
Indicators of Digital Readiness

Indicator	Sustaining a Digital Learning Environment
Theme	Leadership
Priority Level	P1
Organizational Level	District

Description of the Indicator

Innovative funding for digital learning leverages technologies to improve teaching and learning, as well as to increase efficiency and cost savings. A cross-functional District budget development team is formed that is composed of District leaders, key stakeholders, and subject matter experts who collectively represent the District's interests. This team employs strategies for sustaining a digital learning environment (instructional practices).

Why is this indicator important?

An effective budget development and review process is guided by a deep understanding of school finance at the District, State and Federal levels. Funding a digital learning environment requires strategic, short-term and long-term budgeting that leverages the use of learning-enabling technology and resources to optimize student learning. All budgets at the district and the school level are aligned in order to prioritize student learning and cost-efficiency, with consistent funding streams for both recurring and non-recurring costs. The District's financial model includes the metrics and processes to sustain the digital learning environment.

Indicator Rubric

<p style="text-align: center;">Insufficient Evidence of Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(0 Points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A cross-functional District leadership and budget development team is formed ● They do a review of current District, State, and Federal financial processes
<p style="text-align: center;">Foundational Stage of Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(3 Points)</p>	<p>Evidence is provided for all previous rubric levels, as well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A cross-functional District leadership and budget development team does a high-level review of current District, State, and Federal financial processes ● They identify current barriers to budgeting for digital learning and collect strategies and best practice examples of innovative funding structures and scenarios ● The team identifies innovative solutions to funding the transition to digital learning ● The District creates a vision for transformational and sustainable funding for a high performing and effective digital learning environment
<p style="text-align: center;">Achieving Success in Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(6 Points)</p>	<p>Evidence is provided for all previous rubric levels, as well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In addition to envisioning, the district develops sound policies and procedures for the ongoing review and analysis of cost variables for equitable funding of digital learning ● The District designs a communication plan that illustrates cost/benefit opportunities associated with digital learning
<p style="text-align: center;">Exemplary Success in Implementation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(9 Points)</p>	<p>Evidence is provided for all previous rubric levels, as well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In addition to planning, District leaders and budget development teams conduct timely reviews of the analysis of efficiencies, effectiveness, and costs of implementing and sustaining a digital learning environment ● The cross-functional District leadership team develops implementation strategies and viable timelines to activate procedures and practices needed to maximize educational investment ● The District communicates actual costs, efficiencies, and effectiveness of implementing and sustaining a digital learning environment

Who in the school/district should lead and be involved with this indicator?

District administrators

Curriculum

Instruction

Assessment

Technology

Finance

How to execute the indicator

- Create a cross-functional District leadership and budget development team
- Conduct a high-level review of current District, State, and Federal financial processes
- Identify current barriers to budgeting for digital learning
- Identify innovative solutions to funding the transition to digital learning
- Create a vision for transformational and sustainable funding for a high performing and effective digital learning environment
- Develop sound policies and procedures for the ongoing review and analysis of cost variables for equitable funding of digital learning
- Review and analysis of efficiencies, effectiveness, and costs of implementing and sustaining a digital learning environment
- Publicly communicate actual costs, efficiencies, and effectiveness of implementing and sustaining a digital learning environment
- Creation or review of Three to Five-Year Technology Plan

Recommended evidence to submit for successful execution of this action

- District Technology Plan
- Evidence of staff professional development opportunities that support digital learning environments
- Evidence (meeting minutes, sign-in sheets, shared documents, etc.) of multiple departments' (leadership team, information technology, curriculum, staff development, educational technology, assessment, finance, etc.) involvement in the technology budgeting process
- Evidence (newsletter, announcements, board minutes, presentations, etc.) of public communication of actual costs, efficiencies, and effectiveness of implementing and sustaining a digital learning environment

Resources schools can use to complete this action successfully

[Resources & Recommendations for School Leaders: Finance](#)

Financial planning for blended learning requires understanding the key cost drivers, identifying strategies to offset some costs, and developing a multi-year plan to support scaling blended learning models to ensure equitable access. The Learning Accelerator

[Blended Learning Implementation Guide 3.0](#)

The Learning Accelerator and Getting Smart joined with DLN to update this popular guide. Version 2.0 reflects feedback from schools and districts, developments in the field, and new educational technology trends.

Digital Learning Now!; The Learning Accelerator; Getting Smart

[The Guide to Implementing Digital Learning \(GIDL\)](#)

The Guide to Implementing Digital Learning (GIDL) is a free web-based resource to support school and district leaders as they work to ensure that investments in digital learning spark positive results. GIDL includes six topic areas: planning, professional learning, content and software, broadband, devices and tech support. Each topic's section includes background information, key considerations for implementation, resources and exemplars of digital learning in action.

State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA)

[Network Essentials for Superintendents](#)

This resource provides tips for district leaders who are managing network upgrades and helps ensure that district broadband infrastructure is digital learning ready.

Education Superhighway

[Planning for Technology \(Second Edition\)](#)

Students and classrooms are growing more technologically savvy every semester, which presents you with an essential choice: Will you let these learning tools sit idle, or will you unleash the power of technology for your students and staff? Note: Not Free

Bruce Whitehead, Devon Jenson, and Floyd Boschee

[The 1:1 Roadmap](#)

Technology is more than just "Computer Class;" it is a literacy that must be threaded throughout the fabric of a school. In a 1:1 environment, you're preparing students to be responsible citizens of the physical and digital worlds. But it's easy to get overwhelmed with devices; you have to have a plan for technology that keeps learning at center stage. Note: Not Free

Andrew Marcinek

Certified Schools Exemplars: See links for school evidence

1. [Mountain Way School, Morris Plains School District, 2018 Silver Certified](#)

MPSD maintains district Administrative Teams (of which member represent both district schools) that meet bi-monthly to review both fiscal functions related to sustaining a digital learning environment as well as educational impact and implementation for digital learning resources. Through these meetings, the financial processes of the district are examined and modified to maximize funding with relation to both state and federal opportunities. One of the distinct struggles of a small K-8 district is to find funding for non-essential education technologies, such as a VR Lab. The district recognizes this struggle and developed a staffing position within the district whose responsibilities include applying for grants and seeking alternative funding as a means to provide students and staff with innovative digital learning opportunities. Through corporate partnerships, grant applications, and participation in school community organizations, MPSD has obtained numerous innovative digital learning resources without impacting taxpayers through the school budget. Many of these financial partnerships are ongoing, with multi-year focuses to ensure both financial and implementation sustainability. Each year, digital learning resources are evaluated by a team of staff and administration and recommendations are made for modifications to programmatic offerings. This process is driven in alignment with the Five Year Technology Plan. For example, a review was just conducted of the current STEM curriculum and a VR Lab and Makerspace are being implemented for the 2018-19 school year as a result of the reflections and recommendations of the review committee and the goals set forth by the Long Term Tech Plan.. Each year, in the spring, the Administrative Team provides a "State of Education" presentation to the Board of Education and the public to ensure public communication of cost, efficiencies, and implementation of the 21st Century learning and teaching practices that occur within the district.

2. [Washington Township High School, Washington Township Public Schools, 2018 Silver Certified](#)

Our school has invested in an instructional technology coach at the High School. This coach serves as a leader in professional development and decision making when it comes to technology that supports teaching and learning. This position sustains ongoing job embedded PD and support for digital learning initiatives.

3. [Delsea Middle School, Delsea Regional High School District, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

The Delsea Regional High School District works with a wide variety of stakeholders and administration to take a deep dive into understanding the importance of sustaining a digital learning environment. Any new technology teachers' or supervisors' request requires a long-term trial period which affords the district data from the vendor as to the efficacy of the instructional technology. Discussions then ensue regarding value versus cost, the probability of continued use, and the platform's application across all disciplines. Once all the previous elements have been thoroughly discussed, a consensus is reached as to whether to adopt the technology. The evidence that was provided to for this indicator included a description of the budget process as well as the previous years budget, the comprehensive technology plan, examples of the professional development workshops, the board approved finance policies, and the school's Google Reference District presentation. These are some of the items that are used to make meaningful decisions about sustaining the digital learning environment while supporting all staff and students.

4. [Demarest Middle School, Demarest, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

Demarest Middle School is committed to giving staff and students the best technology there is to offer. Teachers received a new MacBook Pro in the fall of 2017. We are a 1:1 school, with students in grades 5-8 each having a MacBook Air to use both in school and at home for the duration of the school year. SMARTBoards are on a frequent refresh cycle, and we have incorporated the use of Apple TVs into our classrooms. Professional learning is of the utmost importance. Staff participated in a gamified professional learning program through Kyte Learning, which offers teachers choice in what technologies they'd like to learn and incorporate in their classrooms. Additionally, staff meeting time has been transformed into learning sessions, with technology and other topics being shared with the staff by administration and teacher leaders.

5. [Luther Lee Emerson, Demarest, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

Luther Lee Emerson has an extensive variety of technology available to staff and students. Teachers all received new MacBook Pros in the fall of 2017. Students in grades 2-4 have 1:1 in school access to iPads, Chromebooks, and MacBooks. Additionally, staff have access to a wealth of professional learning opportunities regarding technology. During the 17-18 school year, staff participated in a learning game through the online Kyte Learning portal. This offered individualization and choice in what teachers wanted to learn. Staff meeting time was also devoted to professional learning, with a variety of topics taught by both administrators and teacher leaders.

6. [Eastern Regional High School, Eastern Camden County Regional School District, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

This section provides the anticipated costs for the 2018-19, 2019-2020, 2020-2021 school years. The document includes the source of funds (federal, state, local, and other) as well as expenses such as hardware/software, digital curriculum including National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) compliance, upgrades, and other services including print media that will be needed in order to achieve the goals of this plan. The plan also includes provisions for interoperability among many technology components.

7. [Cove Road School, Hazlet Township Public Schools, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

Our school achieved exemplar level success in the Sustaining a Digital Learning Environment. We began by highlighting our new STEAM Lab which replaced our outdated computer and art spaces. By creating a collaborative learning environment, we improved the quality for our instructional design to include more project based learning and cross-curricular lessons. In addition to this, we recently implemented a 1 to 1 Chromebook initiative to provide students with the opportunity to use technology throughout their classes, and at home. Since the students have unlimited access to Chromebooks, they are able to utilize multiple digital learning tools such as Google Classroom, IXL, Newsela, Codesters, etc. All of this evidence is outlined in our District's Five Year Technology Plan.

8. [Lillian Drive Elementary School, Hazlet Township Public Schools, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

LDS achieved an exemplary score in "Sustaining a Digital Learning Environment" by providing evidence of online tools used by the school, proof of purchase of the tools and proof of training staff how to use them. LDS attached Google Slides presentations and agendas showing the training staff members received.

9. [Long Branch High School, Long Branch, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

Our district invests millions of dollars annually in technology to support a digital learning environment. Part of the investment is on digital learning platforms for children and teachers in the classrooms. Data protection and security is built into the budget which includes data warehousing systems and controls of processing systems for all of our student assessments. Network Management - to ensure all devices are on the same platform and protected, we invested money in networking equipment and management software. Communications - Investment on our TV Broadcasting classes, devices and software communication helps us to spotlight our students throughout the district and allows our voices to be heard across multiple platforms. Security Innovations - Investment in technology software ensures our schools are secure. Sustainability - Our district invested in 8 solar installations. Five of our schools take part in the PowerSave Schools program. We also have 6 bronze and 3 silver certified Sustainable Jersey schools, as well as 2 U.S. Green Ribbon schools. Our detailed Digital Ready Technology Plan provides information on our current status as well as our plan through 2020.

10. [Stephen J. Gerace Elementary School, Pequannock Public Schools, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

We achieved exemplary status in this area as our district is committed to meeting students in the digital arena of which they are accustomed. We have a very comprehensive technology plan in which we address programs, devices, and infrastructure. We provide training not only for our staff but we host a yearly technology summit that is attended by Pequannock staff and other interested teachers, administrators, and presenters from all over New Jersey.

11. [G. Harold Antrim Elementary School, Point Pleasant Beach School District, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

G. Harold Antrim Elementary School is committed to sustaining a digital learning environment. The district has 1:1 Apple devices for every student in the school (K-8). Antrim teachers utilize their PLC time to plan for and evaluate various programs and activities to implement in the classroom. Each year, funds are allocated to online resources, apps, programs, and other tools to assist the students in class each day. In addition, the district has a certified Apple technician on staff for the purpose of keeping repair costs down. Finally, Point Pleasant Beach School District has developed a 3-year tech plan to detail the district's tech goals and objectives.

12. [Holdrum Middle School, River Vale Public Schools, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

River Vale provided examples of multiple professional development opportunities that support digital learning environments. We have had multiple PD opportunities, this year alone, on how to effectively use Canvas, our Learning Management System. Our first PD day in September offered over an hour on how to share Canvas pages, our October 9th PD Day offered 3 ½ hours of training, and our January 15th PD Day will offer ½ day on advanced training. We used this survey to see what areas of Canvas the staff wanted to work on and/or learn more about on January 15th.

Our staff members also have the opportunity to attend Regional Curriculum offerings on many different topics, including technology and 21st Century skills. Our staff is encouraged to attend these workshops with their colleagues, or alone and turnkey information during team/faculty meetings. New staff members attended a ½ day training on best practices for technology integration. Training was also offered for basic G Suite questions.

River Vale publicly reviews its budget each year at a BOE Meeting. This is when there is public communication of costs of implementing a digital learning environment for our students. River Vale also had a Budget Development Team to conduct timely reviews of the analysis of efficiencies, effectiveness, and costs of implementing and sustaining a digital learning environment. We also provided the team with example PD agendas, BOE agendas, and staff surveys regarding district technology.

13. [Indian Mills Memorial School, Shamong School District, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

Shamong Township Schools incorporates a comprehensive method to sustain and maintain a digital learning environment. This process starts with key stakeholders, including administration and staff to assist in developing curriculum and technology plans. With these plans, resources are allocated for funding along with an action plan to ensure success.

14. [Chestnut Ridge Middle School, Washington Township School District, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

Our district has devoted time, energy, and resources to ensure that digital learning is supported and monitored for efficacy. In addition to providing 1:1 devices to every student in grades 3-12, there is purposeful and thoughtful support of this initiative. A instructional technology committee meets to discuss plans for technology usage according to the district vision. They also monitor device usage and developed a refresh plan. Instructional Technology Specialists are assigned to each school so that teachers have access to support, professional development, and information to help support digital learning. The Chestnut Ridge Instructional Technology specialist provides push in and pull out support and regularly holds professional development through faculty meetings, co-teaching, full day in-services, and walkthroughs. In the evidence, we show the specifics of how these pieces were enacted over the past year.

15. [West New York Middle School, West New York, 2018 Bronze Certified](#)

To address 21st Century skills, the West New York Middle School continues to develop district-wide, technology-driven programs that create learning environments in which community interactions and a shared learning climate are promoted. 21st Century Skills require students to be interconnected and address learning needs of the whole learner. Technology is aligned with Best Practices streamlined to foster the needs and inquiries of individual students. The West New York Middle School is dedicated to creating learning practices that support the teaching and learning of 21st century skills that are crucial to use in an accelerated world. Exploring ways to connect data to student achievement is supported through Personal Professional Learning Networks (PLN). Educators use sustainable planning and design to collaborate, share best practices, and blend 21st century skills through project-based learning (PBL). Technology learning tools and resources are equitable for all.