****

**Facilitator Guide – Best Practices**

**What is in this Guide?**

This guide provides facilitators with the information they need to conduct a workshop around the essential components of state and/or district digital learning plans. It is our assumption that the facilitator will have at least a basic knowledge about learning in the digital age. Ideally, the facilitator should understand the basic components of a digital learning plan.

This guide provides facilitators with step by step activities, with suggested times for each activity, as well as narrative content and resources to support the topic. This guide is accompanied by a presentation slide deck for use during the workshop. It also includes a link to the logistics spreadsheet to help facilitators plan the workshop. Logistics include recommendations for audio visual, catering, registration and outreach.

This facilitator guide can be used in its current format or it is easily customizable to meet your needs. The guide is organized as follows:

* Purpose of the workshop
* Objectives for participants
* Key sections with suggested times
* Resources

**Purpose of the Workshop**

The goal of this session is to provide participants, typically school and district leaders, with the opportunity to learn about best practices for learning in the digital age. Participants will see examples of effective digital learning in action, discuss how digital learning can be best addressed in their school/district/state and consider best practices related to purchasing tools/resources.

**Objectives**

* Learn about best practices for learning in the digital age
* Review scenarios and discuss issues of transformative digital learning opportunities, connectivity, equity and professional learning with your colleagues
* Use rapid cycle evaluation for digital instructional materials
* Collaborate with colleagues regarding best practices to ensure digital learning in action
* Develop and maintain relationships with other district and state leaders

**Session Overview (Total time: 90 minutes)**

* Welcome and Introductions (5-10 minutes)
* Background (5-10 minutes)
* Exemplar Rapid Fire Presentations (15-20 minutes)
* Digital Learning in Action Scenarios Activity (25-30 minutes)
* Rapid Fire Evaluation Activity (10 minutes)
* Policies (5-10 minutes)
* Reflection and Wrap Up (5-10 minutes)

\*\*Please note – the timing of activities requires a rapid paced session. Each facilitator will need to consider their audience (as related both to background knowledge and size) as well as future opportunities for professional learning opportunities around the topic and then choose the activities and time commitment for each.

****

**Welcome and Introductions (5-10 minutes)**

***Facilitator Note:*** *Introduce yourself, review the agenda and logistics for the session. Introduce the welcome activity. This activity will help the facilitator better understand the audience. If you have a large group, ask the participants to complete this via individual tables vs whole group. You can also choose an activity from the Activity Toolbox.*

**I’m Here and I’m In -** Ask participants to share their name, title and in 1 short sentence why they are attending the meeting. To help focus participants on the meeting at hand and not multitask ask them to leave their personal and professional woes at the door and share “I”m here and I’m in” after their statement.

**Example**: *My name is Maria Lopez, I am a district curriculum advisor and I am participating to help support our district shift to digital instructional materials. My daughter is home sick with stomach flu but she has a great sitter so… “I’m here and I’m in”.*

**Background (10 minutes)**

***Facilitator Note:*** *Share some general background information on learning in the digital age.*

The [NETP Digital Use Divide Infographic](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxyHdKDFj7h-RGpzZUJBaVpQQm8/view) states that we must close the digital use divide and focus on the active use of technology to enable learning and teaching through creation, production and problem-solving. The active use of technology tools and resources offers new learning opportunities to support deeper learning and best prepare students for college and careers. For example:

* Personalized instruction to support learning activities specific to each learner
* Access to online courses & virtual activities including field trips and science labs not available on campus
* Collaboration with peers and experts locally and across the globe
* Game and simulation experiences to support critical thinking and project based learning skills
* Support for computer programming and coding opportunities
* Easily adapted to address students’ learning differences and styles
* Real-time assessments

***Facilitator Note:*** *Choose the featured video or select one of your own. This activity will help support the mindset of the participants; provide an opportunity for dialogue; and share experiences in and among leaders. Choose whole group, individual table or partner discussion depending on timing and size of group.*



**Reimagining Classrooms: Teachers as Learners and Students as Leaders**

Kayla Delzer speaks about her mission to revitalize learning and the classroom environment. Kayla explains how to release the power in the classroom by giving students ownership of their learning and making it relevant to them.

<https://youtu.be/w6vVXmwYvgs>

**Discussion Questions**

* What parts of this presentation resonate with you?
* Do you have classrooms that already demonstrate digital learning in action?
* If yes, please share an example.

****

**Exemplar Rapid Fire Presentations (15-20 minutes)**

***Facilitator Note:*** *Ask two exemplar school/districts to share how they have transformed learning opportunities via digital tools and resources. The presentations should be 5-7 minutes and prepared in advance of the workshop.* *Additional information about presentations can be found in the Logistics resource.*

**Discussion Questions**

* How is your school/district similar to the exemplar?
* Are there policies/practices shared that your school/district can implement within the next quarter? Next Year?

**Digital Learning in Action Activity (20-25 minutes)**

***Facilitator Note:*** *Assign each table one scenario to review and provide each group with the set of discussion questions. For each scenario, either via poster paper and markers or online collaboration tools ask the participants to share their responses to the discussion questions. Depending upon time constraints, individual tables can review and respond to one, two or all three scenarios. Ask a couple of tables share with the whole group.*

**Student Vignette**

Malcolm lives in a rural area and has a 45-minute bus ride to school. Each day, he takes advantage of the school bus’s wireless access and dives into projects. Since the beginning of the year, he has been following Under Armour® corporate financial statements for his Entrepreneurial Business class. Today, he clicks on an article from The New York Times that shares details about a new production facility in Vietnam. Then he checks his online Physics II class group chat to see if he needs to catch up on anything. Once at school, Malcolm switches to the campus Wi-Fi network. Throughout the school day, he accesses online tools and resources to complete his work, conduct research, and collaborate with students and teachers. During his blended learning Spanish class, he practices speaking with his teacher and other students via the microphone and headset. At lunch, he sets up an evening video conference with his history group. Thankfully, last year Malcolm’s parents learned about discounted internet opportunities and now he has home internet access so he doesn’t have to stay late at school or go to McDonald’s to use the Wi-Fi. Apart from improved grades, this has helped Malcolm’s parents to become much more engaged in Malcolm’s learning, including the ability to check his grades, communicate with his teachers, and observe his work.

**Discussion Questions**

1. How does the seamless broadband connectivity impact this student’s learning opportunities?
2. What practices are the teachers using that demonstrate digital learning in action?
3. How are the student’s learning experience personalized?

**Teacher Vignette**

After breakfast, Mr. Franklin logs-on to the school’s learning management system to send a reminder message to his students about an upcoming project. When Mr. Franklin arrives at school, he schedules an evening meeting via instant messaging. Mr. Franklin creates a reminder notice on his laptop to update the online gradebook by end of the week and heads to his first class. He uses a flipped classroom method for instruction where students watch a video of his calculus lesson, prior to class and then participate in practice activities in class. Students use Sketchpad to work on calculus functions, creating unique functions by drawing a cartoon character—deepening the learning experience and reinforcing the properties of functions. In the next class period, students will work on calculus problems using interactive digital resources. Mr. Franklin answers questions and personalizes instruction based upon student online formative and summative assessments. At the end of the day, he meets with the principal to discuss options for the school’s online community of practice where teachers are sharing lesson plans and coordinating peer-to-peer observations.

**Discussion Questions**

1. How does the seamless broadband connectivity impact this teacher’s instruction?
2. What type of professional learning opportunities would you speculate have impacted this teacher’s instructional practices?
3. How does this teacher demonstrate leadership?

**Administrator Vignette**

Principal Clark leads a 1-to-1 school that has seamless wireless access throughout the building. As Ms. Clark walks through the halls of the school, students are using laptops to prepare a presentation. The bell rings and other students broadcast the morning announcements via streaming video. Ms. Clark has a full day of teacher observations to conduct, so she grabs her tablet and heads to the first classroom. On her tablet, she is able to access the district’s educator effectiveness system and observation tools. The teacher has built lessons with resources from the district’s learning object repository and posts them in the learning management system. Ms. Clark observes all students interacting via groups and posting notes online to share. On her way back to her office, Ms. Clark passes a classroom where several teachers are analyzing data from last week’s formative assessments to determine if students have mastered the material. Ms. Clark arrives in her office in time to meet with a parent who has been accessing the parent portal and has noticed new behavior of not turning in assignments. After the parent meeting, Ms. Clark reviews the observation from this morning and recommends an online professional development course. She then attends a virtual meeting with other principals in the state who have a 1-to-1 school, to share best practices.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. How does the seamless broadband connectivity impact this administrator’s work flow?
2. What type of leadership style would you speculate this administrator has based on the teacher collaboration?
3. What type of expectations do you believe this administrator has for students and teachers? How does that impact learning experiences?

*These scenarios were adapted from* [*SETDA’s Broadband Imperative II*](http://www.setda.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/SETDA-Broadband-ImperativeII-Full-Document-Sept-8-2016.pdf) *paper.*

**Ed Tech Rapid Cycle Evaluation Activity (10-15 minutes)**

***Facilitator Note:*** *Provide a short overview of the tool. Allow participants to review the tool and discuss it with their peers. Have tables discuss the steps and parallel the steps to a future purchase they plan to make in the next 6 months.*

The [Rapid Cycle Evaluation (RCE)](https://tech.ed.gov/rce/) Coach is a free and openly licensed web-based platform that supports school and district leaders in conducting short cycle evaluations of educational technologies they are already using or have yet to use at their sites. The Coach’s five-step process includes intuitive tools that serve as embedded professional development for educators that might not have a traditional research background or research capacity. The goal of the RCE Coach is to support school and district’s procurement and implementation processes to include evidence-based decision making throughout.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Step | Information Needed |
| The Basics | * Who the technology users are (will be)?
* What outcomes you’re interested in?
 |
| Determine Your Approach | * Whether the technology has been implemented.
* How you will sort potential users into similar groups?
 |
| Craft Your Research Question | * What outcome you are targeting?
* Who you are trying to impact?
 |
| Think About How you Will Use the Results  | * Cost of the technology
* Idea of what success looks like
 |
| Summarize Context | * Basic information about the technology and its implementation
* Details about the educational environment
 |

****

**Reflection and Wrap Up (5-10 minutes)**

***Facilitator Note:*** *Take a few moments to reflect on the session, share details about additional events related to the remainder of the day and engage the audience to take action when they return to their schools/districts. Use this Audience Challenge activity or choose another one from the Activity Toolbox.*

**Two Stars and a Wish Activity**

* Share two things your school/district is doing well.
* Share one thing you plan to work on based on your return to the office.

Based on the reflection activity, identify the next steps for your state, district or school.

**Wrap-Up**

***Facilitator Note:*** *The facilitator wraps up the day and shares resources with participants. Sample language: “This is only the first step of many steps in supporting teachers and students for learning in the digital age. I encourage you to follow up on our reflection activity during the next few weeks and continue to collaborate with your peers. Think about what tools and resources you can use to maintain relationships and encourage collaboration, as well as identify opportunities for on-going professional learning and workshops.*

**Resources**

The US Department of Education does not endorse any resources; instead they are provided to assist the facilitator in preparing for the workshop. The facilitator can also share these resources with participants to support on-going professional learning and school/district planning after the workshop. For example, some districts have used the NETP for on-going book studies throughout the school year to support the development and refinement of technology initiatives.

**US Department of Education Resources**

[Building Technology Infrastructure for Learning](https://tech.ed.gov/futureready/infrastructure/)

[Educational Technology Rapid Cycle Evaluations](https://tech.ed.gov/rce/)

[Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)](https://www.ed.gov/essa)

[National Education Technology Plan (NETP)](https://tech.ed.gov/files/2017/01/NETP17.pdf)

[Stories of Ed Tech Innovation](https://tech.ed.gov/stories/)

**Facilitator Guide Resources**

[Navigating the Shift: Mapping the Acquisition of Digital Instructional Materials](http://www.setda.org/priorities/digital-content/navigating-the-shift/)

[Quality Instructional Materials Toolkit](http://qualitycontent.setda.org)

**Exemplars**

**Henry County, Virginia**

Rich Acres Elementary School is a Total Title 1 Project School based on a high percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. Each teacher has a wireless laptop and the entire curriculum is digital and available via the staff’s webpage. Teachers at this school have become facilitators, rather than lecturers and students have an active part in their learning process. Students in grades 3-5 are provided tablets that include digital instructional materials, a variety of educational games, support content and numerous educational apps. Digital learning has increased parental involvement and Rich Acres continues to have the highest achievement scores of any elementary schools in the district. <http://web.henry.k12.va.us/domain/1051>