



# **Special School District**

## **Technology Services Program Evaluation**

Chris Baldwin, Chair

Board Approved: June 14, 2011



# Technology Services Standard Program Evaluation

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## Executive Summary

As required by the Missouri School Improvement Plan (MSIP) standards, school districts must evaluate technology biennially. The focus of the present evaluation is to: *Identify the status of recommendations made in the MGT Technology Review and Assessment submitted in March 2010.* In addition, select items will be recommended to be incorporated into the current SSD Technology Plan (CSIP 3.1). Based on the review, stakeholders noted strengths, concerns and recommendations.

### Results

#### Strengths

- Of the 17 Recommendations made in the 2010 MGT report, 9 have been completed and/or are on schedule and are progressing satisfactorily.
  - Monitoring the fiber connection to the north area schools.
  - Upgrading the LAN infrastructure in SSD facilities.
  - Providing Apple Certified Mac Technician certification (ACMT) training to technology support staff.
  - Providing Certified Information System Security Professional (CISSP) training to selected technology staff.
  - Reorganizing Technology Services.
  - Enhancing tools used by technical support staff working in the Help Desk area.
  - Contracting with Partner Districts with regard to purchases and technical support.
  - Securing laptop hard drives using encryption software.
  - Creating and implementing a Disaster Recovery Plan.

#### Concerns

- No action has been taken on 8 of 17 MGT recommendations.
- As the current Technology Plan consists of 23 strategies in diverse goal areas, the incorporation of additional strategies/recommendations may create difficulties in addressing each in an equitable manner.

#### Recommendations

- Based on committee review, it is recommended that the following MGT recommendations be incorporated into the existing SSD Technology Plan along with action steps noted in this evaluation in alignment with CSIP Goal 3.1.
  - Develop and implement online surveys for students, teachers and staff to gather continuous data on technology needs to determine sufficient and appropriate use of instructional technology.
  - Implement a tiered filtering system that maintains student safety yet provides flexibility for adults.



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- Ensure technical support staff has access to documentation on new technology ordered by SSD prior to being scheduled for deployment and has sufficient time to learn the new technology.
- Survey all instructional staff to determine technology competency, and develop a district plan based on ISTE standards that will move the entire instructional staff to competency in the standards.
- Convert all SSD Windows-based computers to part of the SSD Domain.
- Defer the following MGT recommendations for reasons noted in this report:
  - Develop a three year transition plan for SSD schools and central office, in coordination with the refresh cycle, that moves the district toward a PC platform with the following exceptions: graphics arts programs at the Technical High Schools and any other programs where the community advisory committee recommends Macs; the central office communications department; and any instructional situations where the IEP committee recommends software, adaptive devices, or other technologies that require a Mac.
  - Implement secure access to all SSD facilities.
  - Create a four-part process to inform and involve educators in selecting technology appropriate for their students.
- The Technology Planning Committee should review the revised plan pending Board approval of the present program evaluation and assess implementation priorities.



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## Program Evaluation Question(s)

Identify the status of recommendations made in the MGT Technology Review and Assessment submitted in March 2010.

### I. Program/Service Information

1. Name of Program or Services:  
Technology Services
2. Personnel Responsible for Evaluation and Program:  
Chris Baldwin, CTO
3. Demographic Description of Program:  
SSD currently serves over 23,000 students in the areas of special and technical education in the county and employs approximately 5000 staff. The Technology Services department currently consists of 17 staff members charged with supporting the technology needs of these students and staff.
4. Date of Evaluation (Year/Duration):  
June 2011
5. Goal/Objective of Program/Services:  
The goal of Technology Services is to facilitate and support the integration of efficient and effective technology solutions in all aspects of District operations and functions in alignment with the District's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan.
6. Brief description of relationship between program goals, CSIP and MSIP Standards:  
Efficient and effective technology solutions can contribute to meeting all District CSIP Goals. With regard to the present evaluation, the following are of primary focus:

CSIP Goal 3.1: By FY 12, revise the current technology plan to include Board-approved recommendations from comprehensive technology assessment.

MSIP Standard 6.4: Instructional resources and equipment that support and extend the curriculum are readily available to teachers and students.



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## II. Evaluation Criteria for Programs/Services Offered

MGT Recommendations  
SSD Technology Plan

## III. Description of Stakeholders Engagement in Program Evaluation

The Technology Plan Implementation committee assessed and prioritized recommendations from the MGT assessment. Members of the committee are listed below.

Name	Role
Chris Baldwin	Chief Technology Officer
Doug Austin	Director of Information Systems
Tom Randolph	Director of Technical Support
Rob Emerson	Network Engineer
Dan Burris	MIS Director
Kelly Alexander	Director of Finance
Randy Barnes	Administrator for Prog Evals & Initiatives
Ginny Bender	Director of Rockwood
Mary Ann Cooper	Director of South Region
Travis Harder	Specialist for Instructional Technology
Chris Ingram	Specialist for Instructional Technology
Jewel Jenkins	Area Coordinator of Jennings
Tia Kreinbring	Director of Publications
Kathy Lalk	Facilitator for Computer Access
John Marshall	Technology Specialist for SCT
Marsha Meyers	Area Coordinator
Judy Presberg	Liaison for Parent Ed & Diversity Awareness
Lisa Powers	Area Coordinator of Learning & Assessment
Amy Schechter	Director of Human Resources
Marcus Shane	Data Base Analyst for Encore
Kari Thompson	Specialist for Instructional Technology
Ros Van Hecke	Director of Learning & Assessment



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## IV. Results

### MGT Study: Scope

In September 2009, Special School District contracted with MGT of America, Inc. to conduct a Technology Review and Assessment. This review addressed the following major areas:

- Technology Platforms
- Filtering
- Network Infrastructure
- Staffing and Technical Support
- Training
- Security
- Back-up and Recovery
- Access to Technology

MGT submitted the written report, including 17 recommendations, to the district in March 2010. The following section outlines the status of these recommendations.

### MGT Recommendations

**1.1:** Develop and implement online surveys for students, teachers and staff to gather continuous data on technology needs to determine sufficient and appropriate use of instructional technology.

- **Status:** Incomplete
- **Recommendation:** Incorporate into current Technology Plan utilizing the following action steps:
  - Form Instructional Technology Needs Assessment committee.
  - Review existing surveys and/or materials used in other institutions.
  - Develop SSD Instructional Technology Needs Assessment survey and timelines to be administered.
  - Disseminate survey and collect results.
  - Submit results to senior leaders and other stakeholders.

**1.2:** Develop a three year transition plan for SSD schools and central office, in coordination with the refresh cycle, that moves the district toward a PC platform with the following exceptions: graphics arts programs at the Technical High Schools and any other programs where the community advisory committee recommends Macs; the central office communications department; and any instructional situations where the IEP committee recommends software, adaptive devices, or other technologies that require a Mac.

- **Status:** Incomplete
- **Recommendation:** Defer this recommendation until the pilot project at Northview is evaluated and discussed with senior leaders and other stakeholders.



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**1.3:** Implement a tiered filtering system that maintains student safety yet provides flexibility for adults.

- **Status:** Incomplete
- **Recommendation:** Incorporate into current Technology Plan utilizing the following action steps:
  - Collaborate with senior leaders/stakeholders to select SSD pilot site.
  - Assess staff satisfaction with current filtering configuration at pilot site.
  - Review Board Policy and Technology User Agreement with regard to accountability with pilot site administration and staff.
  - Implement tiered filtering at pilot site.
  - Assess staff satisfaction with tiered filtering at pilot site.
  - Make recommendation to Superintendent regarding implementation of tiered filtering in other locations.

**1.4:** Continue to closely monitor the fiber connection to the north schools (Northview, Ackerman, and North Technical High School) to identify additional connectivity needs.

- **Status:** Complete - The level of utilization at all sites is monitored on an ongoing basis. Collaborative planning and coordination efforts are put in place to address needs of all SSD buildings when needed. Examples include a current PDSA process assessing connectivity needs in Court Program locations.

**1.5:** Upgrade the LAN infrastructure in SSD facilities as soon as the district wireless strategy is completed.

- **Status:** Complete – The LAN infrastructure in all SSD schools has been upgraded with Power-over-Ethernet technology (PoE). By integrating power into the standard LAN infrastructure, PoE technology enables power to be supplied to network devices, such as IP phones, network cameras and wireless access points. In addition, the upgrade allows for a scalable and flexible networking infrastructure to address growth needs.

**1.6:** Reorganize Technology Services, specifically Infrastructure and Security, Operations, and Support, and add two new technical support specialists for the technical schools.

- **Status:** On Schedule - The reorganization of Technology Services staff at Central Office is nearing completion (Phase I). The restructuring and realignment of various positions and at Central Office focused on strengthening the ability for the department to meet customer needs more efficiently and effectively in the areas of Technical Support and Information Systems. In addition, the restructuring will decrease annual personnel costs by approximately \$55,000. With regard to Technical Support, the MGT assessment also recommended a regional technical support model involving a North, South and Central region. This component of the recommendation already exists in the current SSD Technology Plan and will be implemented in the near future (Phase II). As the budget was a significant concern when assessing reorganization, and continues to be a concern,



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the District is unable to add additional technology staff at the technical schools at this time as recommended by MGT.

**1.7:** Implement a fully functional help desk by enhancing the tools the help desk staff use.

- **Status:** On Schedule – Help Desk needs are monitored and addressed in an ongoing manner. Recent acquisitions of tools/resources include enhanced network accessibility, network monitoring application, and tracking system for parts ordered. In addition, regular meetings between supervisor and help desk support staff are held. Data from the help desk ticket system is monitored daily and improvement efforts are currently underway to enhance the quality of documentation on support requests and utilize the information to build an internal knowledge base library.

**1.8:** Consider contracting with Partner District for them to provide a computer, a viable Internet connection, technical support, and an equipment replacement schedule for SSD teachers.

- **Status:** On Schedule – The district currently has 8 Partner Agreements in place and hopes to continue to increase that number. These agreements outline equipment purchase and technology support arrangements for SSD staff in partner district buildings.

**1.9:** Ensure technical support staff has access to documentation on new technology ordered by SSD prior to being scheduled for deployment and has sufficient time to learn the new technology.

- **Status:** Incomplete
- **Recommendation:** Incorporate into current Technology Plan utilizing the following action steps:
  - Continue to use current software applications to monitor requisitions for computer hardware purchases.
  - Develop guidelines for including implementation and technical support into the technology purchasing process.
  - Submit guidelines to senior leaders for review and feedback.
  - Submit guidelines to Superintendent for review and approval.
  - Communicate approved guidelines throughout district.





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**1.10:** Survey all instructional staff to determine technology competency, and develop a district plan based on ISTE standards that will move the entire instructional staff to competency in the standards.

- **Status:** Incomplete
- **Recommendation:** Incorporate into current Technology Plan utilizing the following action steps:
  - Utilize the Technology Planning Committee and other stakeholders (i.e., HR, Planning and Development, etc) to gather and review information on assessment tools available.
  - Develop the SSD Technology Competency Assessment for instructional staff and timelines to be administered.
  - Implement assessment and collect results.
  - Submit results to senior leaders for integration in district planning, training and support.

**1.11:** Provide training for an existing tech support staff member to receive the Apple Certified Mac Technician certification (ACMT) until a decision has been reached regarding the use of one platform district.

- **Status:** Complete – Technology Services now has 5 staff members who have successfully passed the Certified Mac Technician certification (ACMT) assessment.

**1.12:** Provide Certified Information System Security Professional (CISSP) training to a technology staff member or to the Director of Infrastructure and Security.

- **Status:** Complete – Technology Services now has two staff members who have successfully passed the Certified Information System Security Professional (CISSP) certification assessment.

**1.13:** Implement secure access to all SSD facilities.

- **Status:** Incomplete
- **Recommendation:** Defer this recommendation until senior leaders and other stakeholders (e.g., Facilities, Safety Committee, etc.) discuss feasibility and recommendations outlined in the Facilities Study.

**1.14:** Secure laptop hard drives using encryption software.

- **Status:** On Schedule - Technology Services is currently implementing procedures to allow for encryption on any Windows-based laptop hard drives.



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**1.15:** Convert all SSD Windows-based computers to part of the SSD Domain.

- **Status:** Incomplete
- **Recommendation:** Incorporate into current Technology Plan utilizing the following action steps:
  - Collaborate with SSD building administrators to develop individual plans for conversion of SSD Windows-based computers.
  - Implement conversion plan and utilize existing applications to monitor.

**1.16:** Create, implement, and periodically test a Disaster Recovery Plan.

- **Status:** On Schedule – This recommendation already exists in the current Technology Plan. The district does have a Disaster Recovery Plan including offsite backups of district data. Retrieval of information has been successful when necessary. Although successful when needed, a complete shut down and restoration of all systems to test a true disaster recovery has not taken place due to the disruption in district operations and functions it will create. As this goal is in the current Technology Plan, future discussions will focus segmented testing and ensuring the Disaster Recovery Plan in place at SSD is sufficient.

**1.17:** Create a four-part process to inform and involve educators in selecting technology appropriate for their students.

- **Status:** Incomplete
- **Recommendation:** Defer this recommendation until data from recommendation 1.1 is collected and discussed with senior leaders and other stakeholders. Preferred methods of informing and involving staff will be incorporated in the Instructional Technology Needs Assessment noted in recommendation 1.1.

## V. Summary

### Strengths

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## Concerns

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## Recommendations

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  - Develop and implement online surveys for students, teachers and staff to gather continuous data on technology needs to determine sufficient and appropriate use of instructional technology.
  - Implement a tiered filtering system that maintains student safety yet provides flexibility for adults.
  - Ensure technical support staff has access to documentation on new technology ordered by SSD prior to being scheduled for deployment and has sufficient time to learn the new technology.
  - Survey all instructional staff to determine technology competency, and develop a district plan based on ISTE standards that will move the entire instructional staff to competency in the standards.
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- The Technology Planning Committee should review the revised plan pending Board approval of the present program evaluation and assess implementation priorities.

Person responsible to champion action plan: Chris Baldwin

Timeframe for reporting updates to Board of Education: Biennial

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

**Signature of Administrator Responsible for Chairing Evaluation**