Technology Resources and Support Webpage

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**1.** **Description of the Capstone Experience and Results**

 In July of 2014 a capstone project was proposed by the candidate in the M. Ed. Instructional Technology program at Kennesaw State University. Commencement of the project began upon project approval in October, 2014. Titled Technology Resources and Support Webpage, the project was designed to meet the needs of faculty at Lakeside Middle School in Cumming, Georgia and was implemented in the spring of 2015. The culmination of the project consisted of professional development sessions to introduce the website, which contains a variety of web resources and tutorials to support the needs of faculty members in the building.

 The project began with the completion by the staff of a technology survey to gage what technology tools were being used. This survey was sent as a checklist in a Google Form to give the candidate an idea of which Web 2.0 tools and computer applications to include in the website. The survey questions were designed to indicate which applications and Web 2.0 tools were being used and which applications teachers wanted help with. Recognizing that the survey questions were inherently biased based on the candidate’s own awareness of available computer applications and Web 2.0 tools, a final question was added to the survey – Which other internet tools, apps or software would you like help with? The survey questions and results are included in Appendix A. The outcome of the survey allowed the candidate to pare down the digital tools and applications to include in the website and determine how much attention to pay to each.

 The selection of the electronic platform was the next concern to be addressed in the completion of the capstone project. Based on the candidate’s experience and comfort level, Weebly was the chosen platform on which to create the website. The initial step was to create a visually appealing home page that reflected characteristics and symbols of Lakeside Middle School. This initial step was completed in December, 2014.

The next step was to determine how to organize the pages within the Weebly platform in a way that best meets the capstone project’s original scope and objectives. These deliverables included the following items:

⮚ A list of video tutorials, downloadable troubleshooter checklists, and visual schematics for routine technology related tasks

⮚A comprehensive list and description of technologies available to our teachers, and how they may be integrated in their classes

⮚ A forum where teachers will be able to share their ideas related to technology integration and best practices

⮚ Module based lessons on core competencies for teachers to self-assess, learn, and evaluate their knowledge of instructional technology

 The Technical Support Q and A page was created to provide instructions and support for routine technical problems commonly occurring at Lakeside that our school Instructional Technology Specialist has typically managed on a case by case basis. Information on this page is broken down into the following categories: Discovery Education, Safari Montage, Microsoft Outlook, Infinite Campus, Its Learning, Promethean Board, and Classroom Computers. Each item contains basic “how to” information that addresses common problems encountered by staff members so that they may quickly correct technical issues on their own. The intention behind the creation of this page is to empower teachers to be able to fix routine issues without the need to contact technical support.

 Classroom Technology Integration A-Z lists the computer applications and web 2.0 tools identified in the initial survey and includes descriptions and tutorials of the technology. Each item on this page is linked to a Google Doc containing links and descriptions about how this technology can be used in the classroom. The content on these pages is shareable. During the professional development session teachers were asked to share any lessons or information about how they are using that technology in their classroom.

The Forum was created to allow teachers to engage in dialog via discussion posts related to technology integration. During the professional learning meeting teachers were encouraged to create their own discussion threads and engage in professional dialogue related to technology integration.

The Core Competencies page contains the Grappling Spectrum of Technology Integration and the NETS Standards for Teachers. It also contains links to a list of articles that highlight how technology is being integrated at the at the transforming level on the Grappling’s Spectrum or higher LoTI levels, and it contains a series of links to online quizzes related to technology skills which teachers can use to evaluate themselves.

 The completion of the project was met with some obstacles that required some deviation from the original proposal. The candidate was unable to get a commitment from school administrators on a reward to incentivize teachers to complete the tutorials/assessments described in the proposal. Recognizing this, the Core Competencies page was reconsidered. The elements on that page were changed based on the belief that teachers, being extremely busy, would not complete tutorials without incentive. Instead, this page now contains description of the LoTI levels and links to articles describing high level classroom uses of technology. The rationale for including this material is based on the candidate’s beliefs that classroom technology use is too often a substitute to paper/pencil tasks and the overarching belief that technology is most beneficial when it is used as a means for students to create their own learning experiences and producers of their own knowledge.

 Another obstacle that the candidate encountered was related to how teachers could best share their ideas about technology integration and the web tools they are using in their classrooms. Initially, the Weebly forum tool was to be used for this collaboration. After experimentation with its functionality, the candidate decided to abandon this feature in Weebly. A change was made whereby each Web 2.0 technology is linked to a shared Google File with the same name. So, when a teacher selects Nearpod, for example, the link opens up a Google Doc shareable to anyone with the link. Teachers can then upload or share their own content related to the technology, or they can ask questions about the technology. The Google Doc becomes a place to learn and a place to share. The candidate decided that this method was much more functional than the Weebly discussion forum.

 The website was introduced to the staff during a grade level professional development meeting in early April, 2015. The attendees were fellow sixth grade teachers who had completed the initial survey back in November. During the meeting, the candidate showed how to access and navigate the website. The candidate shared how the website deviated slightly from how it was originally intended. The candidate expressed his enthusiasm that the site is malleable and may be adjusted depending on how teachers prefer to interact with the content. At the time of this writing, the candidate had not yet met with faculty members outside of his grade level to share the new website.

**Project Evaluation**

After introducing the site to fellow staff members the candidate asked participants to complete an anonymous web based questionnaire will be conducted to allow participates to honestly express their beliefs and opinions about the usefulness of the website. The survey questions and results are located Appendix B. The results indicate that the website will be valuable. Most responders indicated that they would access the site frequently. When asked why they would visit the site the primary reasons were mostly for technical assistance related to smart boards, the district LMS, and the district electronic gradebook. This is not surprising because of the relative newness of the learning management system and student information system being used in the district.

 During the April staff development session when the website was introduced the candidate sensed that the general consensus among the attendees was one of appreciation and gratitude. Some of the attendees suggested that it will be nice to have one place to go to find answers to their technology related questions. Even though the mindset of the individuals in attendance seemed to be that this website was mainly a place to go for technical support, the candidate spent time in the staff development meeting explaining his program of student at Kennesaw State, and his general beliefs about using technology effectively. For most of the attendees, this was their first exposure to LoTI and Grappling’s Spectrum. Some attendees seemed surprised at the notion that technology use could be categorized in on a continuum from less effective uses to more effective uses. The candidate introduced this concept in a factual, non-threatening manner, and aspires to create interest among his colleagues to learn the best practices in classroom technology integration. The candidate is fully aware that his website serves multiple, and seemingly unrelated purposes. It is simultaneously a repository technical support and a vehicle to move dialogue and understanding of effective technology integration forward. The candidate realizes that perceptions among staff members is that the site is a place to go for technical support, but he wants users to explore the other resources while there.

 There is follow up work to be done on this project. First is to continue to add content to the website. Each page in Classroom Technology A-Z needs more examples and descriptions of how teachers can best incorporate the tool based on their needs. Next, the Core Competencies page will need to be updated regularly with new articles about high level classroom technology integration. (Candidate is considering renaming this page) Ideally, the school ITS and the director of the Media Center will have administrator rights to the website, and will be able to add or adjust content along with the candidate. Candidate will be discussing this with these individuals. Finally, the website will need to be properly introduced to the rest of the faculty at Lakeside Middle School. The candidate will be discussing how and when to do this with administrators. This may be a topic for the entire staff during post-planning.

**2. Discussion and Reflection**

The planning creation and the launch of the website provided a valuable learning experience. The candidate began the process with a faculty survey to ascertain teacher technology use and interest in a technology website. Survey results indicated that a one-stop technology website would be quite useful. Not surprising to the candidate, survey results indicated that most faculty members tended to view classroom technologies more as communication and productivity tools and less as instruments to enhance student learning. Teachers who struggle with basic computer tasks are going to shy away from learning how to use technology at higher levels. Research supports this claim. Rakes, Fields, and Cox (2006) suggest that "basic technology skill levels appear to provide teachers with a comfort level with computers needed to support constructivist teaching practices." (p. 421) Likewise, in their discussion of teachers' knowledge gaps related to technology integration, Hew and Brush (2007) describe a linear process of technology integration: 1) familiarization, 2) utilization, 3) integration, 4) reorientation, and 5) evolutionary. (p. 244) Acknowledging this reality Lakesidetechnology.weebly.com was designed to offer basic support for those teachers at the familiarization level, but with an eye toward a future where the entire faculty is integrating technology at high levels to support student learning. Hew and Brush's first three stages are addressed in the three main sections on the website. Technical support Q and A will support teachers in steps one and two - familiarization and utilization of the different types of technology available. Classroom Technology A-Z provides information about step three - integration. Core Competencies addresses integration at steps four and five - higher levels of technology use.

The candidate had the opportunity to implement principles of adult learning in the process of completing this capstone project. Too often the recipient of one and done professional development sessions, the candidate designed and created a website that provides an informal support system and collaborative structure. Also, faculty members were given a choice about whether or not they wanted to attend the training session. As such, the candidate implemented elements of Jim Knight’s partnership philosophy of professional development. (Knight, 2007, p. 24)

Most of the Capstone Project went as planned. However, as alluded to earlier, the candidate was unable to get commitment from administration to offer a reward or motive to staff members completing computer skills training lessons as described in the initial proposal. Consequently, the Core Competencies page on the website was re-envisioned and now serves to communicate high level classroom technology use. This redesign may prove to be more effective in the long run. As technology changes frequently, displaying a framework for effective, high quality classroom integration and providing real world examples can serve as a guide regardless of the specific technologies being used.

Appendix A

Lakeside Technology Survey

This form is anonymous. The results of this form will be used to tailor a website to help teachers use technology more effectively.

\* Required

Top of Form

Place a check beside the applications you would like to learn more about or need assistance with. \*

* + Discovery Education
	+ Safari Montage
	+ Microsoft Excel
	+ Microsoft Outlook
	+ Infinite Campus
	+ Its Learning

Discovery Education

Is there anything specific you need help with? If yes please type your response in the field below.

Safari Montage

Is there anything specific you need help with? If yes please type your response in the field below.

Microsoft Excel

Is there anything specific you need help with? If yes please type your response in the field below.

Microsoft Outlook

Is there anything specific you need help with? If yes please type your response in the field below.

Infinite Campus

Is there anything specific you need help with? If yes please type your response in the field below.

Its Learning

Is there anything specific you need help with? If yes please type your response in the field below.

Are you interested in learning more about Animoto?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Audacity?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about blogging?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Glogster?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Google Docs?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Kahoot?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Nearpod?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Padlet?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Pearltrees?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Popplet?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Prezi?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Quizlet?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about screencasting?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Socrative?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Thinglink?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning more about Voice Thread?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning how to create digital word clouds?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Are you interested in learning how to create digital word clouds (Wordle)?

(Choose one)

* + I don't care to learn about this technology
	+ I would like to learn more about this technology
	+ I use this technology frequently. I do not feel the need to learn more about it.

Which other internet tools, apps or software that you would like help with? List whatever you would like help with in the field below. There is no limit to the number of items you may list.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Summary of Responses on Initial Survey

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| District Licensed Software Applications |  |
| Percentage of Respondents who checked: |  |
| Discovery Education | 91% |
| Safari Montage | 91% |
| Microsoft Excel | 36% |
| Microsoft Outlook | 18% |
| Infinite Campus | 18% |
| Its Learning | 100% |
| Web 2.0 Tools |  |
| Percentage of Respondents who indicated that they would like to learn more about: |  |
| Animoto | 27% |
| Audacity | 18% |
| Blogging | 55% |
| Glogster | 64% |
| Google Docs | 91% |
| Kahoot | 82% |
| Nearpod | 91% |
| Padlet | 64% |
| Pearltrees | 18% |
| Popplet | 64% |
| Prezi | 91% |
| Quizlet | 91% |
| Screencasting | 73% |
| Socrative | 91% |
| Thinglink | 27% |
| Word Clouds | 91% |
|  |  |

Appendix BLakesidetechnology.com Website EvaluationTop of FormWhat is/will be your primary purpose for visiting [Lakesidetechnology.com](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Flakesidetechnology.com&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFFLDDUWpGFWL2xRM1_odNDSkrFbA)?Check up to three boxes* + Technical Support related to Its Learning
	+ Technical Support related to Infinite Campus
	+ Technical Support related to classroom/laptop computers
	+ Technical Support related to Promethean Boards/projectors
	+ Technical Support related to Microsoft Outlook
	+ Technical Support related to telephone/voice mail
	+ Technical Support related to licensed educational software (Safari, BrainPop, netTrekker, Discovery Education, Wikispaces, Digital Textbooks, Study Island
	+ Technical Support related to web browsers, filters, and the internet
	+ Technical Support related to Web 2.0 tools and applications
	+ Information about integrating technology in the classroom

How often do you/will you visit [lakesidetechnology.com](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Flakesidetechnology.com&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFFLDDUWpGFWL2xRM1_odNDSkrFbA)?* + frequently
	+ occasionally
	+ rarely
	+ never

Was there any technology related information you needed but were unable to locate on Lakesidetechnology.com?What suggestions to you have to improve [lakesidetechnology.com](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Flakesidetechnology.com&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFFLDDUWpGFWL2xRM1_odNDSkrFbA)?**Survey Results**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Open ended survey questions: | Responses |
| Was there any technology related information you needed but were unable to locate on Lakesidetechnology.com? | * I would like to be able to access the numerous files that we use without having to search through email attachments, the school share drive, or my personal folder.
 |
| What suggestions to you have to improve [lakesidetechnology.com](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Flakesidetechnology.com&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFFLDDUWpGFWL2xRM1_odNDSkrFbA)? |  |

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