/ESE in meeting special needs, including those of students with disabilities.

A district web portal provides important information about the school district and provides easy access to individual school websites used to communicate school information. An after-hours automated telephone information system provides information about the school district to people without direct access to the Internet or World Wide Web.

A parent portal allows parents access to individualized data regarding their child's learning progress.. Internal effort has developed an Intranet resource (Sharepoint) designed to offer staff effective access to a range of decision-making data and resources.

The School Board of Sarasota County has developed a collaborative plan to maintain the integrity of the electronic systems that support teaching and learning. Under the authority of local School Board Rule 8.60, the Superintendent of schools has directed the departments that provide telecommunication and electronic communication access to ensure that adequate procedures are in place that define approved standards of use. These procedures include, but are not limited to:

- Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

This document provides a guideline to staff and students on the appropriate use of Internet and World Wide Web technologies and provides for specific actions in response to violations of local acceptable use procedures and/or State and Federal Statutes.

- Copyright Guidelines

This document provides staff with a checklist of copyright rules. It serves to remind staff of the proper procedures that must be observed when duplicating information, both in printed and electronic formats.

- Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

The School Board of Sarasota County is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, which was passed into law by Congress in December 2000. Through the use of effective Technology Protection Measures and an approved Internet Safety Policy, the school district is taking action to protect students from harmful information.

## Online Protection Measures

The School Board of Sarasota County has established an ongoing procedure to filter and block access to Internet sites that contain pornography, obscenity, and content harmful to minors. The School District is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), inclusive of the following three components:

- Implementation of a Technology Protection Measure
- Implementation of an Internet Safety Policy
- Advertisement of a Public Notice and Holding of a Public Hearing

Plans for out-years regarding "Access" will be further revised, updated and will be incorporated in the districts' new Technology Policies and Procedures manual.

## 7. USER SUPPORT PLAN

The user support plan component should include, but not be limited to:

- 7.1 Network management and improved support for end-users in classrooms.
- 7.2 Development of district technical support options for equipment maintenance and replacement.

The Information Technology department has been rapidly advancing in support systems for site-based technology. Since 2008/2009, a full service Technology Service Desk has been used to service all district and school Technology needs and requests. Appropriate routings have been defined so that the proper technician can be assigned to the request immediately, thus providing the end user with the most optimum support necessary.

School sites are staffed with a Technology Support Professionals. These individuals are trained on the maintenance and support of all site-based technology. Technology support personnel receive training via:

- group training at the district training facilities
- email communications
- on-site service and support by district technology technicians or vendors
- web-based portals such as Sharepoint and/or AngelWeb
- equipment recommendations for all technology-related purchases

The district has standardized all Local Area Networks with a 100Mb switch connected to the desktop network with a gigabit backbone. All networks utilize the latest Cisco products for their network infrastructure. These systems are centrally managed.

The district maintains Exchange, the electronic mail system, which is open to all staff. This service provides easy access to District Technology technicians, vendors and other departments throughout the district.

Technology Support will continue to expand their portal presence to include resources, troubleshooting tips, hardware and software standards, hardware and software pricing and network information.

The district will continue to increase all levels of competency by providing high-level technical training to district staff members. The first tier of access for district technology support is through the school-based Technology Support Professional. This individual makes use of vendor online resources and the Technology Service Desk. Second tier support access is provided through the Technology Service Desk and results in the assignment of a specialized district support technician. Where available, repair is done onsite. All repairs follow established cost-analysis procedures.

## 8. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A professional development plan should include, but not be limited to:

- 8.1 Provisions for increasing the use of technology in the classroom and media center by:
- development and acquisition of new programs and software that promote the integration of technology into everyday curricular needs;
  - the integration of technology as a meaningful component within all curriculum training;
  - district-level coordination of training and support;
  - ensuring adequate facilities, instructors, materials, equipment and funding for staff development; and
  - identification and acquisition of technology-based professional development delivery systems that minimize teacher time away from the classroom and delivery of training in the most cost-effective manner.
- 8.2 A list of sources of ongoing training and technical assistance available to teachers and administrators served by the district, such as State technology offices, intermediate educational support units, regional education training facilities or institutions of higher learning.

Sarasota County Schools maintains a foundation of technology integration through effective and timely training. The district coordinates a series of training events for teachers and staff to support further and expanded use of the tools the district has provided. In this economy however, many of these opportunities have been offered as “non-paid” opportunities. Our staff is so dedicated to advancing their technology skills – oftentimes, these “non-paid” opportunities are offered multiple times due to overwhelming registrations.

Training offered by Information Technology and Professional Development will focus on:

- Educator Productivity
  - Activ Education
  - Instructional Management System
  - Data-Driven Decision Making
  - Web Development
  - Authentic Assessment
  - Word Processing
  - Database Development
  - Spreadsheet Development
  - Internet Research and Information Literacy Skills
- Curriculum Integration
  - Techniques for instructional impact through data-driven decisions
  - Technology-based curriculum review (selection of software focusing on reading, writing, math, and science)
  - Technology-based curriculum development (creating products using technology tools and applications)
  - Curriculum resources development
  - School improvement research (collecting and analyzing data electronically)
  - Recommendations of software which emphasizes critical thinking skills development
  - Effective utilization of Instructional Learning Systems

- Impacting higher-order thinking skills through technology

District technology staff members maintain an effective relationship with many of the educational technology vendors involved in purchasing agreements with schools. When available, district initiatives have included negotiations for opportunities to incorporate training and project management services for the benefit all participating schools. District agreements have produced opportunities for schools to participate in cost-effective efforts to establish online learning systems and project management resources at each school. All of our schools have taken advantage of this opportunity.

The district will continue to establish training opportunities that can be made available to our staff “anytime, anywhere.” Technology staff will continue to pursue grant opportunities that assist the district in providing a broad selection of online training resources.

Delivery systems used in technology staff development training programs will attempt to model those teaching and learning methods which are being used by technology leaders today in the Information Age. The goal is to minimize teacher time away from the classroom, to deliver training in the most cost-effective manner, and to most effectively impact student achievement. The following learning methods are offered throughout the district:

- Online Training
  - All staff has access to online training modules for use at home or at school via the Internet. Resources include Angel-authored courses and Atomic Learning online resources.
- Mentor Training in Data-Driven Decision Making
  - Mentor-led training in complex, integrated hardware/software management systems
- School-Based Training
  - A collection of training opportunities available to all staff and offered at the school.
- District Training Lab
  - A collection of training opportunities available to all staff and offered at the central district labs. These trainings focus on productivity skills needed by staff to successfully accomplish their jobs.
- Electronic Simulation Software
  - Students learn through use of software that emulates activities and occurrences and develops critical thinking skills.
- Training via Distance Learning
  - Video Conferencing used by the learner to communicate with others globally.
- State/University Resource Training

- District representatives attend a series of state/university-led training events. These events assist districts in the establishment and utilization of resources developed outside the district. Information received is disseminated to other departments and schools through the train-the trainer model. Agencies providing training/information include the University of Central Florida (UCF), Florida Council of Instructional Technology Leaders (FCITL), Florida Department of Education (DOE), and Area Center for Educational Enhancement (ACEE).

No single delivery system can provide for the entire needs in any given technology staff development program. All learning methodologies need to be explored and used for training. Combining or offering alternative learning methods offers a more powerful learning environment. Since participants usually have personal preferences for how they like to learn, they should be provided with choices of one or more technology-based learning systems which can provide them with training in use of emerging technologies. The District must focus our investments on tools that integrate seamlessly into the art of teaching. The District will invest in training our teachers, empowering them with tools that engage both student and teacher in this new model of instruction.



## 9. PROGRAM EVALUATION

The program evaluation component of the plan should include, but not be limited to:

- 9.1 A description of the process for the ongoing evaluation of how technologies acquired are:
  - being integrated into the school curriculum; and
  - are affecting student achievement and progress toward meeting the educational goals of the Sunshine State Standards.
- 9.2 A description of the process used to facilitate mid-course corrections in response to new developments and opportunities as they arise.

Sarasota County Schools utilizes a variety of instruments to evaluate how acquired technologies are integrated into the district's curriculum. The Florida Department of Education's School Technology Awareness and Readiness (STAR) survey and other internal surveys are completed annually by each school and the data from these surveys is used to help schools, the district, and the state evaluate how well technology is being integrated into classrooms.

The Technology Oversight Committee meet, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis to review progress made in completing the activities outlined in individual project management profiles for all district technology initiatives. Modifications will be made to the plan as necessary in response to new developments and opportunities. Information regarding this progress and any respective correction will be communicated to district leadership through the communication meetings with the TOC Chair.

## 10. E-RATE PLANNING CRITERIA

The following five planning criteria are associated with participation in the federal E-Rate Program and concern telecommunications related resources and services provided through the program:

- 10.1 Clear goals and a realistic strategy for using the telecommunications and information technology to improve education or library services;
- 10.2 A professional development strategy to ensure that staff know how to use these new technologies to improve education or library services.
- 10.3 An assessment of the telecommunications services, hardware, software, and other services that will be needed to improve education or library services;
- 10.4 A sufficient budget to acquire and support the non-discounted elements of the plan; the hardware, software, professional development, and other services that will be needed to implement the strategy; and
- 10.5 An evaluation process that enables the school or library to monitor progress toward the specific goals (of the eligible entity) and make mid-course (i.e. mid-year) corrections in response to new developments and opportunities as they arise.

### Services

Our Telecom Services include:

- Local and long Distance Telephone Services
- Internal Voice and Data Lines from the District office to all sites
- Cellular
- VOIP

Our Internal Connections include:

- Basic Telecom Maintenance and Technical Support Services (phone switches, lines, and handsets)
- Intercom communications in schools and classrooms

Internet:

- Shared services with Sarasota County Government

### Goals and Strategy

In support of the School Districts Mission, Vision and Strategic Goals and Objectives, the Information Technology Organization will procure and maintain reliable voice, video, and data transmission services based on the following guidelines. Providing equitable technology access, support and training district-wide is a district goal that supports the use of the internal connections that provide telecom and internet access.

Telephone services will be readily available using individual or PBX/VOIP equipment, linking instructional and educational support staff with parents and educational resources. Telephone services may be provided using the following technologies:

- POTS
- Trunk Lines (analog, digital)
- Centrex Lines
- PRI
- 800 Number (Toll-free)
- VOIP

Additionally, wireless (cellular) telephone and paging services are available when justified to support the instructional and educational programs of the school district.

Additional telephone lines have been provided to support the following services:

- Fax Machines
- Alarm Systems
- Direct Inward Dialing
- 911/E911 Trunks/Lines

Long distance services are provided when justified to support educational support programs of the school district.

Wide Area data connectivity will be provided using an effective network of Digital Transmission Services that include:

- Fiber
- T1
- Fractional T1
- OC-3
- Wireless
- Multipoint-to-multipoint Ethernet

Routers and switches are used to support the schools districts Wide Area Network of high speed data, voice and video transmission. The school district provides content filtering of all Internet activity within the school district via BlueCoat Appliance.

The school district provides each school site and educational support facility with a high speed Local Area Network (LAN) that includes fiber cabling and wireless technologies.

## Professional Development

The school district utilizes professional service days and standard duty days to provide user training and instruction. Web based tutorials, videos, documentation and guidelines will also be provided via AngelWeb and Sharepoint intranet portal. Teacher and staff development using the Internet continues to be in the forefront of the Technology Plan.

## Assessment

The Information Technology organization will provide annual self assessment of the services they provide in supporting the Mission, Vision and Strategic Goals and Objective of the School District. Professional consultants and existing partnerships with other organizations will also be used as appropriate to assess efficiency.

## Budget

The School District will include in its Operating and Capital fund budgets the funding required to support the technologies specified in the School District's Technology Plan.

## Evaluation Process

The School District will maintain a Technology Oversight Committee to review technology operations, and assist in developing recommendations for changes to the Technology Plan.

