

# Outsourced Educational Technology Management

Discover how top school districts are advancing 21st century learning.



**With Questeq, advancements in a district's use of technology to boost personalized student achievement and growth are possible regardless of the district's transformation starting point.**



**South Side made a district-wide switch from mobile laptop carts to 1-to-1 in only 4 months**

## Challenge

Following a vision to quickly transform South Side Area School District (SSSD), with 1-to-1, digital curriculum and real time assessments the district set a plan in motion. Part one of the challenge for SSSD was to move from legacy mobile laptop carts to 1-to-1 very quickly. Part two of the challenge was to motivate educators to make technology an integral teaching partner.

## Action

The Questeq onsite IT staff undertook a large data collection assessment, where every classroom instructor was asked the same question, "what do you NEED from a technology tool for the students to be successful?" Even with precious little room for research in the timeline, the survey was the first step of many to engage and encourage participation by educators.

## Results

South Side has seen a year-to-year steady gain in student achievement. The school district anticipates more progress over the next school year. Many other intangible changes can be seen in the district: Students are more excited to get to class, no longer lingering in the hallway or arriving after the bell rings. Also, teachers have noticed an increase in computer/technology literacy and student engagement has increased in all grade levels, K-12.

## South Side Area School District:

Current Enrollment: 1,184 students, 32% on free or reduced lunch

District Size: A\*

\* "A" is the state of PA's smallest school size rating. In the case of football, Single-A stands for school districts with total male population, grades 9, 10 and 11 of 185 or lower.

**Behind-the-scenes there is a story of infrastructure-building that enabled the 1-to-1 transformation. There is also an answer to the question: How did SSSD get educators to make technology an integral teaching partner? SSSD's "rest of the story" will provide the reader with a little more insight into the on-going solution.**



## The Rest of the Story

The district's vision of 1-to-1, digital curriculum and real time assessments set this successful plan in motion. Behind-the-scenes there is a story of infrastructure-building that enabled the 1-to-1 transformation. There is also an answer to the question: How did SSSD get educators to make technology an integral teaching partner? SSSD's "rest of the story" will provide the reader with a little more insight into the on-going solution.

## Infrastructure-Building

SSSD was able to transition to a 1-to-1 program so quickly in large part because earlier steps had been taken to implement technology network infrastructure. As part of a Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) program called Classrooms For The Future (CFF) districts like SSSD were awarded technology - often mobile lab carts with laptops. When Questeq entered the District, it became priority to put in the infrastructure including a wireless system that enabled quick log-in times, and also set planned security permissions for internet browsing by students, teachers, administrators and guests. Without this system already in place, it would be impossible to implement the 1-to-1 transformation.

## Engaging Educators to Integrate Digital Learning

If you build it, will educators use it? The Questeq IT Team resolved to seriously engage with educators, administration, and IT at every step of the transformation as a means to make technology an integral teaching partner and encourage digital lesson plan development. The Questeq onsite IT staff undertook a large data

collection assessment, where every classroom instructor was asked the same question, "what do you NEED from a technology tool for the students to be successful?" Here are some of the steps included in that effort:

- In the initial data collection, and even though it took weeks out of a tight schedule, the IT Team engaged with every district educator to understand which curriculum resources were needed, and what tools already owned by the district needed to be protected. This prevented the focus on just one type of IT device or a limited number of applications.
- Before implementing any part of the transformation, the IT team purchased and tested ALL equipment and applications that were needed by the educators.
- The team created a simple-to-use "plus/minus" evaluation sheet to be filled out by the testers. This provided a simple way to share aggregated results that were later reviewed in a meeting with all educators.
- IT met with educators and administrators to share results of the test, to see the devices and what they could do, and to jointly agree upon which devices were best for each building.
- The unified Administration/Educator/IT Department decision was taken to the Board for approval.
- A series of professional development opportunities were provided for educators to reduce reservations and to refresh educators on what the tools could do.

Throughout the assessment phase of the plan, Questeq continued to keep both the administration and staff involved in the process and gained supporters along the way.

## Results

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South Side's next challenge is to continue to use technology as an integral teaching partner, and to further develop supporting policies and procedures. In line with this South Side teachers must consistently be given professional learning opportunities in innovative uses of digital curriculum.