"The new mission of schools is to prepare students to work at jobs that do not yet exist, creating ideas and solutions for products and problems that have not yet been identified, using technologies that have not been invented." – Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond

From the Director

For many years, school districts were required to have a technology plan in order to receive E-Rate and technology grants through the California Department of Education. In a previous life, I helped many districts write those plans and I read a lot of their drafts. While the process of developing the plan often prompted important conversations, far too many of those plans were written more to meet the requirement that to serve as a guide for technology moving forward. Many of them quoted the rubric language word for word. Most of those plans ended up on the shelf next to that binder from last summer's professional development.

This month I shared a plan with the Board of Trustees for updating our district's technology plan. Without those external requirements, we can focus on creating a plan that will create a shared vision for technology, outline our goals and provide a set of measurable objectives with a timeline for reaching our goals. I am working with the District Technology Committee to have a plan to share with the board in December, hopefully for adoption in January 2017. In each subsequent year, we'll update the plan and bring it back to the board and the community in January. It's a lot of work, but I'm excited about the possibilities. More to come!

Become a CUE Rock Star

CUE Rock Star Camps are two-day PD focused on changing education through technology. Their goal is equipping attendees with technology tools they can use right away. At $249, they're very affordable. We have a couple specialty versions coming up soon. On April 9/10 in Orcutt (near Santa Barbara), CUE Rock Star Teacher STEAM Edition is available and on May 14/15 in Los Gatos, there will be CUE Rock Star Teacher Math Edition. These weekend camps are a great PD opportunity.

Bond: Classroom Technology

We're moving forward in our effort to get every school to a 2:1 student to Chromebook ratio. We've started ordering the 1,400+ Chromebooks we need to do that. Those new machines and appropriate charging stations will be in place for the start of school in August. We're also working with the principals at the schools undergoing modernization this summer as they plan for technology in their Flexible Instructional Space (FIS). Each site will have funding available to equip their FIS with needed technology such as Chromebooks and presentation stations. Just as each FIS will be different, each will have some basic technology tools as well as unique technology resources that align with their vision for the space. It's very exciting to see what they're planning to do in the space. In the fall, schools will have funding to utilize for additional classroom technology upgrades.

Need Professional Development?

Our Technology Coach Martha Campos is ready, willing and able to provide high quality professional development for you and your colleagues in using technology to improve teaching and learning. Check out the schedule of existing offerings or complete a request form to let her know about your specific needs. Martha is a fabulous resource! She has great ideas for any grade level and subject!

This Might Be the Droid You're Looking For

If you're looking for an opportunity to teach some coding or you want a classroom toy that will get your students' attention, consider the Sphero BB-8 App-Enabled Droid. Like its brother, the Sphero SPRK, the BB-8 can be used with the free SPRK App and the "Classic Lessons Pack" from Sphero of 17 lessons to use the robot to teach basic programming concepts, math, and science. The SPRK Lightning Lab is an online community of students and teachers sharing their educational resources. Check out this marketing video of happy teachers and students for examples of how you might use it. The SPRK lists at $129.99 and the BB-8 lists at $149.99.

Having Trouble Accessing the Help Desk?

Some people have reported have difficulty using the online Help Desk request tool at http://helpdesk:8080/. If you're having that problem, just remember you can always just send an email (from a working computer) to support@busd.net with the details of your issue. Please be sure to include your department or school name and your contact information along with the problem description so our team can get back in touch with you.

Technology Skills Scope and Sequence

With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards and the computer-based assessments, student technology skills are more important than ever. To help educators know which skills should be mastered and when, the Long Beach Unified School District developed a K-12 Technology Skills Scope and Sequence aligned with the Common Core State Standards. Take a look and see if it would be helpful in your efforts to make sure students have the needed technology skills at each grade level.

Sharing Technology Resources

Be sure to visit the Technology Services department blog. New instructional resources and tips are added daily. You can also follow us on Twitter! The archives of this newsletter are also available on our web site.

Three Tips for Using YouTube Videos in Your Classroom

Richard Byrne of FreeTech4Teachers.com, has a great blog posting on three tips for using YouTube videos in lessons. The reader's digest version is: 1. Use ViewPure to remove the distracting sidebar content. 2. Use TubeChop to "chop" out a section of the video rather than showing the whole thing. 3. Create a playlist in your YouTube account to have them ready to go when you need them.