

Northeastern Catholic District School Board: 2015 - 2016

Project Title	TOPS: Transforming our Practices for Success
Description	<p>The purpose of our project is to determine the effectiveness and impact of NCDSB’s educational technology phase training initiative for all staff members, and in turn, students. We are measuring the skills acquisition of core applications adopted by NCDSB, and tracking the progress of technology usage in classrooms via surveys to gather qualitative and quantitative data. These applications include Gmail, Read & Write for Google Chrome (our web-based assistive technology), and Google Drive and Docs Editors.</p> <p>As an integral part of this initiative, NCDSB’s Ed Tech Champions were established in April 2015, and formally trained on Google Apps for Education in May 2015 in a two-day intensive workshop. This core group of educators are providing leadership and the support teachers will need (on site) to use these Web 2.0 tools to further facilitate enhanced learning in every classroom. The Ed Tech champs are trained by the Ed Tech SAT for each phase, and provided with training materials and a link to a survey/checklist on Google Forms, which they then use to facilitate training at their schools.</p> <p>During phase 5, we have broadened implementation of a standard platform (Google Apps for Education) for student and staff collaboration, communication, and creativity. We are investing in our educators, and providing them with multiple opportunities to learn about technology enabled learning and teaching, so that their practices are engaging students.</p>
Context	<p><i>Number of students: 2,174</i></p> <p><i>Number of teachers: 144</i></p> <p><i>Number of schools: 14</i></p> <p><i>Grades/Program: JK-12</i></p>
Impact on Students	<p>Two Likert scale surveys (Academic Staff, and Students) were administered to help us determine impact of GAFE on student learning. A sample of responses is shown below.</p> <p>Academic Staff: <i>I believe that the integration of Google Apps for Education has positively impacted student learning.</i></p> <p>Out of 116 respondents to this survey, 37 (31.9%) of academic staff Somewhat Agree that GAFE has positively impacted student learning, while 36 (31%) Agree with this statement. 25 (21.6%) Strongly Agree. The majority of respondents responded favorably to this question, which tells us that academic staff recognize the benefits of using GAFE in the classroom to enhance student learning outcomes.</p>

	<p>Students: Do you like using Google apps in your class?</p> <p>This question was used to gauge student engagement with GAFE use in the classroom. 132 students (43.3%) state that they like using GAFE in class Very Much, and 76 students (24.9%) responded with a 4 on the scale. These results are very positive and may be linked to familiarity, as they also coincide with 86.3% of students often or always use Google Drive and Docs in their classrooms.</p> <p>Students: <i>Does using Google apps in your class help you to learn better?</i></p> <p>This question was used to help determine to what extent students perceive GAFE helps them to learn better in class. 32.1% students responded with Very Much, while it was an even split between 3 and 4 on the Likert scale. Again, students believe in the value of GAFE in their classrooms, but this is also tied to <i>how</i> teachers are using GAFE to present their lessons. For example, when asked how the students actually used these apps in their classrooms, 253 responded with “I use Google Docs to type up my work.”</p> <p>The focus for next year will be applying technology, specifically GAFE and our core suite of iPad apps, in meaningful ways in the classroom. As we increase the levels of difficulty and concentrate even more on practical classroom applications rather than simply how to use the apps, we will use these surveys as baseline data for next year’s phase.</p>
<p>Impact on Instruction</p>	<p>In the Academic Staff survey, we asked two Likert scale questions that address Impact on Teachers:</p> <p><i>I believe that the integration of GAFE has positively impacted my own practice.</i></p> <p>Most respondents (39, or 33.6%) returned a 4: Agree, 33 (28.4%) responded with 3: Somewhat Agree, and 20 (17.2%) returned a 5: Strongly Agree. These results tell us that the majority of staff recognize the positive impact GAFE has made in their classroom with regards to collaboration and sharing work to provide immediate student feedback.</p> <p><i>I believe that the integration of GAFE has improved the efficiency of my classroom.</i></p> <p>Most respondents (36, or 31%) said that they Somewhat Agree with this statement, while 34 (29.3%) said they Agree. 24 (20.7%) responded with Somewhat Disagree. These results were not as promising as the preceding question; however, this question deals with efficiency. There could be a relationship between this and the “Comfort Level and Ability” question.</p>
<p>Impact on System</p>	<p>The purpose of our project is to determine the effectiveness and impact of NCDSB’s educational technology phase training initiative for all staff members, and in turn, students. We are measuring the skills acquisition of core applications adopted by NCDSB, and tracking the progress of technology usage in classrooms via surveys to gather qualitative and quantitative data. These applications include</p>

Gmail, Read & Write for Google Chrome (our web-based assistive technology), and Google Drive and Docs Editors.

As an integral part of this initiative, Ed Tech Champions were established and formally trained on Google Apps for Education in May 2015 in a two-day intensive workshop. The Ed Tech team wanted to get an idea of where our staff members were at in terms of using any type of technology in schools.

A small sample of survey results are shown below.

Academic Staff: Comfort Level and Ability: Gmail

Of 116 respondents to our Academic Staff survey, an overwhelming majority ranged from 4: I'm capable/comfortable and 5: I could teach others with regards to Gmail. 51 (44%) responded with a 4, and 53 (45.7%) returned a 5. There appears to be a correlation with in terms of frequency of use,

Ed Tech Champions: Do you believe that your role was critical in the implementation of technology in your school?

9 champions, or 64.3%, returned a Strongly Agree response, while 5 (35.7%) said they Agree. It was our intention that in establishing this core group of champions and having them present at each of our schools, that we would build and develop leadership. We believe this was accomplished, and will be continuing the initiative next year.

How often do you use your LCD projector or Smartboard?

19.7% of academic staff use these tools Every Day, 29.9% use them Almost Every Day, and 29.1% use them Occasionally/Sometimes. These results show that this hardware is being utilized in our schools, which is encouraging.

We are investing in our educators, and providing them with multiple opportunities to learn about technology enabled learning and teaching, so that their practices are engaging students. We intend to close any gaps in learning through follow-up GAFE training sessions, and revisiting other staff with more advanced training sessions.