



WEYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Technology Integration: Vision for the Future



In the 21st century, understanding and using technology will be an integral part of virtually every aspect of daily life. It is the school system's responsibility to prepare students for this future. The Weymouth Public Schools is committed to engaging students in a stimulating academic environment that is student-centered, focuses on inquiry-based learning and provides access to the tools and technologies needed for success.

Students must be engaged in meaningful activities that incorporate new technologies to enhance communication, refine critical thinking skills and foster global awareness. In a technology-rich, learner-centered classroom, the teacher serves as a mentor, facilitator of instruction, and coach. Every teacher must be knowledgeable and skilled in the use of diverse technologies that support student learning and provide a platform for students to share their work beyond the walls of the classroom.

To that end, our schools must be equipped to provide both access to information and the tools necessary to utilize that access. In addition, teachers and students must be immersed in high-quality learning experiences that will improve their ability to navigate a world that is becoming increasingly dependent upon technology.

Although rapid changes in available technologies make long term projections a challenge, we believe that within three years our physical learning environments should include:

- Wireless access to the Internet as well as access to a rich library of instructional materials
- Appropriate display and presentation equipment to facilitate instruction
- Laptops, netbooks, video cameras and other devices that will provide students with the means to communicate, create, produce and publish in a web-based environment
- Access to and instruction in the use of Web 2.0 tools that promote collaboration, problem-solving, and awareness of cultural diversity

To facilitate the optimal use of these technologies, our educational programs should include:

- On-going and sustainable professional development for all staff with a focus on teaching approaches designed to foster 21st century skills.
- Integration of technology skills as a key component of instructional design for students.
- A requirement to demonstrate mastery of the technology skills identified by the International Society for Technology in Education for both staff and students.

As a first step in a multi-phase plan, utilizing monies that are part of the federal stimulus funding for education, the district proposes the following:

- Install hardware at Weymouth High School to provide schoolwide wireless access
- Install overhead projectors in all fourth grade classrooms
- Acquire four netbook carts to pilot use in two primary and two middle school classrooms
- Provide time for building staff to collaborate, design and share best practices in the use of newer technologies
- Continue building-based support, through fundraising, for equipment such as interactive whiteboards, document cameras, video cameras and other tools that support and enhance student learning.

As additional funding becomes available, resources will continue to be distributed to implement our long term goals and provide technology-rich learning experiences for all of our students.

Technology Integration – Next Steps

As we begin the 2010-2011 school year, we will continue to utilize federal stimulus funding to support our longer term goals. The second phase of the multi-year plan will include the following:

- Install hardware at Maria Weston Chapman Middle School and Abigail Adams Middle School to provide schoolwide wireless access
- Install interactive projectors in all third grade classrooms
- Acquire mobile labs for all schools based on the pilot-project results. Distribution of labs will include one for each academy plus the library at the high school, one for each grade at the middle level and one for each primary school that will include a wireless access point.
- Provide training and learning opportunities for staff as the newer technologies are integrated into our learning environments
- Continue building-based support, through fundraising, for equipment such as document cameras, video cameras, response devices and other tools that support student learning.

Technologies change quickly as we have seen with the move from interactive whiteboards to projectors that make any surface interactive. However, keeping pace with those changes is a necessity if we are to prepare our students for a future that relies on those newer technologies. While adequate funding will continue to be a challenge, the Weymouth schools are committed to providing the access and tools that our students need to be successful productive citizens. We will continue to invest our resources strategically and in a way that maximizes the one-time infusion of stimulus dollars to improve both infrastructure and equipment in alignment with our vision for our students as 21st century learners and leaders.