Reflection on Educational Technology

Artifact: Plan to utilize fund for Common Core Implementation

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The artifact presented is a review of the current technology state in Alternative Education at the SCCOE and a recommendation to fund IPads for teachers use. This artifact demonstrates my understanding of the common core standards, technology implications and my ability to analyze and address needs associated with the common core standards and match budget to requirements.

This exercise was a journey for me. Educational Technology, while an important piece of a CTO's skill set, was my weakest point. I am surrounded at work by people who understand the topic of Educational Technology and impacts; however, it is difficult to learn by osmosis. The CTO program gave me an opportunity to learn about Educational Technology in a thorough and specific manner. In addition, this exercise required that we read the common core standard and be able to use it as part of our analysis and discuss it with others.

My journey during this assignment began at attempting to obtain a copy of our SCCOE CCS plan from 2013. Santa Clara County Office of Education is a large, geographically distributed organization. Obtaining this item proved more difficult than I expected and demonstrated some of the political aspects of our organization. When I finally had the spending plan from 2013 I was initially surprised that the plan was focused on Professional Development and Instructional Materials. What I had expected was more technology; Chromebooks, Networking, Infrastructure.

My second area of learning and expanding awareness during this exercise was how busy the Student Services Branch are and how difficult it is to have a meeting with them. Before this assignment I did not have any daily interaction with this group. While I was trying to arrange a meeting they were rarely in the office and very difficult to reach. During 2013, when this plan was written, our office was very politically charged. The Technology Services Branch, although we had a CTO, was not included in the planning and analysis for use of this funding. Now everyone seemed reticent to provide the plan from 2013 or discuss the plan. I did have brief discussions with various people who worked in the Student Services Branch however I was not able to schedule a meeting with the Chief of that branch or the Directors. I relied on discussions with my Supervisor and Mentor to complete this assignment.

In addition to my Mentor and Supervisor I also met with the Network Analyst and Technicians who support that group to improve my understanding of the Alternative Education environment. We reviewed the network and bandwidth available in classrooms, and discussed what hardware was deployed in the classroom. They helped me understand why it was important to have Professional Development for the teachers rather than more technology resources. I saw through their lens that there was no need for additional technology but rather improved support for the teachers in the classroom because they already had enough

technology. Before this conversation I did not understand the impact of the E-rate funding and the new title 1 funding. Again, these were all things I had read about but discussing current state with the people that support that area provided me with a real life example and experience.

I have benefited from the CTO mentor program because this exercise has led me to form better relationships with people in the Student Services Branch because I was interested in what they were doing and that created common ground. It also helped me form better relationships with those that support technology in Student Services and understand their point of view. This exercise reaffirmed for me that it important to be persistent and look for alternative paths to the information and support you seek. Through this exercise I have improved my understanding of Educational Technology including common core standards and classroom use of technology and am better prepared to shoulder the mantle of CTO.