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Thomas County Schools Online Technology Professional Development

**PART B: CAPSTONE REPORT OUTLINE AND ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA**

**Description of the Capstone Experience**

The process that was proposed for the Capstone Experience involved holding weekly workshops for teachers and videotaping sessions so that teachers may refer back to them as necessary. The Capstone Experience did not go according to the plan, in that there were no scheduled meetings, but instead there were meetings with teachers one-on-one to discuss problems or ideas about the technology in their rooms. This came about because of a scheduling obstacle with many teachers. So, to continue the capstone project and serve more teachers, meetings were scheduled through workshops during teacher workdays, emails, and meetings. The most common subject during interactions with teachers was concerning All In Learning (AIL). Recently, AIL added an online testing component (Engage & Learn) and teachers at my school were advised to use it so students become more familiar with online testing. Through the teachers’ questions and my own communication with the AIL team, we have dealt with many hurdles.

One example of the meetings was working with a teacher on how to use Google Form as a quiz. During the coaching he was shown a quick way to allow the Form to grade the quiz immediately without having to use Spreadsheet or any grading Add-ons. Another meeting was with a teacher was setting up constructed response questions in her Google Classroom so that the students were able to type their answers on a Google Doc and submit the work electronically.

Through coaching, advising and helping teachers will be continued. Follow-up with teachers will be available by participating in workshops during teacher workdays and making contact with teachers and administrators who have technology concerns or questions.

**Discussion and/or Reflection**

By completing this capstone project, it has become apparent that technology facilitation and leadership involve flexibility, communication skills, and a determined mindset. Although the planned calendar proved to be ineffective, technology professional development still occurred. Being flexible with my schedule and how concerns were discussed, be it Google Apps, All In Learning, or any other application like Remind messages, Kahoot!, Socrative, etc. These teachers should know that even though the meetings were not the traditional professional learning setting, their concerns and questions are valid and deserve attention. Flexibility was also required in the many outlets to communicate to colleagues. Step by step instructions needed to be communicated at times through email, modeling a process, or promoting best practice for teachers to use with their students. Communicating clearly and connecting with teachers was essential for succeeding with teachers and gaining their trust. Without forging that connection, teachers felt as if it was an intrusion when offered any help, until they understood that their students’ best interests were in mind. Finally, a determined mindset assisted in gaining the confidence of teachers. If an immediate answer to a question was not known, it would be found. It didn’t matter what website, program, or application, resources would be exhausted until the answer was found.

The knowledge, skills, and dispositions gained throughout the Capstone Experience included things such as in Standard 2, planning collaboratively to decide what areas of technology use have greater needs of assistance in Thomas County Middle School. Also, modeling and designing a lesson to facilitate differentiation by using technology-enhanced learning experiences, and as in Standard 3.3 it is necessary to develop, model, and facilitate the use of online and blended learning when teachers have too busy of schedules to attend a workshop. Finally as in Standard 5, after conducting the needs assessment, technology-based professional learning workshops were implemented.

Advice for other technology coaches attempting to fill a need for professional learning in their school is to be available. It may seem to be a good idea to guide teachers towards a subject that the coach is an expert in, but they will soon be asking the coach about any technology related question that comes up in their classroom. Teachers, administrators, and any school-related faculty know who to go to with questions and who will help them out. Coaches being available, as opposed to saying that they will be emailed, is a great way to build confidence in the coach’s abilities and work ethic.

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