



Netbooks: A proposed alternative one-one program for grades 9-12 Curriculum and Learning Plan information

Vision:

1. Authentic and challenging student learning experiences that use a variety of communication and electronic tools...
2. New roles for students and teachers as partners in the learning process.
3. Evolution of a culture that connects learning beyond the school walls to community and global resources.
4. Preparation of learners for a world immersed in technology.

Goals:

1. Students will use technology to create original works and activities.
2. Students will use technology to work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support their learning and to help others learn.
3. Students will use digital tools to find, evaluate, and use new information.
4. Students will use critical thinking *and technical knowledge* to discern the usefulness, accuracy, and intent of material they find on-line.
5. Students will practice legal and ethical behavior, and demonstrate ways to keep safe while using the Internet and new media.

What specific new initiatives will help Portland Public Schools achieve these goals for secondary students using netbooks?

1. *ePals* Partnership. The MLTI-sponsored association with ePals will allow teachers and students to: Search for classrooms in other countries, exchange secure email, set up projects that occur over distance, arrange for participation by other schools and students. (V1-4, G2) (Also see thinkquest.org)
2. *Common Sense Media* Partnership. The MLTI sponsored association with CSM provides: Curricula for teaching media literacy and digital citizenship to students, parents and teachers,* a web-based resource for evaluating media (V4, G3-5) [PPS is developing K-12 curriculum in this area.]
3. ON-line Classrooms. This new PPS system will allow teachers and students to: Set up courses, whole or in part, in an online environment, participate in discussions, shared projects, collaborations, and a variety of learning tasks both in and out of class, with record-keeping, data retrieval, statistics, activity tracking, etc. (V1-4, G2, 5)
4. OER [Open Educational Resources](#). The Maine DOE has established a new program to organize these resources (freely available on the Internet) and reference them to the Maine Learning Results.
5. FlexBooks. [Customizable textbooks online](#) have the capacity to replace certain school texts (especially those which must remain current.)

Can you summarize the new skills and knowledge you are trying to provide? The following is from an [article](#) on the “[21st century Literacies](#)” by Donald Leu, and members of the [New Literacies Research Lab](#): at the University of Connecticut:

“Many groups from the private sector and national content organizations have tried to identify 21st Century skills. Some commonalities emerge when you view the following reports: [Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework \(2007\)](#); ... [ISTE NET-S Standards \(2007\)](#); [AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner \(2007\)](#); the NCTE policy statement [Towards a Definition of 21st Century Literacies \(2008\)](#); [Are They Really Ready to Work?](#) (Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006). We often refer to these as navigating the "C's of change." Across all the new standards and reports, students must now build their creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, self-control, and comprehension skills.”

What does the new instruction look like?

The research tells us not to teach the new skills and knowledge in isolation, but to embed them into regular teaching and learning. The term “integration” is most often used to describe this. For instance, instead of teaching “how to collaborate in an on-line forum,” we use the online forum to discuss Macbeth, while introducing and reinforcing the new skills throughout the class. This is a qualitative change that applies across the curriculum. Specific new skills are needed and occasionally taught directly, but the technology is not emphasized over required learning in the content areas. It is simply necessary to teach today’s students for today’s world in those content areas.

What specific actions will you take in the schools to implement these changes?

CTS and district administration will create and conduct learning opportunities for teachers. Building administration will practice supervision, mentorship, coordination (for instance, organizing teachers into learning communities, organizing student volunteers, etc.) Teachers will attend training both in person and online, and will use their improvement process to try new integration strategies with students. Students will use their equipment to practice research, collaboration, communication, content creation, etc. CTS technical staff will provide software and network support, to help make sure everything works. Building ed. techs. will operate the daily program, assisting teachers and students with hardware and software issues, repairs, replacements, etc. All of these activities are driven by the learning process, which is evaluated as it is now, in the content areas, reduced absenteeism, course and school completion, etc.

(New content will be formally taught and assessed in some areas. Internet safety, digital citizenship, and media literacy curricula are being developed (K-12) in committee this year. These are required in new legislation, and would be necessary with or without a one-one program.)