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District:
West Michigan
Academy of Arts &

Academics [70902]

Building: West Michigan Academy of Arts & Academics [08332]

ISD: Ottawa Area ISD [70]

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Introduction

District Profile

West Michigan Academy of Arts & Academics (WMAAA) is a public school academy chartered and authorized by Grand Valley State University since 1996. (It is a district of one school.) WMAAA is located in Ferrysburg, Michigan, Ottawa Area Intermediate School District, but also serves students from Muskegon Intermediate School District. WMAAA is more ethnically diverse than most schools in northwest Ottawa County. Over 35% of the student body economically qualifies for free or reduced lunch benefits, and 14% are serviced for special education needs. The student body is 56% female and 44% male.

WMAAA is a K-8 school. Class sizes are limited between 19-24 students, depending on the grade. The projected student body for 2015-2016 is 480 children. In addition to the 29 academic staff, there are 6 arts staff who teach dance, theatre, visual art and music to all grades. WMAAA also offers special education programming.

WMAAA provides a unique curriculum inspired by integrating fine arts programming (visual art, music, dance and theater) with core academic subjects. Fine arts provide a hands-on demonstration and reinforcement of concepts learned in the classroom. Full-time academic and arts coordinators facilitate meetings with the teaching staff every six weeks to integrate academic and arts activities. Teachers attend art classes with their students to maximize instruction opportunities in the classrooms.

District Mission Statement

The mission of West Michigan Academy of Arts & Academics is empowering students to reach their ultimate personal success through the unique integration of arts and academics.

Technology Planning Team

Cathy Cantu	Director
Rachael Hobeck	Technology Committee
Catherine Kuchan	Technology Committee
Bridget Heyblom	Technology Committee
Tisha Lankamp	Lower Elementary Representative
Stephanie Huffman	Upper Elementary Representative
Katie VanSingel	Middle School Representative
Mandy DeBoer	Arts Representative

Technology Plan

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Plan Approval Process

The plan is a cooperative effort between the technology committee and the academy staff. The process for approval includes the accumulation of data and models by the team to develop the framework for the plan. The team will solicit input from the staff to complete the framework; assignment of/responsibility for which will either be whole group or individual. Once the framework is filled, it will be reviewed by the team as a whole, modified accordingly, and then reviewed by the Academy Board of Directors.

Plan Availability: The plan will be posted on the Academy's web site, www.westmichiganacademy.org, and will be available upon request in paper form via the school office.

Vision & Goals

Technology Mission Statement

To provide a technology environment that enhances instruction, increases student engagement, promotes the integration of arts and academics, provides essential technology skill development and is utilized as a catalyst for creative learning and expression.

Technology Vision Statement

The vision of WMAAA is to provide all students with access to technology systems that will assist them in:

- Becoming proficient in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, and critical thinking.
- Becoming knowledgeable users of computers and related hardware and relate to these technologies as relevant tools in their lives while practicing safe internet usage.
- Becoming proficient in expressing ideas and information in creative ways.
- Being prepared for the next level of education.
- Acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary to be life-long learners.

When integrated into instruction, technology will support new strategies for teaching and learning by:

- Addressing diverse learning styles.
- Increase student engagement through a wider variety of teaching resources.
- Accommodating individual learning rates.
- Encouraging cooperative learning.
- Helping students accept responsibility for their learning.

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- Providing means to communicate globally and safely.
- Improving academic achievement in all areas.

The Academy will become an environment where all students and staff have ready access to and proficiency in a full range of technology, software, tools and applications. The Academy will have knowledgeable staff and a range of resources to further the curriculum goals.

Goals

- Students will be provided with a range of experiences designed to develop the technology skills necessary to be life-long learners.
- Students and teachers will become comfortable and competent with the use of technology as a learning aid.
- Students and teachers will use technology as a bidirectional medium for communication of information and creative expression.

Curriculum

Integration

Technology standards have been developed with progressive skills. The end objective is three-fold: 1) to prepare students for the high school technology environment; 2) to develop the skills needed to function in the business world; 3) to develop safe internet communication skills. One goal for the upcoming school year is to reevaluate the Michigan Educational Technology Standards for Students and put a curriculum map in place that addresses all standards.

Student Achievement

Student technology achievement goals will be detailed in the curriculum map to be expanded during the 2015-2016 school year. Research shows that technology integration contributes to academic achievement in the same manner as the integration of the arts , which research also shows *significantly contribute to academic achievement*. The integration of technology with “the arts” with “academics” is a natural extension of the integration philosophy that is foundation to the academy’s mission.

With respect to academic achievement, technology provides two assistive opportunities at the Academy:

- Technology is a tool to assist in the learning of base knowledge in all core areas. Wonderful opportunities exist in multitudes of software to hone skills in math, science, social studies and language arts. For assistance in research and expanding a student’s knowledge base, the Internet has replaced volumes of encyclopedias with information that is updated by the minute.
- The use of technology is one more tool or skill which can be used by a student to express what it

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- is they have learned. Technology does not replace the teaching or learning of base knowledge; technology is an assistive tool. It can take the presentation of a student's ideas to another level.
- Technology is a tool also used to assist teachers in alternative, interactive forms of instruction. The visual nature of a technology presentation engages students longer and in a more interactive way than traditional teaching tools. Technology presentations reach students of many learning styles. Longer time on task has been shown to improve student learning.

Assessment: In 2006, the Academy began incorporating technology into its standardized assessment program. In conjunction with NWEA's Measure of Academic Progress program, all K-8 students are measured at least two times per year for academic growth. This computer based program provides an adaptive testing environment designed to measure the growth of student learning from Fall to Spring that is only possible through the use of technology. The results are received in a timely manner. WMAAA also piloted the Smarter Balanced assessment during the 2012-13 school year.

Integration: In addition to the development of student technology skills, technology activities will be integrated into unit lesson plans. Currently, teaching staff meet with the arts staff every six weeks to facilitate/plan integrated art activities to enhance what is learned in the classroom. "Technology" will has been added to this process to facilitate the integration of technology-related activities into unit lesson plans.

Process time line: WMAAA will continue the process of identification, writing of rubrics and integration of specific technology activities for the unit plans. Integration activities include internet research, presentation, organization of information and use of appropriate on-line courses or software. Each year thereafter will be a refinement of the activity or revamping depending on the evolution of the technology involved, as discussed/planned at the six week integration meetings. Integration activities newly planned or refined will continue to be formally documented.

This integration process will be further used to identify skills areas which need to be improved within the teaching staff, resulting in directed professional development activities, either in a group or on an individualized basis.

Parental Communication and Community Relations

Our technology plan will be posted on our website.

The Academy continually works to update our parents and inform our community through the use of social media (Twitter, Facebook and classroom blogs) as well as the use of Infinite Campus for parents to view grades and attendance.

Parents also contribute to the School Improvement Plan and the technology plan is a part of the School Improvement Plan

Collaboration

Since WMAAA is a K-8 building, we do not offer GED programs due to age.

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Professional Development

All staff members need to be proficient in the operation and integration of available technologies. The obvious progression is that staff will require training in and development of technology skills and knowledge, and then the integration of those skills within the administrative and teaching arenas of their profession. This will be accomplished through:

Skill Assessment: For all current and any incoming teachers, technology skills will be assessed in the operation and knowledge of technology hardware and software operation, as well as the documentation of experience with technology integration in curriculum unit plans.

Skill Development: Training will need to address various learning styles, a wide variation in skill levels, and provide opportunities for immediate, practical application. Resources: training offered through ISD, in-services with tech services provider for introduction of new technologies and/or further training on existing technologies, software application specialists in-house or via Webex seminars, staff mentoring. A “Professional Development Plan” will be written/re-written annually for each staff member to assist with the logical progression of skills during their annual performance evaluation.

Skill Application: Benchmark aligned curriculum unit plans are reviewed and revised, or developed every six weeks. Due to limitations on lab availability, unit plans will include at least one developed technology integration activity in one of the four core areas. Each year, with the progression in the availability of equipment, requirements will be expanded to include at least one activity in additional core areas.

Evaluation: All staff are reviewed annually by the Academy’s Director and/or Assistant Director.

Supporting Resources: All staff members receive training on any new technology or software they are required to use or teach, either one-on-one or as a group in-service. Additionally, they have access to manuals (on-line or paper), as well as “help desk” support from the technology services provider.

Infrastructure, Hardware, Software, and Technical Support

Current Structure

Hardware:

- One static lab consisting of 24 desktops
- Four mobile labs of Samsung Chrome Books
- Approximately 15 refurbished laptops to support our student “Bring Your Own Device” policy
- All classrooms outfitted with LCD projector, ELMO document camera, teacher laptop/desktop.
- All classrooms outfitted with Smart Notebook hardware and software
- 31a and Title I programs are equipped with iPads, Android tablets, Smartboards
- Special Education programs are equipped with iPads, Android tablets, Smartboards

Software:

- Largely web-based software delivery:
- Infinite Campus serves as our student information system, student portal, parent portal, and teacher portal
- Google Apps for Education is primary document storage/collaboration

Assessment

Equipment Access: Current student access to equipment has improved substantially since 2010. We have phased out mobile laptop carts and replaced with Samsung Chrome Book carts. Students in grades 5-8 are under a new Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy. A new physical computer lab has allowed for greater, more reliable computer access.

Internet Access: All computers have access to the Internet and our network system. The summer of 2013, WMAAA engaged in a massive technological upgrade that included new wireless access points capable of handling a BYOD initiative and a new network closet to address our growing physical plant. In the fall of 2014, WMAAA also added another line of internet access.

Internet Filtering: The Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) directs school districts to protect children from obscene or inappropriate material on the Internet or material deemed harmful to minors. To comply with this law, the Academy’s access to the internet is filtered through a Barracuda brand web filter. It filters inappropriate and obscene material as well as materials deemed distracting to the learning experience.

Server & Network: The server has adequate drive space to accommodate growth needs for the next two to three years. Back-up servers are in place to run nightly.

Technology Lab Equipment/Software: Desktop computers in the physical lab are one year old (purchased in 2012).

Staff Equipment: Upgrades are being done on an ad-hoc basis. Staff desktops are being replaced by laptops.

Technical Support: The Academy contracts with a third-party vendor (KR Group) for technical support to maintain the integrity of the hardware, and maintains technical support contracts with the major providers of the Academy’s information systems software.

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Goals:

- Engage students in a meaningful curriculum designed around 21st century skills.
- Provide a safe, flexible, and effective learning environment that supports the anytime, anywhere, anything initiative.
- Allow students the opportunity to apply technology to content areas to gain knowledge, develop skills, and create artifacts to demonstrate their learning.
- Use technology to support a culture of data-driven decision making.
- Develop skills within the teaching staff needed to facilitate greater extensions into technology.

Objective	Strategies	Timeline
Continue to improve teaching and learning through the effective use of technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update curriculum maps K-8 that address MI Technology standards. ● Survey of professional development needs for teaching staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2015-2016 year <p>November 2015</p>
Provide continuous training for teachers on current technology initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Further training on Infinite Campus ● Google Docs training ● Smart Board training ● Chrome Cast/Apple TV training ● Bring Your Own Device training and technology integration in the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ongoing
Invest in hardware that will meet the changing needs of the technology environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to upgrade staff computers on an ad-hoc basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ongoing
Considerations for future technology plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required technology skills course ● Re-evaluate wifi coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fall/Winter 2015 ● Summer 2016

Funding and Budget

WMAAA contracts services from a technology company, the KR Group. Our budgeted cost for them, which includes server licenses/warranties is \$30,000 annually. We have also budgeted \$10,000 for more chromebooks, training on the chromebooks, as well as smart notebook software training.

Internet Use & Content Filtering Policy

UNDESIRABLE MATERIALS:

The WMAAA will take all possible precautions to restrict access to undesirable materials including,

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but not limited to, installing content filtering software/hardware solutions on its network or using an Internet provider which uses content filtering software on its equipment to screen all Internet web sites by URL and/or by keyword search. WMAAA currently accesses the internet via the Ottawa Area ISD, which provides filtering using 8e6 Technologies filtering software. However, students and teachers must also accept responsibility for restricting access to these materials. Students who gain access to undesirable Internet materials while using school computers must report this material to their teacher, who will report it to an administrator. Teachers who gain knowledge of undesirable Internet materials while using school computers must report this material to an administrator.

SECURITY:

Students and teachers must not allow others to use their network accounts (both Internet and School accounts). Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Designated school personnel may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on school file servers will always be private.

ACCESS:

Students are not allowed independent use of the Internet. Instructions on Internet use will be given to students by their teachers. All student Internet use will be supervised by a staff member.

E-MAIL:

E-mail accounts may be assigned to students at the school's discretion. E-mail accounts will be assigned to teachers on a continuing basis. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks and other inappropriate behaviors are prohibited on the network. Receipt of inappropriate mail should immediately be reported to a teacher and to an administrator. The use of encryption will not be permitted. No right of privacy exists in favor of any employee of the firm in respect to this information.

I.M., CHAT & USER GROUPS:

Student use of instant messaging (I.M.), chat, and user groups is not allowed on school computers.

COPYRIGHT & CITATIONS:

Any copyrighted materials are subject to the Fair Use provision of copyrighted materials as it relates to education. Internet materials used in reports or other documents must be cited. If there is no direct citation, the Uniform Resource Location (URL) must be cited.

DOWNLOADING:

Files and pictures may be downloaded from the Internet only for class instructional purposes with prior approval from a teacher or building administrator. Software and software upgrades may be downloaded only by school employees for instructional or equipment maintenance purposes and only with prior approval of building administration. Private Internet Service Provider (ISP) software may not be downloaded for any reason.

PRIVATE INTERNET PROVIDERS:

Students may not use school computers to access private Internet Service Providers.