

Georgia Department of Education  
Richmond County Comprehensive Technology Improvement Plan

**Richmond County School System**  
Augusta, Georgia



Three-Year Technology Plan  
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## **I. District Mission and Vision**

### **District Mission/Vision and Access**

The motto of the Richmond County School System (RCSS) is "Learning Today...Leading Tomorrow." The primary purpose and mission of RCSS is to educate students to become lifelong learners and productive citizens in the 21st Century. The role of technology in this mission is to provide quality programs and activities along with support and services to RCSS for the purposes of improving student learning and enhancing instructional and administrative effectiveness. Students will be prepared for the future through the instructional use of interactive computer-based technologies and Internet resources.

Through technology, RCSS strives to support the mission and vision statements by targeting various areas of impact and/or improvement, to include:

- Continuing to upgrade, maintain, and support the wired and wireless network infrastructure and end-user hardware/software to assure access for administrators, faculty, staff, and students.
- Making the use of technology second nature to students at all levels with curriculum integration strategies and 21st Century equipment and resources for alternative means of remediation, enrichment, instruction, and achieving system-wide goals for student performance.
- Providing students with technological proficiency to bridge the gap between secondary education and the essential skills necessary for college preparedness and/or the job market.
- Improving student achievement on standardized tests through a systematic process of continuous data evaluation.
- Streamlining data collection by providing access to data repositories for all employees and provide extraction and analysis training.
- Providing effective and efficient resources to support community awareness by utilizing technology as a medium to create an interactive partnership between the Richmond County School System, parents, community agencies, and business/industry partners.
- Assisting teachers in the integration of technology into the curriculum.



- Utilizing technology to support, develop, and evaluate the professional growth of administrators, faculty, and staff, which will result in maximum learning for all students.

## **II. Current Reality**

Because the classroom is the focal point for teaching and learning, the availability of state-of-the-art equipment, resources, and support is essential for technology integration. As teaching has changed from teacher-directed to project-based learning, the need for technology in the classroom has increased. Current research has switched the focus from a defined computer ratio to the accessibility of various 21st century technology tools such as interactive whiteboards and Web 2.0 tools to enhance teacher instruction and provide engaging lessons for student achievement. One computer in the classroom is no longer adequate or appropriate to ensure student success. A 1:1 student to computer ratio is ideal. According to Marc Prensky, the author of Teaching Digital Natives, Partnering for Real Learning, "digital natives" learn in new and different ways, so educators need new approaches to make learning both real and relevant for today's students" (Prensky, 2010). In keeping with research and best practices, E-Rate funding provides a significant portion of the means for the needed infrastructure while equipment purchases are made through a variety of funding methods to carry out the support of equitable system-wide initiatives. With the provision of equipment, infrastructure, and the inclusion of technical and instructional support, administrators, teachers, and students will be well equipped for the 21st Century.

RCSS utilizes the following sources for the collection of technology/planning data:

- Annual System Technology Budget
- Department Budgets
- School-based Technology Committee Reports
- System-wide and School Technology Surveys
- Technology Service Management Software Reports
- Technology Conferences
- Technology Industry Standards and Best Practices
- System Focus Walks
- Professional Development Training Records

### **a. Access to Technology/Data Sources**

According to the June 2014 District Technology Survey compiled for the Georgia Department of Education Statewide Technology Inventory, the school system has 19,461 computers available for instructional use. For 31,927 students, this number represents an average of 1.64 students per computer. This is a system-wide average, however, and the number varies from school to



school. Currently, this average ranges from .60 students per computer at one school to 3.58 at another. This inventory was completed by each school's media specialist and included information regarding all equipment housed on each school campus. Steps are being taken to standardize both hardware and software through a centralized purchasing policy.

New construction standards are being revised on an on-going basis to maintain their currency regarding technology needs of all types.

Additional surveys have been sent out to all media specialists to identify instructional software and web-based programs available for teacher, administrator, and student use.

The above mentioned software survey results showed:

- Schools have purchased numerous instructional programs for individual practice.
- High schools utilize various reference databases, SAT Prep software, EOCT software and credit recovery software.
- Schools have standardized on Destination Math for K-5 and Carnegie for 6-12 math software and have access to the online Harcourt Math resource.
- All elementary and middle schools have Renaissance Place's Accelerated Reader.
- All schools have Renaissance Place's STAR program for reading testing and AIMS Web for math testing.
- Special Education is purchasing software for RTI Tier II interventions for all schools.
- Current trends are toward web-based software packages.
- The current web communication tool is provided by eChalk.

Given the variety of available software, guidance and training on effective uses of content-rich software would be beneficial to teachers at the school level. Richmond County School System has purchased and maintains instructional and administrative software in support of our schools, teachers, and students. In an effort to increase the amount of training provided to our teachers, MIT has installed a Moodle server. Moodle is an open-source online course delivery system that will allow MIT to leverage its resources and reach more teachers in the county. Teachers will be able to take training classes online, thereby eliminating the need to travel to the central offices.

In addition to the numbers of computers available to the teachers and students, wired and wireless network infrastructure components are a critical part of an effective instructional and administrative network. Richmond County School System's important infrastructure elements include/require: additional devices, additional upgraded bandwidth data drops per classroom for wireless coverage; updated Wide Area Network components/services, network switches, and



infrastructure service servers. E-Rate only funds a portion of these resources. The needs for the infrastructure outweigh the current technology budget.

Richmond County School System has 56 schools, which house 1,975 classrooms. Within these schools the school system maintains 135 computer labs for teacher and student access. Our immediate goal is to provide at least 3 modern computers in each classroom (two instructional and one teacher dedicated workstations) and our long-range goal is to have a one-to-one ratio. Our computer lab goal is 30 computers or devices per lab. We are installing a wireless environment to support 1-1 and BYOT. Of our 1,975 classrooms, we currently have 98% of classrooms with at least one or two modern computers and 62% of these classrooms have three or more computers. Each classroom also houses an interactive whiteboard, projector, document camera and other personal devices.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems provide information that support data- driven decisions for student learning, recording, reporting and district system operations. Our major ERP systems consist of a financial system and Student Information System. These systems are required to carry out the day-to-day operations of the school system, as well as provide state and federal electronic reporting. The financial ERP is utilized for our employee demographics, payroll, general ledger, purchasing, human resources, and state and federal mandated reporting.

The Student Information System (SIS) ERP consists of student record recording; and local, state, and federal reporting. Data consists of student demographics, enrollment, boundary management, grade recording, attendance, student and teacher schedules, and discipline. This data is used to make many local as well as state and federal decisions.

All schools have fiber connectivity up to 1GB for the WAN. The Central office, Maintenance, and Transportation buildings have also been upgraded. This new network infrastructure is in place to provide more bandwidth and access as additional devices are procured and as new school renovation projects are completed.

## **b. Instructional Uses of Technology**

The Professional Learning, Curriculum and Instruction, and Media and Instructional Technology departments provide training that serves as an effective model for integrating technology into the classroom. System Leadership Teams comprised of teachers, administrators, and personnel from all central office departments attend monthly meetings to informally review best classroom instructional practices and the extent to which teachers are integrating technology. This collaboration of the leadership team has created awareness of the need for RCSS stakeholders to examine the relationship between best practice instruction and the 21st Century Classroom.



Title I, SPLOST, and competitive grants, as well as local funding, have enabled RCSS to move forward with the purchase of a variety of 21st Century tools, such as interactive whiteboards, digital projectors, mobile devices, student interactive devices, desktops, laptops, tablets, and software for instruction-based projects and continued improvements in technology literacy throughout the county. While the funding sources provide the purchase and maintenance of the equipment, there is a lack of funding to support the development and implementation of Professional Learning classes.

Because of the increasing need for technology instruction and integration in the classroom, RCSS has created a new program called Technology Trainers in Residence. Teachers and/or staff members with a high propensity for technology applied from each school. After being screened and admitted to the program, the TTRs were trained in software integration and hardware optimization and redelivered content to their schools during the year.

All elementary, middle, and high schools are utilizing a variety of network-based and online programs to enhance instructional practices and raise student academic achievement. The integration of technology into the classroom consistently offers new and innovative ways for the delivery of instruction. RCSS was the first Georgia district to have a nationally certified school for the Project Lead the Way program. This program is the nation's leading provider of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education, offering a rigorous curriculum for college credit that allows students to apply what they are learning in math and science class to real-life engineering and technology projects. A wireless network and updated infrastructure will make programs more accessible.

Other system projects include the following: (1) The district media festival provides teachers with a new teaching methodology and students with a means of displaying their technology skills through multimedia projects. The county has produced a number of winners that competed at the International level. (2) The MIT department supports the schools' technology committees and all district level leadership teams. MIT also provides support throughout the year to various community technology-related projects. (3) Periodically, a district vendor show is hosted by MIT that allows county employees the opportunity to view modern technologies and software as well as media-related resources. The MIT staff also holds forums and presentations to make sure schools can make informed decisions on technology purchases. (4) Teachers, administrators, and support staff attend state conferences to stay abreast of the latest technology. (5) System-wide support of National Education Association's (NEA) "Read Across America" Program is implemented using technology in a variety of creative ways.

RCSS's Media and Instructional Technology Department computer training labs are used to provide extensive district wide professional learning as well as



software- oriented classes. There are three computer labs and one mobile lab that are available for the entire county for software, hardware, new technology integration testing and training, vendor demonstrations, multimedia training, and collaboration. Each lab is equipped with 21st Century tools such as interactive whiteboards, digital projectors, document cameras, interactive response systems and sound systems. Multimedia classes are offered to county staff and faculty in the use of multimedia software, scanners, digital video cameras, projection devices, interactive whiteboards, and learner response systems. The Curriculum Department is involved with on-going projects that address strategies and performance tasks (i.e., standards-based and performance-based tasks that require higher order thinking). These projects and standards-based instruction require creating video clips, digital portfolios, multimedia presentations, commercials, billboard displays, jingles, etc. that reflect and address all subject areas and maximize the integration of various technology tools and resources.

The Media and Instructional Technology Department has continued this collaborative effort to promote technology integration aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards by modeling lessons and activities that exemplify integrating technology into the curriculum. The Professional Learning Department also supports these efforts through the offering of a variety of technology-related courses for all Richmond County active and retired personnel. These courses are scheduled and made available through the Professional Learning web page: <http://rcboe.iperformonline.com/>.

### **c. Administrative Uses of Technology**

Computer proficiency for administrators and administrative support staff is essential in order to automate tasks/procedures to best facilitate and support the needs of the teachers and students. Administrators and support staff members are provided with the tools to accomplish day-to-day school and system activities. These tools consist of mobile devices, computers, printers, system email, VOIP telephone systems, high-speed gigabit network infrastructures, software that provides reports regarding student health, behavior, and individual education plans, software that assists with data-driven decisions, and system Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software that allows access to financial records and student information.

The student information ERP contains student demographics, attendance, grades and discipline information as well as graduation tracking, curriculum and content management components. The mission of the Richmond County School System is to educate students to become lifelong learners and productive citizens, to which improved student performance is essential. Using the data collected in these applications allows administrators, faculty and staff



the capability to make critical data- driven decisions to assist students in their learning skills and abilities.

The system is moving towards complete web-based ERP systems so that all data can be accessed by administrators, teachers and staff from any location at any time. By virtualizing servers, the Information Technology department will be better able to manage the servers, reduce costs, and provide better support for the school system.

The Technology departments will continue to provide training and support for administrators, teachers and staff in utilizing the ERP systems to help them perform their jobs more efficiently. Proper training will also assist them in their critical data- driving decisions that affect the entire school system.

#### **d. Parent/Community Uses of Technology**

Richmond County's Strategic Plan lists parent and community involvement as a major component and technology can play a huge role in attaining this goal. The system website and individual school web sites are excellent sources of information for parents and community members to find school-related resources and view systemic initiatives. Through these websites, parents are able to monitor overall system academic achievement, view Board meeting information, and access the RCSS Strategic plan, as well as email school and system personnel.

Research shows that for any technology plan to be effective, all stakeholders should have the opportunity to have an input into the goals of the plan. Teachers, administrators, school staff, parents and the general community all have a stake in the educational outcomes of students (Harvey, 2001). Periodically, surveys are posted on the system homepage or school pages to elicit responses from parents, students, teachers, staff and the community. The Richmond County School System seeks to continually reach this goal by incorporating community partners. A listing of these partners can be found on the system homepage. The partners support and strive to meet the needs of RCSS students in achieving academic success.

The Citizens Oversight Committee for Pay As You Go Projects has been instrumental in acquiring technology for the Richmond County School System. This committee oversees special local option sales tax funds and makes decisions for purchases based on school needs. The committee is able to purchase software that is beneficial for system-wide use. The 11th District Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in Richmond County is another program that supports the system schools. The organization has more than 1,000 active members. The group holds fundraisers for schools, provides public support and serves as an advocate for the system as a whole. The PTA has been able to purchase computers and laptops to meet the needs of students.



The local RESA works to serve educators in Richmond County. They support implementation of some grant requirements as well as provide professional development for grants and non-grant related mentoring and training.

The Richmond County School System has entered into a partnership with the Augusta Public Library. The school system is making sure that library programming information is distributed to all schools and the public library is sharing resources such as databases.

The Morris Museum of Art offers tours and programs designed to support the Georgia curricula along with provided Georgia Performance Standards Connections for each lesson or activity. Tours are interdisciplinary and enhance classroom learning in social studies, language arts, and visual arts designed for engaging students in discussions and small group assignments. Resources are housed at the museum for teacher check-out as well as downloadable art-based, interdisciplinary lesson plans for the classroom.

The CTAE Advisory Committee oversees the support and maintenance of the vocational education program in Richmond County. As a part of the CTAE program, the Georgia Youth Apprenticeship program provides opportunities for juniors and seniors to start preparing for their career paths while still in high school. Participants commit to post-secondary technical education while receiving on-the-job training.

RCSS has a relationship with the Youth Challenge Academy at Fort Gordon that has been very effective in increasing graduation rates for those students in that program. It is sponsored by the Georgia National Guard.

A percentage of the County's Title I budget is spent for parental involvement. Title I staff members serve as parent liaisons providing conferences and workshops for parents. These meetings are focused on parent concerns about resources for the students. Title I currently houses a "Parent Center" which provides parents the opportunity to use computers and check out resources for their students. Resource staff from the Title I department travel to schools to offer additional assistance to Title I schools.

RCSS standardized on a system-wide student information system. Parents are able to view attendance and grades through the resource of this integrated system. Teachers can effectively plan lessons and communicate their plans with the curriculum portion of the learning management system. Parent and community groups play a major role in the education of the students in the Richmond County School System.



e. **System Readiness**

As our educators attend Professional Learning courses, RCSS has confirmed the demand for beginner, intermediate, and advanced level computer courses. Basic computer classes are still being offered while sessions such as intermediate or advanced training are offered upon request. Leadership Team Focus Walk reports reveal that the typical teacher displays an instructional disconnect between a change in instructional technology pedagogies and daily classroom instruction. A large percentage of the teachers and administrators are still utilizing beginner techniques, making it necessary for additional training to integrate technology into their content area. Collected data for assessing technology integration has been implemented using formal and informal observations. The Technology Trainer in Residence program is in place to help teachers bridge the gap to help make technology a part of their everyday instructional practice.

f. **System Support**

The Media and Instructional Technology Department staff consists of the Director, two Instructional Technology Specialists, one Technology Specialist for Media Specialist Support, one Technology Specialist for Online Content Management, and one Technology Specialist for Audio-Visual needs. The department also includes a Secretary to the Director and a Bookkeeper.

The Information Technology Department staff consists of the Director, a Lead Technology Specialist, four Technology Specialists, one Computer Technicians, two Network Staff, two SIS Help Desk Staff, three System Programmer, two Data Center Operators, one Data Analyst, and three Clerical staff. The Technology Specialists (two of which are A+ certified) provide hardware and software troubleshooting and technology maintenance for the entire system. This technical team requires extensive technical training in order to support and maintain the system's network infrastructure, computer and technical needs. Collaboration between the Technology Specialists and all Media Specialists is critical to maintaining and supporting the technical needs in the schools. The Information Technology Department provides support and training to individuals responsible for payroll and finance, system programming and applications, networking, student information system, required state reporting, such as FTE, system email, as well as the administrative tasks required of all schools and departments.

The School Nutrition, SPED, Title I, Transportation, and Maintenance departments each have a technology specialist who works in collaboration to support various technology needs in those areas.



## **g. Access to Technology Gap Analysis**

Each year, the Media and Instructional Technology Department administers the annual system-wide technology survey. The survey instrument is used to document current reality as well as the school system's needs assessments for decision-making and determining the existing gap in technology. The June 2014 survey results revealed that the school system's student-to-computer ratio is 1.964. Survey results revealed 1.92% of the system's classrooms did not have a modern computer. It also revealed that 35.65% of classrooms have 1-2 modern computers, 50.38% have 3-5 computers, 6.68% have 6-9 computers and 5.37% have 10+ computers. Based on best practice recommendations for adequate classroom computers needed to accommodate project-based learning with authentic student assessment, this ratio still reflects a need for additional computers system-wide. BYOT can help narrow this gap.

With the accelerated growth in technology, computers listed in the survey as modern will become obsolete within a few years. The expense of updating vast numbers of administrative, teacher, and student computers to replace outdated systems and provide system-wide modern access is astronomical. Various federal funding sources, such as Title I, have helped to bridge this gap by providing funding for computers and software. Unfortunately, Title I only targets select schools that meet federally-mandated criteria and guidelines. Due to the high cost of new technology, schools not targeted to receive funding experience difficulties in trying to keep abreast of purchasing or replacing outdated equipment.

The school system has 1,975 instructional classrooms. Among those classrooms, the distribution of other technology reported in the survey are 977 document cameras, 2,114 interactive white boards, 730 interactive slates, 24,289 student response devices, and 2,206 digital projectors.

Providing the equipment for integration is only a small portion of the equation in adequately providing access to technology. Once equipment is provided, user training is required and mandatory. The school system offers year round face-to-face or site-based training to support the integration of technology into the curriculum through equipment use. Despite the system's initiative to support the instructional use of technology, formal and informal observations show there is still a system-wide gap in technology integration. The routine maintenance of hardware and software also plays a major role in computer functionality. This is a major concern for the technical staff responsible for supporting system-wide computers. Information Technology (IT) is responsible for keeping teacher, student, and administrative computer, network, and telephone equipment functional. Currently the school system has a known gap between the number of qualified technicians to support the system's 58 schools. IT currently has six technicians who manage, support, and perform these services. The total number of service orders tracked in the TigerPaw management system has been consistently increasing throughout the years. However, the number of technicians available to address these issues has decreased. Service requests

also become increasingly complex each year. Technicians require training in VOIP telephone systems, the Windows network operating system, and user interface procedures with administrative and ERP systems/programs. Service requests are processed in the order that they are received, and priority requests are evaluated based on the nature of each request. Currently the school system does not have sufficient technical support staff to service and support all the schools in a timely manner. Priority requests are completed within days; normal requests can be delayed for more than six months. The excessive response time for service due to the lack of sufficient numbers of technicians is evidence of this gap.

**h. Access to Technology Goal/Gap Analysis**

Goal: Continue to upgrade, maintain, and support the current network infrastructure and investigate and implement a wireless infrastructure and end-user hardware/software to assure access for administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

Gap: Having the wireless infrastructure to support the expanding use of mobile devices

Gap: Keeping devices updated at an established interval
Gap: Providing administrative training to use tools more effectively in the student information system for data driven decision-making
Gap: Increasing web-based curricular resources for all subject areas and grade levels to increase student technology-connected activities and assignments
Gap: Identifying and purchasing assistive devices needed in each special needs classroom
Gap: Hire additional trained technical support staff to support and service system-wide service requests.

**i. Instructional Goal/Gaps Analysis**

Although great efforts have been made district-wide to align the system goals with the United States Department of Education goal to “Improve the elementary and secondary education system’s ability to consistently deliver excellent instruction aligned with rigorous academic standards while providing effective support services to close achievement and opportunity gaps, and ensure all students graduate high school college- and career-ready,” teachers still struggle



with curriculum and technology integration. If the set goal is for students to become college and career ready, teachers need to become facilitators of learning in the classroom embracing and implementing proven technology pedagogies.

Changes in instruction that are supported through technology integration require a great emphasis on information literacy and professional learning. The Media and Instructional Technology Department (MIT) is involved in a large percentage of technology related instructional training for the system. With budget cuts and loss of personnel, the MIT and IT departments do not have enough staff to fully support the current and increasing technology within the school system. Because of this shortage, media specialists and the technology trainers in residence have played an important role in providing training and troubleshooting at their schools. RCSS Media Specialists serve as a liaison between their assigned school and the IT and MIT Departments.

Goals: Ensure that students are effective and responsible users of technology, with a mastery of technology literacy evident by middle school to ensure students are college and/or career ready.

Provide students with technological abilities to bridge the gap between secondary education and the requirements of the job market and/or the essential skills necessary for college preparedness.

Assist teachers in the integration of technology into the curriculum. To utilize technology to support, develop, and evaluate the professional growth of administrators, faculty, and staff, which will result in maximum learning for all students.

Gap: The business community is concerned that some students graduating from the Richmond County School System are inadequately prepared to enter the workforce.
Gap: Current funding levels are inadequate to support the acquisition of new technology programs and the on-going maintenance of current technology.
Gap: Collaboration between teachers, media specialists and school technology trainers in residence is needed to integrate strategies and align curriculum.
Gap: Lack of technology embedded into the total curriculum at each grade level and in each content area.
Gap: Lack of constant scheduled time for teacher technology-related professional development.
Gap: Utilizing the system-wide student management software that includes a grade book, progress reports, and database
Gap: Lack of teacher technology assessments and accountability for implementation of technology into the curriculum.
Gap: Lack of accountability for student assessment and for growth of technology skills.

Gap: Lack of funding to provide adequate technical and instructional assistance to support RCSS.

**j. Administrative Uses of Technology Goals/Gaps Analysis**

All financial management and student information functions are currently performed with IFAS and Infinite Campus at each school site. All administrators, teachers and support personnel have access and utilize the system’s Microsoft Exchange server. There are also other avenues for email that may be used such as the Google Apps for education account and email accounts associated with the system’s webpage. The school system’s website, as well as each school’s homepage, is regularly updated to ensure that current information is posted.

The student information system is web-based, allowing administrators to access all student data such as attendance, classes, grades and discipline. Administrators and school personnel have been trained on the gradebook, scheduling and Parent portal modules.

RCSS strives to take full advantage of state provided tools such as the Teacher Leader Effectiveness (TLE) portal, State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), Teacher Resource Link (TRL), Instructional Improvement System (IIS), Formative Instructional Practices (FIP) and looks forward to the use of the Learning Object Repository (LOR). These online tools allow administrators and teachers immediate access to useful resources, student data and information to support more effective classroom instruction and a personalized learning environment.

The TLE Platform allows administrators to perform teacher evaluations, instantly upload those evaluations into a database, and email that feedback to the teacher. This technology allows for a great reduction in the time spent performing evaluations and paperwork.

Goal: Continually monitor student performance data in an effort to improve student achievement on standardized tests. Streamline data collection by providing access to data repositories for administrators and provide extraction and analysis training.

Gap: Need for wireless infrastructure to support mobile devices
Gap: Continual Professional Learning course offerings related to various system academic and administrative reports and all other relevant data that is currently transmitted on paper.
Gap: Provide continual resources and training with user accountability for managing and using all components of available data for system leaders, coordinators, administrators, faculty, and staff.

**k. Parent/Community Uses of Technology Goal/Gaps Analysis**

RCSS strives to encourage the community and other stakeholders to participate in the educational process of their students. The student information system with the integrated learning management system provides parents access to their student’s attendance and academic information.

The Pay-as-You-Go committee was established in 2007 to oversee the SPLOST funding generated from the local 1% sales tax to finance select system-wide projects, including projects related to technology. This group is made up of community members and Richmond County taxpayers.

Goal: Provide effective and efficient resources for support of community awareness by using technology as a medium to create an interactive partnership between the Richmond County School System, parents, community agencies, and business partners.

Gap: Provide classes and access to technology after hours for students and parents.
Gap: Create partnerships with local colleges and universities to collaborate on joint enrollment opportunities.
Gap: Collaborate with local businesses to use technology to promote project-based learning.
Gap: Improve parental involvement using resources to access student data.
Gap: Establish a wider and more effective means of ensuring that all stakeholders are well informed about goals and concerns of the school system.
Gap: Provide greater opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback, identify specific areas of concern, make suggestions, and assist in the formulation of plans for the school system.

**l. System Readiness for Technology Goals/Gaps Analysis**

The introduction of computers and mobile devices into a classroom requires a fundamental change in the way teachers instruct students. This pedagogical change must take place through professional learning. Professional learning is a process of reflection, and growth that yields the best results when sustained





over time through practice with the focus on job-embedded responsibilities. Research shows that professional learning has become increasingly important as a way to ensure that teachers succeed in matching their teaching goals with their students' learning needs (Darling Hammond, 1998; Diaz Maggioli, 2004; Sparks, 2002). In this digital age of 21st Century learners, teachers need continual training on how to integrate technology into the curriculum.

Goal: Assist teachers in the integration of technology into the curriculum. To use a wide range of technology to support, develop, and evaluate the professional growth of administrators, faculty, and staff, which will result in maximum learning for all students.

Gap: Provide release time for teachers, Technology Trainers in Residence, and media specialists to visit schools, either in the system or in other counties that have successfully integrated technology into the curriculum. Provide time for teachers, Technology Trainers in Residence, and media specialists to collaborate and share ideas for using technology.
Gap: Offer professional learning that provides management strategies for technology integration into the curriculum.
Gap: Offer professional learning for teachers on using technology and the Internet as instructional tools, to include how to manage and monitor student achievement and progress using State-provided tools.
Gap: Provide the opportunity for teachers to preview and provide input toward selection of instructional software.
Gap: Provide the opportunity for teachers to master software that meets objectives stated in lesson plans.

Computer proficiency for administrators, faculty, and staff at the school and system level is beneficial in completing a number of repetitive tasks. Computer usage for these types of tasks allows jobs to be processed more effectively, freeing up time that can be spent with students. Being a good leader in technology provides an example for others to follow.

Goal: Provide technology training for administrators, faculty, and staff so they can act as role models in the use of technology through a full range of technology tools and resources.

Gap: Implement an administrative technology training program consisting of the following classes: Use of mobile devices, State-provided tools, word processing fundamentals, spreadsheet fundamentals, presentation fundamentals, Promethean ActivBoard fundamentals, Web 2.0 tools, technology integration in the classroom, and technology tools for administrators.
Gap: Hire additional instructional support staff to provide a broad range of Professional Learning opportunities for training all employees.
Gap: Provide release time for teachers away from the school building to train and practice using the technology tools that are in place in the classroom.

Gap: Provide release time for administrators away from the school building to train and practice learned technology skills.

Determining the success of the integration of technology into curriculum is imperative in order to obtain additional technology funding, to prepare students for the workforce, and enhance student achievement. Test score comparisons, for example, can be an indicator of the impact of technology.

Goal: Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the classroom technology and student achievement for improved data-driven decision making.

Gap: Utilize available program evaluation reports to measure the effectiveness of academic-based software and how they are being utilized to increase student achievement.

Gap: Survey the teachers, students and parents to determine the effectiveness of classroom technology. Does technology assist retention of information? Are students with access to technology achieving better grades and higher test scores? Does technology promote higher-order thinking?

Gap: Comparison of test scores before and after the implementation of technology. Comparison of test scores of classrooms with one computer to those with multiple computers in the same demographic area.

Gap: Evaluate student technology competencies by assessing performance indicators in the ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education) Technology Standards for students at all grade levels as well as the NETS (National Educational Technology Standards).

Gap: Establish a partnership with local colleges for the purpose of analyzing data.

It is imperative that teachers, media specialists, TTRs and administrators attend classes that pertain to the school system's core software applications and equipment training. It is also essential that teachers attend classes using technology and software to enable transfer of skills into their daily jobs.

Goal: Evaluate the effectiveness of professional learning courses offered to teachers and administrators for improved data-driven decision making.

Gap: Provide evaluations at the conclusion of each session to determine the effectiveness of the instruction provided.

Gap: Evaluate the enrollment in optional technology classes by comparing attendance from year to year.

Gap: Survey all teachers and administrators by attendance, attitude toward technology before and after taking classes, and usefulness of the material in using technology in the classroom or office.

Information Technology (IT) is responsible for all administrative computers, administrative software, email servers, the school system's Wide Area Network infrastructure, and the wireless network. IT is also responsible for the repair and



maintenance of the LANs, application servers, and instructional computers to include selected software applications.

Media and Instructional Technology (MIT) is responsible for the management and operations of all media centers. MIT is also responsible for the system website, as well as all instructional technology purchases and technology related training for administrators, faculty, and staff.

Goal: Evaluate the effectiveness of the technology services and support provided by the Information Technology and the Media and Instructional Technology departments.

Gap: Increase network bandwidth throughout the school system to accommodate additional network traffic and ensure resources are available.
Gap: Implement a wireless infrastructure to support the use of mobile technology.
Gap: Track trouble reports and service requests to determine the average response time for service and repairs. Provide additional technicians as needed to resolve and reduce service/response/repair time to a reasonable level.
Gap: Survey administrators and teachers to determine the effectiveness of technology support provided by IT.
Gap: Survey administrators and teachers to determine the effectiveness of technology training in the Training Lab, in building-level training sessions, and in one-on-one sessions.

Teachers must serve as role models to encourage the use of technology in the classroom. Technology should be included as a part of every curriculum area, not as a separate entity.

Goal: Evaluate the effectiveness of teacher’s use of technology for improved data- driven decision making.

Gap: Evaluate teacher use of technology as evidenced by the collection of lesson plans that reflect technology integration.
Gap: Track the number of courses/training taken by teachers at each school.

**m. System Support for Technology Analysis**

The mission of the Richmond County School System is to educate students to become lifelong learners and productive citizens, and a vision that through integration of instructional technology in the classroom, trained teachers will become facilitators of student learning. RCSS strives to become a unified learning community of parents, citizens, county officials, and business partners to provide financial and intellectual support in achieving student academic



success. Therefore, the use of technology is embedded throughout all areas of instructional, administrative, parental, and community uses of technology.

Goal: Provide modern hardware and software, as well as the personnel to support the technology.

Gap: Establish a help desk system that provides on-call support for users on simple hardware and software questions. The Help Desk technician will have network remote access to all computers and will possess the technical ability to identify and resolve computer related issues. Funding issues have prevented this position from becoming a reality.
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Gap: Hire additional technical support staff to respond to computer support/service requests and reduce the report-to-repair time for users.
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Gap: Continue to provide training to school-level personnel on basic computer hardware and software troubleshooting.
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Technology placed in classrooms without appropriate training becomes an ineffective instructional tool. Teachers require training on software applications for differentiated instruction and training on how to become facilitators in technology for increased student achievement. Technology placed in the classrooms with months delay in maintenance requests negates this instructional tool. Technical support staff must be increased to meet this need.

Goal: Provide on-going technology training opportunities for teachers.

Gap: Maintain the Professional Learning/Technology Training Labs with Internet access and the latest application software. Offer a wide variety of courses with a focus on differentiated instruction, integration strategies, and relevant application courses.
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Gap: Establish a teacher competency skill set that corresponds with ISTE's teacher technology standards, which will require all schools to participate in technology training.
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Gap: Provide release time for all teachers wishing to participate in technology training.
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Gap: Hire additional Instructional Technology Specialists to assist with the integration of new technologies with the curriculum
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Richmond County Schools implemented a program in 1994 with ten instructional technology specialists to support RCSS teachers. In 1997, six of these were reassigned as technology specialists to focus on troubleshooting hardware and software problems. By 2008 the number of Instructional Technology Specialists was reduced again, leaving two people assigned to focus solely on instruction and five to focus on network, telephone, hardware and software issues. Technology Specialists must stay abreast and knowledgeable with modern technologies. Training has been received in Microsoft applications, wireless networking, forensic investigation, Adobe products, Destiny Library/Textbook Management System training, as well as training to support IP telephone



system. Additional training is required in specific VOIP systems, Windows networking, and network/internet forensic applications.

Goal: Continue training Technology Specialists to provide hardware and software support for all users.

Gap: Require Technology Specialists to be knowledgeable in network fundamentals, wireless network, and server operating systems in order to provide user/computer administration.
Gap: Continue to maintain a current knowledgebase of Microsoft Windows operating systems and other Microsoft applications, network operating systems, and other applications as well as learning new web-based applications.
Gap: Require increase in number of Technology Specialist available to service the needs of RCSS.

n. **Goals, Benchmarks, and Strategies**

**Access to Technology**

<b>GOAL:</b>	<b>Continue to upgrade, maintain, and support the network infrastructure and end-user hardware/software to assure access for administrators, faculty, staff, and all students.</b>			
<b><u>Strategies</u></b>	<b><u>Benchmark</u></b>	<b><u>Evaluation Method Timeline</u></b>	<b><u>Funding Source/Estimated Amount</u></b>	<b><u>Person Responsible</u></b>
Continue wireless infrastructure for all schools and departments	BUDGET Review for maintenance annually	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	RT3: FY15: \$1,000,000 eRate FY15: \$2,700,000 FY16: \$225,000 FY17: \$225,000 Local FY15: \$362,000 FY16: \$25,000 FY17: \$25,000	Rob Jankus, IT Director

Increase Bandwidth to all Schools, Maintenance, Transportation (WAN), from 1GB to 10GB	BUDGET Review for maintenance annually	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	E-Rate FY15: \$1,051,935 FY16: \$1,051,935 FY17: \$1,051,935  Local FY15: \$296,699 FY16: \$296,699 FY17: \$296,699	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Increase System Bandwidth to Internet – Augment bandwidth provided by DOE	FY15: 1.2 GB, as Necessary FY16: 10 GB + 1 GB, as necessary FY17: 10 GB + 1 GB, as necessary	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	E-Rate FY15: \$61,140 FY16: \$61,140 FY17: \$61,140  Local FY15: \$6,000 FY16: \$6,000 FY17: \$6,000	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Support for maintaining sufficient network infrastructure and internet access bandwidth throughout school system	Contracted Network Support	Network Support	\$30,000 annually	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Maintain updated switch technology in all schools and departments	Complete annual E-Rate Application	RCBOE Annual Technology Inventory	E-Rate \$2,660,800 annually Local \$532,732 Annually	Rob Jankus, IT Director

Install and maintain sufficient UPS's and SNMP modules to protect servers and network electronics	UPS's and SNMP modules upgraded as needed	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Costs of UPS's & SNMP modules included in switch and server upgrades  Maint & Batteries Local \$ 6,000 annually	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Annual Maintenance Agreement for Data Center UPS	BUDGET Review for maintenance annually	Vendor annual preemptive reporting	Central Office Data Center UPS maintenance plan Local \$7,000 annually	Rob Jankus IT Director
Annual Switch Maintenance in schools and departments	BUDGET Review for maintenance annually	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Local \$45,000 annually	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Annual Switch Maintenance in Central Office Data Center	BUDGET Review for maintenance annually	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Local FY15: \$25,000 FY16: \$28,000 FY17: \$31,000	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Maintain and utilize Network Monitoring tools	Budget Review for maintenance annually	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Local maintenance contract FY15: \$151,000 FY16: \$171,000 FY17: \$191,000	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Implement Network/ Workstation Monitoring System	BUDGET Review for maintenance annually	Impero reports	Local FY15: \$40,000 FY16: \$40,000 FY17: \$40,000	Kim Stripling, MIT Director Rob Jankus, IT Director

Maintain Virtual Servers and SAN	BUDGET Review for maintenance annually	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Costs included for server upgrades or replacements	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Maintain updated Firewall Protection for system network	Budget Review for Maintenance annually	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Local \$60,000 annually	Robert Jankus, IT Director
Maintain CIPA compliant Internet filtering system: hardware and software	Renew license annually	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Local \$91,000 projected annually	Kim Stripling, MIT Director Robert Jankus, IT Director
Implement and expand Web-Based Communication System for entire School System	E-Rate Application	RCBE Annual Website Assessment	E-Rate FY15: \$149,905 FY16: \$149,905 FY17: \$149,905 Local \$45,000 Annually	Kim Stripling, MIT Director
Upgrade Instructional / Classroom management servers every three years	Purchase 20 servers each year	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Local \$100,000 estimated annually	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Upgrade system E-Mail servers and storage every three years	Budget Review for Maintenance annually	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Local \$180,000 projected every three years	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Upgrade CTAE lab servers every	Purchase 6 servers each year as necessary	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	CTAE \$63,000 estimated annually	Nanette Barnes, CTAE Director



3 years				
Upgrade Special Ed servers every 3 years	Purchase 2 servers each year as necessary	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Local or SPLOST \$21,000 estimated annually	Talithia Newsome, Special Ed Director
Standardize network operating system	100% same release Windows NOS as servers are purchased	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Local \$19,000 per school	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Protect, maintain, secure and image instructional computers	Software installed at time of network migration	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	Local \$100,000	Rob Jankus, IT Director

<p>Purchase &amp; maintain modern multimedia computers and interactive instructional equipment</p>	<p>5% Decrease in student to computer ratio per year and increase access to interactive instructional equipment by 5% each year</p>	<p>Annual School &amp; System Technology Hardware Inventory</p>	<p>Local pending SPLOST APPROVAL \$1,500,000 estimated annually</p> <p>Local or SPLOST \$90,000 Local Gifted \$10,000 estimated annually</p> <p>Local \$20,000 Perkins \$100,500 estimated annually</p> <p>Local \$12,000 estimated annually</p> <p>\$500,000 estimated annually</p>	<p>Kim Stripling, MIT Director</p> <p>Talithia Newsome, Special Ed. Director</p> <p>Nanette Barnes, CTAE Director</p> <p>Joslyn Fields, SIPL Coordinator</p> <p>Audrey Spry, Title I Director</p>
<p>Maintain and support student Information system and financial ERP software</p>	<p>BUDGET for maintenance annually</p>	<p>RCBE Annual Technology Inventory</p>	<p>Local FY15-17 IFAS \$240,000/YR Infinite Campus \$285,000/YR</p>	<p>Rob Jankus, IT Director</p>

Provide Radio, Mobile Telephone, and mobile E-Mail Comm. for Central Office, Maintenance, Transportation & Administrative functions GPS and voice communications for school buses	E-Rate Application	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	E-Rate \$125,245 estimated annually Local \$31,311 estimated annually	Benton Starks, Maintenance Director
Upgrade three MIT Labs every three years	Purchase 21 computers, Promethean board, and projector each year	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	SPLOST \$90,000	Kim Stripling, MIT Director
Implement Distance Learning system	Add one school per year as funding permits	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	E-Rate \$25,000 estimated annually Local \$50,500 estimated annually	Kim Stripling, MIT Director
Install MediaCast in all new construction and in schools as funding is available	E-Rate Application	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	E-Rate projected \$50,000 per school Local \$23,000 per school	Kim Stripling, MIT Director
Install VOIP system in schools	E-Rate Application	RCBE Annual Technology Inventory	E-Rate/SPLOST \$3,500,000 Local \$17,500 per school	Rob Jankus, IT Director

**Instructional Uses of Technology/Professional Development Strategies**

<p><b><u>GOAL:</u></b></p>	<p><b>Make the use of technology second nature to all students, beginning at the elementary level with curriculum integration strategies and 21st Century standardized equipment and resources for alternative means of remediation, enrichment, instruction, and reaching system-wide goals for student performance.</b></p> <p><b>Provide students with technological abilities to bridge the gap between secondary education and the requirements of the job market and/or the essential skills necessary for college preparedness.</b></p> <p><b>Assist teachers in the integration of technology into the curriculum. To utilize technology to support, develop, and evaluate the professional growth of administrators, faculty, and staff, which will result in maximum learning for all students.</b></p>			
<p><b><u>Strategies</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Benchmark</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Evaluation Method Timeline</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Funding Source/Amount</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Person Responsible</u></b></p>
<p>Teachers, Technology Trainers in Residence and media specialists utilize software programs and accompanying materials that support research-</p>	<p>Review software/materials annually to determine instructional benefits. Increase the % scoring at or above the standard in all content areas annually by 5%.</p>	<p>Semester software usage reports Annual CRCT August -April Review lesson plans and conduct classroom observations for evidence of utilizing instructional software effectively.</p>	<p>RT3</p>	<p>Rosemary Vaughan, Program Coordinator</p>
			<p>Local or SPLOST \$2,500 estimated annually</p>	<p>Talithia Newsome, Special Ed Director</p>
			<p>Local \$1,500 estimated annually</p>	<p>Maria Brown, Student Services Director</p>

based instructional strategies in each curriculum area.			Local FY12: \$300,000 FY13: FY14: \$150,000 estimated annually	Stacey Mabray, Curriculum & Instructional Services Director
	Increase the % passing rate by 5% annually in all content areas	Annual GHS GT, SAT Prep, EOPA August - April	Local or SPLOST \$2,500 estimated annually	Talithia Newsome, Special Ed Director
			Local \$10,000 Perkins \$10,000	Nanette Barnes, CTAE Director
Technology Trainers in Residence selected from each school to provide technology integration into the curriculum	Increase the % of teachers utilizing instructional technology strategies	TKES formal and informal observations and surveys	RT3 \$126,870 Local	Rosemary Vaughan, Program Coordinator  Kim Stripling, MIT Director
Provide students with an increased amount of technology-connected assignments	5 % increase with student entries in the Media Festival, the Foreign Language TechFest, 5% increase in assignments for authentic projects integrating technology.	Annual System Media Festival, Foreign Language Tech Fest, Participants Computer Literacy Skills Competency Test/Annually in the Spring	Local FY12: \$1,000 FY13: \$1,000 FY14: \$1,000	Teachers, TTRs, Media Specialists, Instructional Technology Specialists, & Principals

Provide students with after school and/or Saturday workshops that integrate content with computer skills	Conduct workshops on each school level each year.	Attendance Count, Teacher Lesson Plans/ Observations Ongoing evaluation of student progress by reviewing student work, and CRCT scores. August - May	Title I \$201,800	Audrey Spry, Title I Director
			Local or SPLOST \$1,000 estimated annually	Talithia Newsome, Special Ed Director
Promote technology integration and the continued use of quality content- rich resources for student academic needs	Train teachers on Instructional component of various online resources	Teachers' Weekly lesson plans  Student Projects		Kim Stripling, MIT Director Media Specialists, Instructional Coaches, Teachers
Evaluate teachers level of technology integration for all schools.	TLE portal standards	TLE report		Building Level Administrator

**Administrative Uses of Technology:**

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>Enhance student achievement on standardized tests through a systematic process of continuous data evaluation. Streamline data collection by providing access to data repositories for all employees and provide extraction and analysis training.</b>			
<b><u>Strategies</u></b>	<b><u>Benchmark</u></b>	<b><u>Evaluation Method/ Timeline</u></b>	<b><u>Funding Source/Amount</u></b>	<b><u>Person Responsible</u></b>
Train administrators in state mandated student information system to access test data for individual students, teachers, and schools	System administrators will be using technology to access available instructional data	Monthly reports completed by Instructional Administrators and Guidance counselors	Local \$20,000 estimated annually	Maria Brown, Student Services Director  Joslyn Fields, SIPL Coordinator
Provide training to administrators and coordinators on how to manage and use test data to guide the instructional program	Ongoing for new administrators and coordinators	Reports which identifies areas of student strengths and weaknesses/ Fall & Spring	\$21,667 estimated annually  \$10,000 estimated annually	Maria Brown, Student Services Director  Joslyn Fields, SIPL Coordinator
Train school personnel to generate longitudinal reports to track students' progress	100% of school personnel will show proficiency by FY14 with additional training for new personnel.	Ongoing evaluation of student progress August - May	N/A	Maria Brown, Student Services Director

Train principals with Ready-reports to re-roster student data on the SAT results	100% of school personnel will have current data for FY14 with additional training occurring as needed for new personnel.	Review teacher records annually	N/A	Maria Brown, Student Services Director
Provide training and support for board members to use new systems and software	100% of Board Members, Superintendent, and Board Attorney will use paperless system @ meetings	Wireless laptops used at board meetings  2nd/3rd Tuesday night of each month	N/A	Kim Stripling, MIT Director  Joslyn Fields, SIPL Coordinator
Train Administrators and teachers to access and use the SLDS on-line website to provide information for formative and summative assessments on all students.	100% of teachers trained. Training continues annually with new teachers.	Teachers will generate individualized online assessments  August - April of each year	N/A	On-site Administrator



**Parent/Community uses of Technology**

<b>GOAL:</b>	<b>Provide effective and efficient resources for support for community awareness by utilizing technology as a medium to create an interactive partnership between the Richmond County School System, parents, community agencies, and industry and business partners.</b>			
<b><u>Strategies</u></b>	<b><u>Benchmark</u></b>	<b><u>Evaluation Method Timeline</u></b>	<b><u>Funding Source/Amount</u></b>	<b><u>Person Responsible</u></b>
Create web-based database of information on all programs purchased and installed on BOE computers	100% software listing from all schools & departments	Annual software Inventory Report	N/A	Kim Stripling, MIT Director
Establish conformity of system level website to section 508 of American Disabilities Act	Annual Website Review	Review of website Spring of each year	N/A	Kim Stripling, MIT Director
Create & maintain the Curriculum websites to include access to the K-12 curriculum, Common Core and GPS resources, and links to community agencies that	Web based activities related to GPS and Common Core standards that enhance virtual and instructional field trips to local museums and organizations  (25% annual increase in usage)	# of Emails to website creators with accurate responses to the activities for the purpose of sharing findings with all participants in an online database	Local \$1,650  Title II \$3,500 estimated annually	Stacey Mabray, Curriculum & Instructional Services Director  Kim Stripling, MIT Director

support the curriculum.		August - May of each year		
Community partnerships Drives formal and informal discussions to support Induction programs and strategic planning.	A 10% increase in trained volunteers annually and community partnerships.  Increase by 5 % annually new teacher retention	Evaluate professional development at all levels to analyze effectiveness of teacher induction and volunteers. August - November annually	Local	School based, school councils, Joslyn Fields, SIPL Coordinator Georgia Regents University
Parent Portal for Student Information	Provide access to student information	On-line real time student information	Local SIS annual maintenance	Rob Jankus, IT Director
Afford parents meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at home and at school	Train Parent Mentor for Special Ed	Monthly Reports by Mentors, Parents, & Social Workers	Local or SPLOST \$12,500 estimated annually	Talithia Newsome, Special Ed Director
	Provide Parent Center	Report on resources used.	Title I FY15: \$60,000 FY16: \$3,000 FY17: \$3,000	Audrey Spry, Title I Director
	% field trip increase to Morris Museum of Art, Lucy Laney Museum, & Augusta History Museum	# of Richmond County Classes each school year Reviewed Annually in June	Local \$69,300 estimated annually	Stacey Mabray, Curriculum & Instructional Services Director

Utilize computer-generated charts, graphs and reports to summarize, analyze, and interpret test data on system performance.	Software programs for posting test data reports to website each Fall and Spring for all stakeholders to view	Use of information in annual instructional planning of GPS test objectives	Local \$21,667 estimated annually	Maria Brown, Student Services  Joslyn Fields, SIPL Coordinator
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**System Readiness for Technology**

<b>GOAL:</b>	<b>Assist teachers in the integration of technology into the curriculum. To utilize technology to support, develop, and evaluate the professional growth of students, administrators, faculty, and staff, which will result in maximum learning for all students.</b>			
<b><u>Strategies</u></b>	<b><u>Benchmark</u></b>	<b><u>Evaluation Method Timeline</u></b>	<b><u>Funding Source/Amount</u></b>	<b><u>Person Responsible</u></b>
Provide training in the application of technology to improve and support regular instruction as it relates to each curriculum area.	5% increase each year in technology-connected professional development	Professional Learning Registration Data  Evaluations are completed at the end of each course. Site observations completed on certified staff. Class participants will complete final projects.	Local or SPLOST \$1,000 estimated annually	Talithia Newsome Special Education Director
			Perkins \$25,000 estimated annually	Nanette Barnes, CTAE Director
			Professional Learning \$100,000 estimated annually	Professional Learning Director  Kim Stripling, MIT Director

Continue to provide online distance learning professional learning opportunities, to include GPSC approved online courses for teachers & media specialists to strengthen content knowledge and research-based instructional strategies	3% increase annually in teacher participation with distance learning & online professional development	Annual Review of Participants submitting Professional Learning units from distance learning and online classes	Title II \$21,000 estimated annually	Stacey Mabray, Curriculum & Instructional Services Director
			SDC \$50,000 estimated annually	Joslyn Fields, SIPL Coordinator
			Local or SPLOST \$1,500 estimated annually	Talithia Newsome, Special Ed Director
Promote continued use of quality, content rich Internet resources for instruction, and to find correlated curriculum internet resources	Georgia Standards.Org (GSO), Galileo resources, Discovery Education	Media Specialists Professional Learning	N/A	Kim Stripling, MIT Director
Provide Professional Learning Instructors with training	75% of training activities offered by Professional Learning each	Review of course syllabus	Professional Learning \$1,000 estimated annually	Joslyn Fields, SIPL Coordinator  Kim Stripling, MIT Director

and equipment for integrating technology in Professional Learning Activities	year, will include a technology component		Title II \$4,000 estimated annually	Stacey Mabray, Curriculum & Instructional Services Director
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### **III. Communication and Marketing Plan**

#### **a. Strategies for Sharing and Dissemination**

Since the Internet has become such an integral part of research and communication, support is necessary to maintain electronic communication, web servers, and web pages. The system web site, currently hosted by eChalk, readily makes information available to administrators, teachers, students, parents, businesses and the community.

The system uses eChalk services to standardize and host the system's web site, electronic email, and all school and teacher web pages. eChalk also provides a student email feature, for communication with the online class components of Georgia Virtual Schools, as well as promoting other instructional student/teacher communication. One online content manager serves as the main website support for the system and is responsible for assisting personnel in updating their individual web pages. The Richmond County School System (RCSS) finds great value in the eChalk website (<http://www.rcboe.org>) primarily provided through E-Rate funding. With information from all departments and schools throughout the system, we are able to put news releases, announcements and actions by the board of trustees on the website, allowing us to keep parents, children and the general public informed about current system events. The site also includes calendar events and information relative to each department, such as lunch menus, transportation information, and the county's testing schedule. By posting our findings concerning technology in RCSS, we can communicate this information to our many stakeholders.

The website is an invaluable tool for our media relations. Frequent calls and queries are received from the media regarding statistics, background information, history, and current events taking place at our schools. The number of local media outlets has grown to over 24 agencies and our system website saves valuable time and resources when reporters can be referred to one central location for current events. Thus, the local media will assist in disseminating our progress with technology to the community. Information about our system is constantly recorded and revised by our online content manager and in emails containing news about the system. This makes information available to teachers, students, parents, and the community.

All news media outlets in Richmond County put forth collaborative efforts to keep the community abreast of current school happenings. In recent years, we have had a great increase in the use of our website, particularly as more parents begin to use the Internet for information.

Schools within the system maintain individual school websites and post current information and resources for parents, to include teacher pages with posted homework assignments for public access. Digital newsletters are posted to the school websites, and paper copies are sent home to keep parents and the community informed about school news and events.

The Parent Portal, through Infinite Campus, is web-based for parents to access their student's attendance, assignments and academic information. Tutorials are on-line, both at the school and system website, to assist with step-by-step help to maneuver through this parent portal.

All schools have access to an automated parent communication system. This system alerts parents of student absences or tardies. It also provides information pertaining to after school programs, emergency information, or general school system information through a telephone database.

Due to E-Rate funding, progress in the area of communication has moved into a range of 21st Century tools. Administrators and Board members are provided with tools that link to the student management system for accessing real-time data for decision-making. Classrooms are equipped with communication devices that link to the front office for immediate teacher/administrator interaction. Voice over IP (VoIP) phones are being installed in schools and departments as part of new construction and renovations. Parents are able to call the schools and leave messages directly for the teacher, as well as access personnel by email. E-Rate funding has assisted in providing global tracking systems on school buses. These devices not only track travel routes, but offer real-time communication capabilities between transportation personnel and bus drivers.

#### **b. Integration/Coordination with Long-Range Planning Initiatives**

Richmond County School System (RCSS) is involved in continual team planning involving all stakeholders. The Department of Education (DOE) is an integral part of our planning process. Representatives from DOE participate in various meetings that bring enriched knowledge and information to guide continual system-wide school improvement for student achievement.

The School Improvement Professional Development (SIPL) department facilitates the continuous improvement process for the district. The AdvancED accreditation standards and indicators are monitored to create systemic processes to



effectively drive student performance, effective school operation practices and characteristics for a quality school system. With the quality assurance of the superintendent of schools, cabinet and all department heads serve as the district leadership team to engage in conversations about educational improvement, system effectiveness, and achievement. The Leadership team serves as a foundation for planning and implementing improvement strategies and activities for measuring success. Action teams from this body serve as think tanks for innovation and future best practice for strategic planning.

Continuous school improvement depends also on high-quality professional learning that focuses on research-based strategies. Professional learning is the primary means that schools and the system utilizes to strengthen the development and performance of educators at all levels in order to improve student learning and achievement. The SIPL department also provides leadership, technical assistance, and resources for teacher induction, mentor training and in support of job embedded professional learning communities across the system in order to improve student learning through organizational development and professional learning (staff development).

The Curriculum Department supports the Math, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Foreign Language Implementation Teams. These teams are made up of representation from various departments, school-level personnel, and classroom teachers. Working from individual curriculum department plans, the teams work together to implement action strategies, interventions, programs, and performance goals centered on NCLB, IDEA, and GaDOE best practices. All plans incorporate technology for management, enrichment, remediation, and data-driven decision making. In accordance with timelines for interventions, teams meet on an on-going basis to review their improvement plan. Each action, strategy, and intervention is implemented and after-action reports are given.

The Director of Media and Instructional Technology plays an active role in system planning and is currently involved in partnerships with the local RESA, school-level representatives, and community members that form the "Pay-As-You-Go" committee. This committee makes recommendations and oversees the spending of SPLOST funding from the local 1% sales tax. A portion of the tax is designated to provide schools with 21st Century technology tools for student achievement. The Director of Information Technology oversees the implementation of the student information system, business systems, and computer maintenance and repairs in the schools.

#### **IV. Professional Development**

Over the past few decades, the focus in the classroom has shifted from teachers dispensing knowledge in a strict lecture model to a model of facilitating the



acquisition of knowledge. Jerome Brunner (1986, 1990) has set forth a theory of learning that supports this shift. Constructivism presents learning as an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current knowledge and experiences.

The technologies of today and tomorrow are well suited to implementing a teaching strategy based on this constructivist approach. John Kosakowski writes, "The new technologies allow students to have more control over their own learning, to think analytically and critically, and to work collaboratively," (Kosakowski, 1998). Thus, it is part of the RCSS vision and goals to make the use of technology second nature to all students with embedded technology in the curriculum.

In order for technology implementation to become an integral part of the curriculum, it is essential that administrators and system leaders embrace technology as a tool for enhancement and learning. Special workshops using eChalk and Outlook have been offered to the Cabinet and school principals, per the Superintendent's request. This enables the Superintendent to communicate electronically via email. Few administrators had the skills to take full advantage of this technology; however, progress has been made in this area. The need to focus on data-driven decision making outlined in the AdvancEd Review, GAPSS State Review, and the MGT Performance Review has helped to reinforce technology use at the administrative level. Professional learning sessions are continually offered to all system and school level administrators. One example of training offered is in the use of Infinite Campus. This tool helps to disaggregate a huge range of data to provide longitudinal tracking and reporting of student assessments and demographics. Another system-wide initiative to promote the use of technology is the Georgia School Board Association (GSBA) eBoard communication tool. All Board members, Superintendent, Cabinet and Leadership Team members have received training on this tool. eBoard is supported by a system technology specialist to ensure continued use and success of this vital communication tool.

Classes directly related to job performance are available upon request for all central office staff. Media specialists and Textbook Distribution Center support staff are offered on-going training for the system library and textbook management system. Media specialists meet once a month for job-related training on various issues. Student Data Collection Specialists meet for job-related training with more concentrated training planned for the new student information system.

All professional learning classes are scheduled through an on-line learning management system. Course descriptions are created and posted for teacher access. Parties interested in offering classes through the Professional Learning Department must submit course information for approval to the Director of Professional Learning. Survey results, submitted requests, informal and formal observations are used to determine course offerings. Professional Learning is



looking into new venues for training opportunities, to include on-line course offerings.

With the increased use of our web-based communication system, eChalk, there is a need for additional support. Central office administrators receive training and updates in conjunction with our continual improvement process. At the present time, approximately 63% of RCSS teachers have been trained to maintain teacher web pages using the eChalk system. As we move to a more data-driven system to support instructional best practices, a variety of programs are becoming available for system leaders, teachers and administrators. In-depth training will be provided for those programs.

## **Appendix**

### **Policy**

#### **Internet Acceptable Use**

#### **Descriptor Code: IFBG**

It is the policy of the Richmond County Board of Education that employees and students should be furnished educational opportunities and resources to have access to Internet-based instructional programs and administrative services. The primary purpose and mission of the Richmond County Board of Education is to educate students to become lifelong learners and productive citizens in the 21st Century. Technology plays a role in this mission by providing quality programs, information and learning activities along with support and services to improve student learning and enhance instructional and administrative effectiveness. The instructional use of interactive computer and web-based technology will prepare students for the future. Technology includes computer hardware, software, local and wide area networks and access to the Internet. Due to the complex nature of these systems and the magnitude of information available via the Internet, the Richmond County Board of Education has adopted procedures regarding acceptable use to ensure that the technology users share in the technology resources in an effective, efficient, ethical and lawful manner. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that students are not granted access to anything other than educational and instructional materials and resources.

The Richmond County Board of Education is committed to: (a) preventing user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) preventing unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) preventing unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) complying with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)]. Each user must follow the Richmond County School System Internet Acceptable Use Procedures found in the Richmond County Board of Education Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

Procedures have been adopted to address Internet safety, which include:

- (a) Access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web
- (b) Safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, instant messaging, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications
- (c) Unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online
- (d) Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information of minors
- (e) Restricting minors' access to materials harmful to them

The Superintendent is authorized to designate certain persons in the School System who will be allowed to disable the blocking or filtering measure placed on the computer system during the use by an adult to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

## **Procedures**

### **Internet Acceptable Use IFBG**

### **Descriptor Code:**

#### **Internet Acceptable Use Procedures**

The Acceptable Use Procedures apply to all students, faculty, staff, employees and visitors (both adults and minors) of the Richmond County School System. All users of the district wide area network and/or other electronic informational services must maintain strict compliance with all applicable ethical and legal rules and regulations regarding access. The school system reserves the right to monitor, access, and disclose the contents of any user's files, activities, or communications.

#### **Availability of Access:**

The Internet will be available to users for instructional and administrative purposes. The electronic information available to users does not imply endorsement by the Richmond County Board of Education. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and misuse will result in disciplinary actions, including cancellation of those privileges.

#### **Security:**

Users must maintain appropriate passwords to obtain access to the network. Login information, user names, and passwords are confidential and it is the responsibility of the user to safeguard that information. Passwords should be at least 8 characters and should contain a number and a capital letter. No user should login with another user's information.

While the Internet is an extremely valuable tool for educational research, information is accessible that may not be appropriate according to community, school, or family standards. The Richmond County Board of Education provides an Internet filtering system which blocks access to a large percentage of inappropriate sites. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or any material deemed to be harmful to minors will be blocked by the web filtering system. Even though most objectionable sites are blocked, various entities create new inappropriate sites daily. If a questionable site or information is encountered, the same should be reported to the school's Media Specialist or to the Media and Instructional Technology Department. Staff members in Media and Instructional Technology will make every effort to block the site as quickly as possible.



### **Internet Safety:**

Internet safety is a great concern of the Richmond County Board of Education. It shall be the responsibility of all educators of the Richmond County School System, including administrators, instructional supervisors, principals, teachers, media specialists, technology specialists, guidance counselors, instructional paraprofessionals and any other personnel having access to the online computer network for instructional purposes, to supervise and monitor usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy and the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), as much as is practical.

A series of age appropriate Internet Safety courses will be taught to all students in the Richmond County School System to provide education on appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, safety and privacy, as well as cyberbullying awareness and response. School personnel have the discretion to provide such other training or to implement such other curricula, provided that such training or curricula meet the requirements of CIPA, as may be amended from time to time. Any suggested topics or proposed curricula are intended as a guideline and in no way replace or diminish the professional judgment and discretion of the administrators or school personnel implementing this policy.

### **The following will be considered inappropriate uses of the Richmond County School System Technology Network, which list is not exhaustive and includes but is not limited to:**

- A. Posting, publishing, sending or creating materials or communications that are defamatory, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, or illegal, or engage in any other type of behavior which constitutes bullying or harassment of any kind, or is in violation of the Code of Ethics for Educators, the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, State law or federal law  
NOTE: Students who engage in such activity off campus and create a material disruption of school operations shall be subject to penalties for bullying and harassment contained in the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline as well as criminal charges, if applicable.
- B. Accessing, sending, creating or posting materials or communications that could be inconsistent with the district's educational needs and goals
- C. Using the network for financial gain, advertising or commercial activity
- D. Transmitting any material in violation of any United States or State law or regulation
- E. Posting anonymous or forging electronic mail messages or altering, deleting or copying another user's email
- F. Using the school's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software, music or images, or violation of copyright laws
- G. Downloading, installing, or playing any unauthorized program or content (even that created at home) on any school's computer or network

- H. Purposely bringing any hardware on the premises or loading any software that is designed to damage, alter, destroy or provide access to unauthorized data
- I. Attempting to vandalize or disassemble any network or computer component including the attempt to alter network or computer configuration
- J. Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person
- K. Sending spam through email
- L. Using the network while access privileges have been suspended
- M. Bypassing or attempting to circumvent network security, virus protection, network filtering, or policies

### **Employee Responsibilities:**

- Employees must use good judgment and keep all passwords protected. Do not post a list of user names and passwords where they may be seen by students or others. Never email user names and passwords to unknown sources. The Richmond County School System Information Technology Department will never ask for passwords by email.
- When leaving a computer, always log off so to prevent unauthorized access to files or email.
- Students should always be supervised while using the Internet, computers, handheld devices or electronic resources.
- Email accounts are provided for professional use only. Email should not be used for personal gain or business related activities. Broadcasting of unsolicited messages is prohibited. All employees must request permission from the building administrator before sending any messages to an entire building's staff. Permission has to be granted from the Superintendent or designee to send messages to "All Users" in the system.
- If an employee brings a personal computer or handheld device, he/she must fill out a form to put the device on the network. The computer or device must have updated antivirus software. The device must be virus free and must not contain any unauthorized or inappropriate files.
- Employees may not download any unauthorized software onto Richmond County School System computers.
- Employees will use system-supported technology, including, but not limited to, Web 2.0 or equivalent resources (wikis, blogs, online collaborative environments, etc.) for educational use only and will refrain from accessing inappropriate information.
- Employees must follow the Code of Ethics for Educators, as well as any other applicable laws or regulations.
- Employees shall act in good faith to enforce the operation of technology protection measures while school computers with Internet access are being used.

### **Parent Responsibilities:**

- Parents should read through the entire Internet Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures and discuss Internet safety with their child.
- Parents of students shall sign and return to their child's school a form to give or deny permission for their child to utilize the Richmond County School System Technology Network and for their child's picture, video clip or name to be featured on Richmond County School System websites.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Students should not use the Internet for purposes other than instructional assignments related to the curriculum.
- Students will use system-supported technology, including, but not limited to, Web 2.0 or equivalent resources (wikis, blogs, online collaborative environments, etc.) for educational use only and will refrain from accessing inappropriate information.
- Students must follow teacher directions for Internet related assignments.
- Students must heed prohibitions and Internet Safety rules.
- Students should participate in any and all training as instructed by school personnel.
- Students will follow all applicable rules related to Internet, computer or digital device use contained within the Student Code of Conduct and Discipline and sign that they have read the policy and procedures of the Richmond County School System and agree to abide by the same.
- Students should take precautions when using the network.

### **For Internet Safety, Students Are Reminded They Should:**

- Never provide last name, address, telephone number, or school name online to someone they do not know.
- Never respond to and always report any messages that make the student feel uncomfortable or that are from an unknown origin.
- Never send a photo of themselves or anyone else without the permission of a parent.
- Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they met online.
- Never open attachments or files from unknown senders.
- Always report any inappropriate sites observed.

### **Usage of Mobile Devices and/or Personal Computers**

The use of mobile devices or personal computers on campus is a privilege that the school grants to students who are willing to assume the responsibilities outlined in the Richmond County Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures. This usage policy also applies to the mobile devices checked out by the school and the RCSS Mobile Device/BYOT Agreement must be signed by the student and parent. All guidelines in the Richmond County Board of Education Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures continue to apply when a student brings a personal laptop computer or other mobile device for use on campus.

## **CIPA DEFINITION OF TERMS:**

**Technology Protection Measure.** The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

1. **OBSCENE**, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
2. **CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or
3. **HARMFUL TO MINORS**. The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:
  - a. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
  - b. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
  - c. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

**Minor:** Under Federal law, the term "minor" is defined as "an individual who has not attained the age of 17 years" (pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)) and "any person under the age of eighteen years" (pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 2256). For purposes of this policy, however, the term "minor" shall apply to any student properly attending a school within the Richmond County School System.

**Sexual Act; Sexual Contact.** The terms "sexual act" and "sexual contact" have the meanings given such terms in 18 U.S.C. § 2246.

*Failure to follow the Acceptable Use Policy violates the requirements as set forth by the Official Code of Georgia and the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)*

**RICHMOND COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**PHOTO AND VIDEO RELEASE FORM**

**FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL USE**

I do hereby grant Richmond County Schools the unlimited right to use and/or produce photographs, videos, movies, recordings, likenesses and/or the voice of any student in any legal manner and for the internal and external promotional and informational activities of Richmond County Schools. I also agree to allow my child's work and/or photograph to be published on the Richmond County School Internet website, RCBOE publications and on tv, radio and media outlets. I further understand that by signing this release, I waive any and all present or future compensation rights to the use of the above stated materials.

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Address: \_\_\_\_\_

