



Technology Plan

2021-2024

Mission:

St. Ambrose Catholic School's mission is to foster a faith-filled and academically strong environment. Saint Ambrose Catholic School works with families and the faith community to encourage the formation of the whole child through the examples and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Philosophy:

Our philosophy infuses our total education program and challenges our students to improve the world by sharing gospel values and living Christ's message of salvation through love and forgiveness. This philosophy helps form the minds, body, and spirit of our students and help them fulfill a life of service to others. It sets our school apart from public and other private schools.

Vision for Technology

Technology has dramatically changed the world, and it is also impacting the learning and teaching environment within our schools. It is widely recognized that students in today's world need to think critically, analyze information from various resources, write or present well-reasoned arguments, and develop solutions for existing problems. It is the view of St. Ambrose Catholic School that, when integrated effectively, technology not only offers opportunities to develop these essential skills but can also be effective in enhancing the teaching and learning process.

Effective use of technology requires:

- Technology integration tools such as appropriate software that engage students and teachers in critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.
- A technology-rich environment that is collaborative and supports creativity, innovation, and risk-taking to enhance teaching, learning, and student achievement.
- Access to the most current technology resources.
- Knowledge and ability to choose and apply appropriate technologies to a given learning situation.
- Shared responsibility between school and parents for safe and ethical use of technology.
- Adequate internet connection to fully use the vast resources available.
- Appropriate technical support to ensure ongoing repair and maintenance of all technology.

It is essential to have seamless integration and equitable access to modern tools and applications in the learning process. This smooth integration will equip our students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that promote the development of well-rounded students who can act ethically to make a life and a difference in today's world.

Introduction

The Technology Plan was developed to reflect our continuous attention toward technology changes and how these affect the future of our students. Our plan is divided into two sections. The first section describes our technology roadmap, identifying the school's technology goals, what has been accomplished already, and what we still need to accomplish in the years ahead. The second section describes our technology integration goals in the classroom and outlines the process that we will follow for a successful integration starting next academic year. This Technology Plan is a "living document" that will be updated as needed.

1) Technology Goals

As technology becomes a fundamental component of our student's education, we aim to introduce it during their daily school experience. Furthermore, we believe that the adequate use of technology will help students acquire the skills they need to survive in a complex, highly technological world. In addition, it is our duty as educators to provide our students with engaging and powerful learning experiences and content in more meaningful ways.

Upon review and assessment of its existing technology stance, St. Ambrose School developed the following three goals based on the needs and priorities of our school:

1. Classroom and School Technology Resources: Install ActivPanels in each classroom to enhance instruction through visual and hearing aids like Google Earth, audiobooks, math graphing and charts, Scholastic news, and Schoology.
2. One-to-One Device: Provide one device to each student to improve teaching time, create a more active student role, allow easy access to digital resources, facilitate differentiated instruction, and allow personalized content for each student.
3. Learning Software Resources: Make available specialized educational programs to enhance the curriculum such as IXL, Reading A-Z, Razkids, Kahoot, Flocabulary, and Pixton, etc.

2020-2021 Technology Accomplishments and Pending Accomplishments

Classroom and School Technology Resources. This goal was partially accomplished with the help of the PTO. We were able to replace old smartboards with ActivPanels from kindergarten to eighth grade and our advanced math class. In the future, we will need to replace the smartboard with an ActivPanel in our music class.

One-to-One Device Policy. Kindergarten to Second Grade students have been provided with iPads. Typing on keyboards, manipulating a mouse and switching between screens simultaneously can be very difficult and overwhelming for students in these grades. The touch screen and all-in-one components of iPads greatly facilitates learning for these grade levels.

Third to eighth grade students will be using Chromebooks because they are capable of handling more complex devices. Chromebooks provide a more cost-effective technology solution that was already partially available to students, only requiring the acquisition of 70 additional new Chromebooks to complete the one-to-one goal. In addition, our Scantron testing is administered using Chromebooks.

This year with the hard work and generosity of our school community and PTO, we were able to sign a four-year lease agreement for 75 iPads for kindergarten to second grade students. We still need 70 additional Chromebooks for our third to eighth grade.

Learning Software Resources: For the next academic year, we have purchased the subscription for IXL to be used for our 2021-2022 academic year. The school still needs more software to enhance instruction

Goals	Identified Needs	Timeline	Accomplished as of 2021	Pending Completion
Classroom and School Technology Resources	ActivPanels	2020-2021	10	1
One-to-One Device	iPads	2020-2021	75	Completed
	Chromebooks	2020-2021	7	70
	Charging carts	2020-2021	0	4
Learning Software Resources	Software	2020-2021	3	5

2) Technology integration plans

Technology helps make teaching and learning more meaningful and fun. Integrating technology into the classroom means more than simply teaching basic computer skills and software programs in a separate computer class. Effective technology integration must happen across the curriculum to deepen and enhance the learning process. In particular, it must support critical components of learning such as active engagement, participation in groups, frequent interaction and feedback, and connection to real-world experts. Effective technology integration is achieved when technology is routine and transparent and when technology supports curricular goals.

To accomplish technology integration in the classroom, our school decided to form the Information Technology Committee (ITC) with members our community and faculty. The ITC will primarily focus on the following areas of work:

1. Operations and technology
2. Teachers' professional development
3. Curriculum development
4. Communication and oversight

Operations and Technology: Oversee that our servers and devices' security and maintenance are constantly update and reviewed. The ITC will supervise Manus Dei, a contractor who has been providing these services to the school. Manus Dei is a Catholic-owned information technology firm serving schools and parishes since 2008.

Mr. Connor Kleb will provide technical assistance for students and faculty.

Safety and Internet Filter

The safety of our students when using the internet is our priority. Under our initial phase, we met with Manus Dei to explore different security software to help manage our devices. The school will be using GoGuardian for Chromebooks and Apple Classroom for the iPads. This software utilizes an Internet filtering system to ensure that we adequately protect our students from inappropriate Internet access as they can block websites. GoGuardian and Apple Classroom are designed to help teachers manage Chromebooks and iPads usage in their classrooms and monitor student activity on the devices. The goal of this software is to help keep students on-task and away from inappropriate content.

Individual teachers will monitor their own students using this software

Teachers' Professional Development

Teachers' Professional Development is an essential aspect of our technology integration. Providing our students with greater access to technology improves the way teachers teach, offering educators effective ways to reach different types of learners and assess student understanding through multiple means. It also has the potential to enhance the relationship between teachers and students. When technology is effectively integrated into subject areas, teachers grow into the roles of adviser, content expert, and coach.

St. Ambrose School has hired Virginia Society for Technology in Education (VSTE). They will be helping us throughout the next academic year in all professional development for our teachers.

VSTE's mission is to promote excellence in education through professional development endeavors supporting the integration of emerging technology.

VSTE will be training our teachers as follows:

June 11, 2021: A two-hour face-to-face session will introduce faculty and staff to the overall PD plan, ensure they can access their devices and the online course, and end with breakout groups (K-2, 3-5, 6-8) doing some tech-related activities together.

Summer 2021: VSTE will be providing our faculty with online office hours with two one-hour blocks in July and one one-hour block in early August.

August 19, 2021: This two-hour face-to-face session will begin with an entire group session and then move to breakouts with individual coaches, where teams will review their summer work and plan for fall implementation. Topics will include tools and techniques, classroom management, and screen time guidelines.

Fall 2021:

Office hours and faculty meeting check-ins

One or two webinars on popular topics such as Jamboard, Open Education Resources, and Assessment

March 14, 2022:

Face to face workshop

Throughout the year our faculty will have access to continued office hours and virtual check-ins.

Mrs. Lindsey Whetzel will coordinate the teachers' professional development

Curriculum: The ITC will conduct a search process to acquire suitable software to enhance instruction in our school. Our goal is to incorporate technology in cross-curricular activities, lessons, and projects that use Internet resources, keyboarding skills, word processing, spreadsheets, and presentation software. Emphasizing critical thinking and evaluation skills will enable students to use technology efficiently, effectively, and with a sound sense of Christian ethics. Furthermore,

To integrate the use of technology in the K-8 curriculum:

- Teachers will regularly use technology to enhance classroom instruction in all subject areas.
- Teachers will use educational software to supplement classroom teaching.
- Teachers will encourage the use of online software & websites.
- Teachers will use vertical alignment to integrate technology into their curriculum.

Saint Ambrose School purchased a subscription to IXL. This software allows insights from student work in the curriculum and the Real-Time Diagnostic to generate personalized guidance for each learner. These personalized action plans link students seamlessly to the skills that will help them build on their knowledge and remediate gaps in understanding.

Mrs. Ann LaBarge will be providing support to our teachers in the use of this software.

Student Achievements Connection to IXL: St. Ambrose Catholic School participates in the diocesan Scantron Performing Series for both the Cognitive and Achievement Evaluations. The school administration and grade-level and subject-area teachers evaluate the data received from these tests. Recommendations and goals are set to fill curriculum gaps and to improve the students' skills. Using the data in this way will enhance the effectiveness and focus of our teaching through IXL.

Internet Access/Bandwidth Sufficient Bandwidth is critical to the implementation of technology integration. This year, we decided to change our internet provider from Cox to Verizon to increase our bandwidth capacity.

All Wi-Fi access points were changed and increased so that every classroom has its own dedicated Wi-Fi access point. These access points provide a more stable connection and coverage because of the increased number of devices needing to be on the internet at the same time.

In addition, we installed and replaced switchers that helped our network become more efficient and manageable.

Communication: The school administration will keep the school community informed on the implementation and progress of this technology plan