TCMS Shared Vision and Rationale

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*Keywords*:

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**Vision Statement**

Thomas County is a premier school district providing innovative opportunities that prepare world-class students. Using technology available in every classroom, our teachers strive to make connections for students learning more meaningful and useful for future occupations and endeavors.

**Rationale**

Preparing students for jobs in the current workforce is done through community and school efforts. According to our surveys, community stakeholders are not familiar with the current advances in our school system or our school. As well, teachers are feeling overwhelmed with the influx of technology in the schools. To combat these misgivings, we are focusing on engaging our communities with Parent Technology Nights as well as Open Technology Nights for other leaders in the community. According to the International Society for Technology in Education, “community involvement can also help ensure that real-world values, applied skills and locally available resources are incorporated into the plan’s implementation framework to improve the chances of success in the long term” (2016).

We will also provide further instruction on student-centered learning as professional learning to our educators to assist them in being more confident with technology in the classroom. By putting students in the “driver’s seat,” instructors (and students) “reap their rewards in more and deeper student learning and more positive student attitudes toward their subjects and toward themselves” (Brent and Felder, 1996). With student- centered learning, teachers guide students without handing them the information. Students work towards the goals, which make learning more meaningful.

**Diversity Considerations**

In our schools, majority of our students were receiving free and reduced lunch before the entire system was allowed to have free lunch. Many of our students do not have access to technology at home. At Thomas County Middle School we will have a device available for every student by the end of the 2016-2017 school year. While we know that having access does not necessarily equate to success, it is a step in the right direction to preparing our students for a technology world. By providing classrooms with a class set of Chromebooks and ensuring that teachers use them with all students, students with different diversities and economic statuses will be utilizing tools that may not be available to them.

By the same token, using the technology in class also requires that both males and females use the devices. Female students need just as much exposure and use of technology as their counterparts who seem to be more interested.

As a school we will also look into providing these specific groups with additional opportunities to use these devices by forming technology groups or incentives.

**Stakeholder Roles**

At Thomas County Middle School, the instructional technology coach will assist teachers by providing professional learning to ensure they are confident with technologies and making learning student-centered. Administrators will support teachers, coaches, parents, students, and community members by communicating expectations and updating as necessary. Teachers will learn more about the technology available in their school by attending professional learning classes. Teachers will also use student-centered strategies in the classroom. Parents will be able to access information about the technology available at Thomas County Middle School and attend informational meetings to learn further. Students will be able to gain valuable knowledge and experiences from new technology. They will also be able to access technology daily in the classrooms.

**References**

ISTE. (2016). Essential Conditions. Retrieved July, 2016, from http://www.iste.org/standards/tools-resources/essential-conditions/engaged-communities

Felder, R. M., & Brent, R. (1996). NAVIGATING THE BUMPY ROAD TO STUDENT-CENTERED INSTRUCTION. Retrieved July, 2016, from http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/Resist.html

**Appendix**

1. As a member of the community, what current technologies are available in your student’s school that you know of?
2. As a member of the community, do you know how to use the current technologies are used in the school?
3. Would you like to attend a hands-on, informational night to learn more?
4. Do you have any questions about the available technologies in your student’s school?
5. In what ways have you used technology to make learning student-centered?
6. As a teacher, in what way is student-centered learning with technology beneficial?