

Regional School Unit No. 5

Technology Plan  
2010-2013

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## Section 1: Vision Statement

RSU No. 5 realizes the implications and potential of technology.

We believe:

- Learning, collaboration, and communication are enhanced and extended by technology.
- Technology plays multiple roles in supporting education in a variety of settings.
- People are empowered by the use of technology.

It is our goal to provide easy and equitable access to information technology to influence lifelong learners by:

- Enhancing the learning process by addressing multiple learning styles.
- Improving communication and collaboration.
- Increasing productivity.
- Expanding access to information.
- Contributing to a more professional quality of work.
- Removing barriers of time, distance, age, social/economic position and disability.
- Raising expectations of individual and collective capabilities.

We are committed to:

- Creating safe, respectful climates in which broad-based educational and cultural opportunities provide rich diverse experiences for all learners.
- Preparing students for many options as life-long learners, effective problem solvers, and capable communicators.
- Be increasingly responsive to individual developmental needs.
- Respond to society's demand for excellence in education.
- Make use of the educational opportunities presented by technology.
- Access to and routine use of appropriate technology at the "point of learning."
- Access to and routine use of a full range of external information.
- Comprehensive internal communication and information management capabilities.
- Appropriate professional training and support structure.
- Ongoing funding structure for keeping current, updating, and expanding capabilities.
- Wide range of opportunities for developing proficiency and skills.
- An ongoing system-wide process designed to make wise use of a broad array of technologies.

## **Section 2: Community and Parental Involvement**

Technology will be used effectively to promote community and parental involvement and increase communication with parents. The overall goal will be to provide the community with an easy to use tool with which they can stay in touch with their child's school and education. This will be accomplished through multiple methods that will include but not be limited to:

### ***School Web Sites***

Through the use of an increasing number of web-based tools, schools in RSU No. 5 are able to more easily publish information pertinent to all constituents. This includes, but is not limited to: school-specific calendars, general curricular requirements and goals, school-specific information (e.g. student handbook, policies, etc.), faculty-specific web sites (e.g. course syllabus, assignment calendars, expectations, etc.), and general district information like Board minutes and agendas, employment opportunities, and news.

### ***Electronic Mailing Lists***

Each school currently operates an electronic mailing list for parents who wish to receive notices. In addition to official school related events, materials sent to the lists include electronic versions of the school newsletters, daily announcements, fund-raising events and volunteer requests.

### ***Parent Nights***

In addition to the electronic mailing lists are regular, hard copy newsletters as well as evening meetings where more information is shared regarding technology use, often accompanied by student demonstrations.

### ***Student Information System (SIS)***

Regional School Unit No. 5 uses PowerSchool as the SIS for all four Freeport schools. Durham Elementary uses Pinnacle/Web2School. Pownal Elementary does not currently have an SIS. A consolidated SIS will be an important aspect of technology planning and effort over the next three years.

PowerSchool and Pinnacle/Web2School offer many communication tools to students and parents, including access to current grades and assessment scores, electronic versions of periodic announcements (i.e. daily/weekly announcements from the Principal or academic team, sports information, etc.) and direct links to email faculty.

### ***Automated Calling***

RSU No. 5 uses SchoolMessenger, a service for making multiple, simultaneous telephone calls and email notifications. This system allows rapid and consistent notification to parents in case of

emergency (school closings, etc.), and will allow future expansion to automatically notify parents of absences.

### ***Community Access***

Currently RSU No. 5 Community Education offers a wide variety of computer-related course offerings.

### ***MLTI***

Laptops deployed to students in grades 7-12 through the Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) include a parent login to access the device for their personal use.

## Section 3: Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: To provide up-to-date training, hardware, and software in adequate quantity to promote their integration into the K-12 curriculum for the enhancement of student learning.

*MLR Guiding Principles of: Creative and Practical Problem Solver, Clear and Effective Communicator, Life-Long Learner, Collaborative and Quality Worker, Integrative and Informed Thinker and Responsible and Involved Citizen.*

- Provide effective and ongoing training and support for all users.
- Improve/update the technology infrastructure of RSU No. 5.
- Standardize and license appropriate, up-to-date software (preference given to freely available, open source software).
- Continually refresh the pool of ideas for effective integration of technology.
- Identify, articulate and implement effective uses of technology in each curriculum area and across grade levels.
- Develop and implement a realistic replacement policy.

Goal 2: To provide all members of the school community with easy and equitable access to a wide variety of technology resources.

*MLR Guiding Principles of: Clear and Effective Communicator, Life-Long Learner, Collaborative and Quality Worker, Integrative and Informed Thinker and Responsible and Involved Citizen.*

- Provide a variety of options of interacting/interfacing with the community.
- Provide seamless access to information technology resources in the schools.

Goal 3: To use technology to promote the generation, acquisition and distribution of information both within and outside our community.

*MLR Guiding Principles of: Creative and Practical Problem Solver, Clear and Effective Communicator, Life-Long Learner, Collaborative and Quality Worker, Integrative and Informed Thinker and Responsible and Involved Citizen.*

- Develop effective uses of the RSU No. 5 web site.
- Continue to develop the use of electronic mailing lists and other means of disseminating and sharing information.
- Develop effective uses of the local cable channel (PEG).
- Continue to utilize the SchoolMessenger system to provide timely information to parents and students (emergency or otherwise).

Goal 4: To build on the lessons learned from the Maine Learning Technology Initiative. Be aware of cultural trends and recent technology initiatives and take advantage of educational and new technology tools.

*MLR Guiding Principles of: Creative and Practical Problem Solver, Clear and Effective Communicator, Life-Long Learner, Collaborative and Quality Worker, Integrative and Informed Thinker and Responsible and Involved Citizen.*

- Identify state and local lessons learned with the Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI).
- Prepare all teachers to take advantage of the technology skills of students.
- Further develop student technology skills to enhance their learning.

- Develop a system-wide plan to address access to laptops for students beyond the Maine Learning Technology Initiative (i.e. elementary grades).

Goal 5: Effective and efficient use of appropriate technology to ensure that all students meet The Maine Learning Results.

- Provide a technology rich environment in the school.
- Assure and maintain access to computers in all areas of school buildings to support and promote learning for the 21st century student.
- Infuse the National Educational Technology Standards for all students in all curriculum content areas.
- Plan, design, renovate, and construct spaces to support integration of technology at the point of learning.

Goal 6: Access to and routine use of comprehensive, interconnected, managed curriculum assessment instruction and professional development information.

- Provide full range of external information linked to curriculum objectives.
- Provide personnel with technical expertise to develop and manage the student information system.
- Provide personnel with time to develop learning experiences for students that meet the requirements for the Maine Learning Results.
- Encourage and support human resources such as volunteers, local experts to collaborate on projects.
- Develop and maintain professional resources such as access to databases, online professional development opportunities, examples and samples of student work.
- Develop and maintain protocol for information/data entry and retrieval.
- Purchase and update applications that are interconnected, share common data.
- Use data to address mandated requirements for tracking student performance and also to make curriculum, management, and budgetary decisions.

Goal 7: Provide organizational support structure and infrastructure to ensure foundation and integration of technology.

- Provide district, school and classroom support systems (including planning, policy, leadership, training, and resources).
- Provide time and the expertise for all personnel to engage in necessary training on a daily basis. (Within staff meetings, team planning classes).
- Plan, design, renovate, and/or construct spaces (facilities) to support integration of technology.

## **Section 4: Identify Necessary Technology**

An inventory system has been implemented and is in use as of June 2009. This will serve as a platform for knowing what we have. Periodic meetings of the IT Team (made up of building-based IT support personnel), administrators (building principals, district directors), and the recently created School Board Technology Committee will serve to reconcile what we have with what we need. A minimum of two meetings per year with the Board Technology Committee (cross-reference Section 14, Accountability) will bolster this assessment. Parents, students, and teachers will be included in the process.

The new Durham Community School has a plethora of technology devices and opportunities built in, and will serve as a laboratory for emerging technology use in the classroom.

Creation and implementation of a comprehensive hardware replacement plan will be a necessary and informative step for the 2010/2011 school year.

## **Section 5: Collaboration with Adult Literacy Providers**

RSU No. 5 is fortunate in having an extremely active community education program (RSU No. 5 Recreation and Community Education) that continually provides a wide variety of programs for community members of all ages. These offerings have served to increase both community awareness of the technology available to students as well as the skills needed to use technology effectively. That involvement has resulted in a clear commitment to collaborative efforts in increasing adult involvement with technology.



## **Section 6: Strategies for Improving Academic Achievement and Teacher Effectiveness**

### ***Academic Achievement***

Improved academic achievement in the 21st century is tied to the availability of the appropriate infrastructure and technology tools. Awareness of and facility with the wide array of technology tools available to students and teachers is essential for improved learning. It is possible to identify significant changes in the approaches to learning resulting from the Maine Learning Technology Initiative. This program, with its 1:1 ratio of student to computer and access to technology tools anytime and anywhere, has transformed teaching and learning. All RSU No. 5 students in grades 7-12 will participate for MLTI Wave III (2009-2013).

Availability of staffing to provide effective and timely training and support to students and teachers is essential for improved academic achievement using technology.

Technology funding that supports infrastructure, tools, and staffing must be recognized in the budget process.

### ***Teacher and Administrative Effectiveness***

Teacher effectiveness will be improved by appreciation and application of the many ways that technology can improve their delivery of instruction as well as their research, data collection and assessment. Teachers will improve their technology skills through staff development offerings, held during late arrival and early release times, staff and departmental meetings, as well as at conferences and workshops.

Administrative capacity and effectiveness will be heightened by awareness and application of the ways technology can improve student achievement, data management, and effective and timely communication. In addition, administrators are developing a vision for the effective uses of technology within the curriculum, instruction and assessment

To respond to this need, on-going staff development for administrators and teachers will be provided not only by local technology staff members, but also by outside presenters as appropriate.

## **Section 7: Integration of Technology with Curricula and Instruction**

### ***Curricula***

Technology is increasingly reflected in the curricula by greater utilization of system-wide email system for educational purposes, web resources, including the RSU No. 5' website, and curriculum specific software. In addition to accessing the resources found on the Internet, the utilization of the school system's website for classroom purposes will continue to expand. The use of technology for data collection and electronic portfolio development is also expanding significantly.

### ***Instruction***

Integration of technology in instruction is dependent on a number of factors including administrative support, teacher appreciation of how technology can be used, the availability of staff development and support in the uses of technology, and access to technology tools including hardware and software, all within an environment conducive to and supportive of experimentation.

Work will continue to address each of these over the next three years by encouraging teacher and administrator participation in a wide variety of workshops, promoting attendance at conferences highlighting effective uses of technology, one-to-one support in new projects, support for teaming efforts to develop classroom projects, showcasing ideas that work, and encouraging class and/or school visits.

### ***Assessment***

Technology affords a great opportunity for improving and tracking student assessment. The use of a longitudinal database for the collection of data has been started in the system. Teachers, together with administrators, are looking at local comprehensive assessment instruments to fulfill the requirements of the ESEA.

The district recognizes the need to import data from some local assessments into an SIS in an effort to improve the analysis of this data. Additionally, the computerized Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) system has been in place since spring of 2006. Beginning in the 2010/2011 school year, students in grades 2-9 will take Math and Reading tests in the spring.

The use of electronic portfolios to document students' personal learning plans is also expanding. It is anticipated that the increasing use of technology in assessment strategies will be of growing interest in the system and will drive some of the professional development offerings.

## **Section 8: Technology Type and Costs, and Coordination of Funding Resources**

### ***Network***

All six RSU No. 5 school buildings are served by Network Maine for internet access. Beginning July 1, 2010, all schools will have a baseline of 10Mbps (up from 1.5Mbps); Freeport Middle School will increase to 20Mbps and Freeport High School will increase to 100Mbps. This increase in bandwidth is highly anticipated, and should alleviate access and reliability problems experienced in the 2009/2010 school year.

### ***Server***

All six buildings have a fileserver on site. A move to consolidate servers and data closets is anticipated over the next three years. With the increase in bandwidth district-wide, a reduction in the number of servers maintained and number of locations to maintain them is more realistic; alternatively, cloud-based storage is becoming a more viable option, and may prove to be the most cost effective and reliable solution.

The fileserver in all buildings often doubles as a DHCP server and NWEA NTE server, among other roles.

### ***Teacher Workstations***

Teachers district-wide are issued a laptop for professional use. Beginning with the 2010/2011 school year, teachers K-12 will have MLTI-issued devices, with the exception of teachers K-5 in Freeport who have use of either an older iBook or newer Dell laptop. An effort to close the gap in performance and reliability between the MLTI and non-MLTI devices will be an important focus in the coming years.

### ***Student Workstations***

Students at all buildings have access to a wide variety of workstations, including laptops, desktops, and other portable devices. Students in grades 7-12 enjoy use of 1:1 laptops through participation in the MLTI program. Students at Freeport Middle School in grade 6 are issued an Apple iBook in a 1:1 environment. Students in grades K-6 in Durham and Pownal, and students in grades K-5 in Freeport access devices on mobile carts called computers on wheels, or "COWs", consisting of Apple iBooks from prior MLTI deployments. Replacement of the iBooks on COWS will be another important focus in the next three years, and could take the form of netbooks, tablet devices such as the Apple iPad or Amazon Kindle, or other device. The Technology Director will work with building technologists, teachers, administrators and the Curriculum Director to create a plan during the 2010/2011 school year that outlines instructional needs and hardware and software recommendations to meet those needs.

Students at Freeport High School have access to Apple iMacs for video editing and CAD programming.

## Peripherals

Each building has a scanner to import analog documents such as student-produced artwork. Smartboards are becoming more prevalent: the new Durham Elementary School will have a smartboard in all classrooms grades 3-8. Other buildings around the district are adding these devices as teachers request them. USB microscopes are utilized at Durham Community School, Freeport High School, Freeport Middle School and Pownal Elementary School. LCD projectors have become integral to daily teaching and learning - RSU No. 5 has been adding to the LCD projector inventory throughout the 2009/2010 school year, and has budgeted for more in the 2010/2011 year.

Parity and consistency in peripheral acquisition and use will continue to be an area of focus across the district. The Technology Director, building technologists, administrators and the Curriculum Director will work together during the 2010/2011 school year to assess needs and address gaps in supporting technology resources.

## Funding Snapshot

The RSU No. 5 2010/2011 Tech Budget is included as an example of district funding for technology. Regional School Unit No. 5 faces some challenge in the area of replacing student-facing hardware in grades K-5. Funding for replacement hardware at this level has been eclipsed in part by adoption of 1:1 computing at the high school level; equipment lines at other schools should be increased in subsequent years and a hardware evaluation and replacement plan created and implemented.

Teacher technology leadership (through stipends) has become an integral part of how we accomplish technology goals. The 2010/2011 budget includes new stipends for teachers in grades 9-12 while maintaining existing stipends in grades 7-8.

Student technology leadership is also an area of growth. Freeport High School began development of a student Tech Team in the 2009/2010 year, and has plans to expand the scope of work for this group for the 2010/2011 school year. Utilizing student assistance for technology support will not only help RSU No. 5 defray costs, but increase staff and student facility with technology.

2010/2011 RSU No. 5 Adopted Tech Budget								
	Durham Community	Freeport High	Freeport Middle	Mast Landing	Morse Street	Pownal Elementary	System Wide	TOTAL
Equipment	\$0.00	\$116,664.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>\$116,664.00</b>
Other Purchased Services	\$2,000.00	\$6,400.00	\$3,453.00	\$3,307.00	\$3,360.00	\$2,000.00	\$13,323.00	<b>\$33,843.00</b>
Software	\$0.00	\$2,500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>\$4,000.00</b>
Stipends	\$2,820.00	\$1,000.00	\$2,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>\$6,620.00</b>
Supplies	\$789.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$8,553.00	\$0.00	<b>\$13,342.00</b>
Tech Repairs/Maintenance	\$3,888.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>\$7,888.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,497.00</b>	<b>\$128,564.00</b>	<b>\$8,753.00</b>	<b>\$5,807.00</b>	<b>\$5,860.00</b>	<b>\$10,553.00</b>	<b>\$13,323.00</b>	<b>\$182,357.00</b>

## **Section 9: Supporting Resources**

To ensure successful and effective uses of technology, a wide variety of supporting resources will be made available to students and staff. These include, but will not be limited to, technical support, appropriate software, and peripheral hardware.

Technical support is essential in order to maintain an on-demand use of technology. It serves no purpose to have technology with high capabilities if it is not in working order. Currently RSU No. 5 works with a number of specialized service vendors (e.g. MacSmith, BEU) who provide repair service for some of our equipment. Each building technologist is responsible for basic troubleshooting and repair work, to the extent of his/her expertise. The demand for troubleshooting and repair work to be done in a timely manner continues to be an issue in our district; effective staffing has not kept pace with the demands associated with more equipment and greater dependency on technology-related services in each of the buildings.

Software provides the tools to allow staff and students to perform the tasks associated with curriculum projects and to experiment. While a basic set of core tools is provided on all computers, specialized software for CAD, graphic design, video and sound editing, etc., is available on specific machines. Catalog and circulation software plays an important role in accessing resources from our schools' media centers.

Peripheral hardware, including video cameras, scanners, midi boards, digital still cameras, etc. are already present in the system and will be updated as appropriate. We are looking carefully at ways to provide high quality printed output while also monitoring costs associated with printing, namely paper and toner. Inkjet printers are no longer supported in the district.

As technology continues to expand in the community, we will need to reassess our needs each year, investigate options and decide which maintenance arrangement is best. The budget reflects the increased cost of a growing network.

## **Section 10: Steps to Increase Accessibility**

The greatest contribution toward increased access to technology comes as a result of the Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI), with the state providing a 1:1 ratio of user-to-device for all students and teachers in grades 7-12. Students and teachers in grades 7 and 8 began participating in 2002. In the summer of 2004, the high school secured a lease to purchase enough laptops to provide a 1:1 ratio for the incoming freshman class. In the summer of 2005, those 143 laptops were re-deployed on COWs, and made available to all high school students. The mobile cart model has proven successful, not only at Freeport High School but also at Durham Community School, Mast Landing School, Morse Street School, and Pownal Elementary School. Beginning in the 2009/2010 school year, Freeport High School is participating the MLTI program, bringing new hardware into that building, and allowing the distribution of the COWs to other schools in the district.

Parallel with the laptop accessibility issue is that of teacher preparedness. This must be addressed with equal energy - access alone is not an answer. Teachers, particularly those who will be facing students who have had years of unlimited technology access, need to be provided with multiple opportunities for training in how best to utilize the skills and interests their students will bring to the classroom. Toward that end, training available from the MLTI project will be open to all teachers in grades 7-12.

Even with the visibility given to the current use of technology through MLTI in grades 7-12, it is important to not lose sight of the access and integration needs of students and teachers in the K-5 program; we must promote greater integration of technology at all levels.

## **Section 11: Promotion of Various Curricula and Teaching Strategies that Integrate Technology**

Beginning with the 2009/2010 school year, RSU No. 5 is fortunate to have hired a Curriculum Director. Close collaboration between the Curriculum Director and Technology Director has begun many far-reaching conversations that will continue to play out over the next three years.

It is widely accepted that an approach where students are able to choose the direction of their learning is very beneficial. Research shows that students often learn more when engaged in such activities as project-based learning. Technology provides the tools that make this kind of instruction possible. The teacher no longer needs to be the expert, but rather a guide.

Technology can also provide tools that can support a variety of learning styles. In science classes, probes and projectors make experiments more visual. Geometry students use software such as Geometer's Sketchpad to manipulate and learn about shapes. Foreign Language students gain a level of immersion as they interact with foreign students via email or the use of "podcasts".

Technology can be a valuable tool for assessment. The district has begun transferring many local assessments into PowerSchool as a central collection point to improve the analysis of this data. We administer the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) MAP twice a year to all 2-10th graders. Teachers are able to evaluate the test results, available within 24 hours after upload, and use the information to better inform their teaching.

Use of electronic portfolios allows students to document their learning in many different ways. Students can easily catalog images, data, sound or movie files.

Making the most of this technology requires skilled support for teachers and students both inside and outside the classroom. An integration specialist would be able to schedule workshops and other training for teachers and be a support in the classroom.

## Section 12: Professional Development

An ongoing menu of professional development offerings will continue to be available. Building- and district-wide trainings are offered throughout the school year and determined by a variety of means including surveys, goal setting sessions and observation.

Information on year-round workshops, summer workshops (MLTI-sponsored training, NWEA training, Literacy Institute), annual conferences (ACTEM) are now coordinated by the Curriculum Director and distributed to staff via email.

Librarians participate in EBSCO and Winnebago training.

RSU No. 5 Community Education and other continuing education programs offer a variety of technology courses suitable to the needs and interests of staff members.

Principals and administrators keep informed about technology through conversations within professional groups (CBEA, etc.) and reports from building technology coordinators and the Technology Director.

Future professional development initiatives must include:

- Training and support for technology coordinators to assist in their need to keep abreast of expanding technology.
- Training and support for Library staff to respond to the increasing importance of technology in library programs.
- Training for staff in more effective integration as well as the student information system (SIS).
- Ongoing and entry level support for common applications: email, Microsoft Office, web resources, web authoring and maintenance.
- Built-in time for teachers to share and practice with peripheral devices and multimedia software (video, graphics, probes, projectors, etc.).
- Opportunities to consult with other districts and educational groups regarding technology initiatives and experiences.



## **Section 13: Innovative Delivery Strategies**

Students have in the past looked to local universities and neighboring schools to broaden their choice of courses. With the current availability of offerings online, students have more choice than ever in how to meet their learning objectives. For the 2009-10 school year, students have the option of accessing Virtual High School courses, and the PLATO (credit recovery) system to expand curricular offerings and/or prevent coursework failure. Students needing more advanced coursework can access college courses around the country. This is an option for both teachers and students.

Students and teachers using the new district email/collaboration system, Google Apps for Education, have a multitude of asynchronous tools available to them, including email, chat and shared documents. MLTI devices come with the excellent NotesShare software, which has allowed absent students to participate in class from home.

## **Section 14: Accountability Measures**

*How will our plan demonstrate the effectiveness of our plan in integrating technology into curriculum and instruction?*

There will be an increase in the use of web resources by teachers, greater student use of electronic media and networks for receipt and delivery of information and products, more classroom units developed by teachers using technology, and a significant increase in student-designed projects using technology.

*How will our plan increase the ability of teachers to teach with technology?*

Teachers will request more advanced training in both more sophisticated uses of software and in effective integration activities. In addition awards and grants to teachers can be used as a measure. There will also be a growing use of the peripherals that facilitate the use of technology in the classroom.

*How will our plan enable students to reach Maine's Learning Results?*

A number of the guiding principles will be met through the application of our plan. Students will become more effective communicators through their collaboration with others both at school and elsewhere; they will produce high quality products using technology tools; they will demonstrate effective problem-solving as they participate in increased opportunities for self-directed learning; with technology serving as the glue to hold together various subject areas, students will become integrative and informed thinkers.

*How will we evaluate this plan and make a midcourse correction as needed?*

The School Board Technology Committee will determine how well we are conforming to the Technology Plan, through meetings twice per year. Specific dates will be determined by the Board Technology Committee. Parents, students, and teachers will be invited to participate in the evaluation. The Board Technology Committee may also employ other means of gathering input from all stakeholders, such as online surveys, input from Parent/Teacher organizations, and parent volunteers.