

Algoma District School Board: 2015 - 2016

Project Title	Educational Technology Leads
Description	<p>Our Educational Technology Lead action plan focuses on system-level professional learning opportunities as well as opportunities for collaboration, co-learning, co-planning and job-embedded learning with colleagues at the school by assisting teachers with the integration of technology into learning and teaching. In time, this will lead to the deep learning task development and assessment practices enabled by technology. Our multi-year plan fosters teacher-to-teacher, teacher-to-student and student-to-student learning partnerships and real-world, authentic learning tasks enabled by technology supporting the development of 21st Century skills: collaboration, creativity, character education, citizenship, communication and critical thinking.</p> <p>In 2015-2016 we are continuing to build on the successes of the Educational Technology Lead role and deepen our professional learning by focusing on pedagogy and the development of deep learning tasks that leverage technology-enabled learning. We are also focusing on our Algoma DSB Standards for Digital Learning framework and strengthen our learning partnerships through the job-embedded support model. Our focus is aligned with Fullan and Langworthy’s research report, A Rich Seam.</p> <p>Our investigation of the Educational Technology Lead role is to determine if there is increased teacher confidence, greater integration of technologies into learning and teaching, and higher student engagement in real-world, authentic learning tasks.</p>
Context	<p><i>Number of students:</i> 3,850</p> <p><i>Number of teachers:</i> 290</p> <p><i>Number of schools:</i> 46</p> <p><i>Grades/Program:</i> K-12</p>
Impact on Students	<p>In analyzing our data, the Educational Technology Leads, Teachers and Administrators indicated that the use of technology is an integral part of student learning. Technology is providing students with opportunities to foster curiosity, engage in learning tasks, build independence, and promote innovation in ways that were not possible without it. A significant number stated that the technology has had the greatest impact on students with Learning Disabilities and students with communication needs, allowing them to be more successful by using accessibility features like voice to text and text to voice options. Having a variety of technology devices (laptops, tablets, chrome books, and desktops) has improved access and engaged students in problem solving dialogue on the most appropriate device to use for a given task.</p> <p>The use of technology has been a catalyst for building collaboration and</p>

	<p>communication among students and teachers, whether sharing a digital product, providing and supporting one’s own point of view in an online discussion, or commenting on another’s post. Students have gained a greater appreciation for the range of capabilities that others possess.</p> <p>Overall, the data indicates that the use of technology represents a significant power shift in classrooms towards a student centered approach. The opportunities for inquiry and problem solving have increased, the efficiency of communication, collaboration, and feedback have improved, and overall, student interest and engagement has been heightened as they work with individual interests, talents, and learning styles.</p> <p>Survey results include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student work shows greater depth of understanding (Yes / Definitely = <b>82%</b>)</li> <li>• Students have greater opportunities for sharing knowledge more broadly with expanded audiences (Yes / Definitely = <b>86%</b>)</li> <li>• Improved student task completion (Yes / Definitely = <b>76%</b>)</li> <li>• Students demonstrating new leadership capacities (Yes / Definitely = <b>66%</b>)</li> </ul> <p>In many instances, the Educational Technology Leads encourage a student-to-student and student-to-teacher learning partnership at their schools. The term “technology ambassador” has been adopted to describe this partnership where students are taking a lead role to support technology enabled learning. These student “technology ambassadors” offer support for other students and teachers in their schools fostering learning partnerships.</p>
<p><b>Impact on Instruction</b></p>	<p>The target group for the Round 5 project continued to be the Educational Technology Leads. We have at least one teacher from every school who enthusiastically stepped forward to fulfill the role. The data indicates a majority of teachers accessed the Educational Technology Lead for support and growth and learning opportunities. In many cases, teachers worked with the Educational Technology Lead a number of times throughout the year.</p> <p>The ADSB Standards for Digital Learning K-12 was utilized to support teachers by providing a guide to help integrate technology and digital learning into The Ontario Curriculum, into teaching practice, and into students’ repertoire of skills to support and enhance continuous learning. The data indicated that a majority of the focus was on technology operations and concepts and communication and collaboration. The data also indicates that a majority of the student digital learning experiences fell within the categories of collaboration, digital presentations and productivity.</p> <p>The data indicates there has been a positive impact on teacher practice. The Educational Technology Leads are continuing to develop teacher-to-teacher learning partnerships with colleagues at their schools. The comments by the Educational</p>

	<p>Technology Leads show that the teacher-to-teacher learning partnerships are improving and resulting in a culture of risk taking and sharing. Through collaboration and planning for authentic learning enabled by technology, there is a shift occurring in teacher practice and learning opportunities for students.</p> <p>The data shows that teachers are feeling a greater comfort level with the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging students in exploring real-world issues and solving authentic problems using digital tools and resources</li> <li>• Advocating, modelling, and teaching safe, legal, and ethical use of digital information and technology, including respect for copyright, intellectual property, and the appropriate documentation of sources</li> <li>• Promoting and modelling digital etiquette and responsible social interactions related to the use of technology and information</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impact on System</b></p>	<p>The Educational Technology Lead initiative is contributing to our system scaling and sustaining of pedagogically-driven, technology-enabled practices through building capacity at each site by having one key individual at each school.</p> <p>The vision of the Algoma District School Board is to engage learners in innovative experiences that maximize achievement, build confidence and develop responsible citizens while utilizing technology in purposeful, responsible and innovative ways to support their learning.</p> <p>The Educational Technology Leads are an instrumental team member in the development of the school’s professional learning by ensuring that technology is effectively utilized as a learning and teaching tool, supporting the use of technology integration into the curriculum, and providing training and one-to-one support to colleagues through job-embedded professional learning opportunities.</p> <p>The Educational Technology Lead role aligns with our Board's strategic goals and is aligned and integrated with other innovative work being conducted with the eLearning and Instructional Lead professional learning communities. Technology-enabled learning and teaching along with the Educational Technology Lead role is embedded in our Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and our Educational Technology Plan.</p> <p>This year, a leadership team participated in the New Pedagogies for Deep Learning (NPDL) Symposium with Michael Fullan. Information from this experience helped to shape our vision for system scaling and sustaining pedagogically-driven, technology-enabled practices. A Microsoft Innovative Expert hosted a day that enabled the Educational Technology Lead to explore various aspects of Microsoft Office, Office 365 and Skype. With a focus on Mathematics, we also hosted a session for our Grade 9 Applied Mathematics teachers. An Apple Distinguished Educator worked with our teachers on instructional practices and the integration of technology.</p>