

Northwest Academy Educational Technology Plan

Northwest Academy
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Char-Em Intermediate School District

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Northwest Academy's Mission

Meeting and surpassing the state's rigorous requirements by providing individualized education in all subjects to all students.

Introduction

Northwest Academy is a Public School Academy that opened in fall of 1996 for students in grades 9-12. Since that time, NWA has grown to become a K-12 school with 75 students in the building, and 75 more high school students participating in our Seat-Time Waiver program. Northwest Academy is currently housed in two buildings, Kindergarten Montessori Children's House, and 1st through 12th grades at our main campus. There are twelve teachers, eleven at the main campus and one Kindergarten teacher at the Kindergarten Montessori Children's House. Northwest Academy has a Targeted Title I program, with approximately 31% of students qualifying for services based on academic need and socioeconomic status.

Northwest Academy was one of the first schools in the state to embrace the seat time waiver program. We began with 25 students during the first year, 50 students the second year, and have reached 75 students in our third year of operation.

Our computer lab features 20 Intel Microsoft computers and five Mac G-5s. Every core content classroom has a SmartBoard and projector, and one additional mobile SmartBoard unit. NWA also has 15 notebook computers, with 3 wireless access points available throughout the building. Additionally, four laptops have Windows 7 operating systems, allowing students the opportunity to experience Windows 7, Windows XP Pro, and Mac OS. Six video cameras are also available for student use.

Technology Vision

Learning with and about technology prepares learners to live in today's technologically driven information society. Technology as a tool is an essential ingredient in a complete education program. Students must understand and experience all forms of technology throughout the academic experience. At Northwest Academy, we envision that all students can learn, and that the use of technology will enhance the learning experiences of each child. Technology must play an important role in all areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Integrated into the educational process, technology is an empowering teaching/learning tool. Within an effective educational setting, technology can enable students to become:

- capable information technology users
- information seekers, analyzers, and evaluators
- problem solvers and decision makers
- creative and effective users of productivity tools
- Communicators, collaborators, publishers, and producers.

District Technology Beliefs

All students will:

- develop technology skills that are vitally important in lifelong learning
- apply ethical and legal standards in planning, using, and evaluating technology.
- Use technologies to input, retrieve, organize, manipulate, evaluate, and communicate information.
- Apply appropriate technologies to critical thinking, creative expression, and decision making skills.
- Transfer technological knowledge and skills to other learning situations.
- Evaluate the societal and environmental impacts of technology and forecast alternative uses and possible consequences.

All staff will:

- Utilize technology to enhance the instructional delivery process and assist in the implementation of the various Federal, State, District, and School level improvement plans.
- Use technology resources effectively to help students achieve high academic standards.
- Seek opportunities to continually develop their technology knowledge and skills.
- Integrate technology into all areas of curriculum, instruction and assessment.
- Model appropriate uses of technological tools.
- Provide equity in student access to technology.

Northwest Academy Technology Goals

Goal 1: Northwest Academy will offer Technology Electives for middle and high school students including Introduction to Applied Technology, Video Production, Studio Recording.

Strategy 1: Hire highly qualified technology teacher for grades 7-12

Rationale: The technology equipment at Northwest Academy supports courses in Video production, studio recording, and any type of applied use of technology. To integrate the use of this technology into student's daily experience and use for all classes, Technology electives will provide students an opportunity to learn how all of the resources available to them can be used in real-world applications as well as for academic use.

Strategy 2: Create course curriculum on It's Learning, to be offered both in the building and for seat time waiver students.

Rationale: Prior to offering these courses, clear, measurable objectives must be established to ensure student mastery of material. The creation of course curriculum and lesson planning through It's Learning will establish uniformity in course content among on-site students and seat time waiver students. This course curriculum will direct all teaching and learning within these elective courses, providing students with a comprehensive understanding of each course objective.

Activities:

- Employ a highly qualified 7-12 grade Technology teacher to work in collaboration with the Curriculum Director in developing Elective course curriculum.
- Create the course on It's Learning, providing learning activities to support the stated curricular objectives for each elective course.

Goal 2: Northwest Academy will provide curriculum that is integrated and uniform for on-site and seat time waiver students. All core content classes will be offered simultaneously on site and through It's Learning courseware.

Strategy 1: Provide Professional Development for all 7-12 grade core content teachers in the Creation of Online Courses.

Rationale: All teachers creating courses on It's Learning will need opportunities to learn how to teach Online students and the best practices of Online course creation.

Activities:

- Plan cohesive, systematic professional development days that focus on online teaching for 7-12 grade teachers.
- Provide supplemental teacher planning time for the creation of courses on It's Learning.

- Research and employ Professional Development providers for online learning and course creation.

Strategy 2: Create Online Courses for all Core Content Areas in grades 7-12, to be accessible by both Seat Time Waiver students and On-Site students.

Rationale: To ensure the cohesiveness of all Northwest Academy curriculum and its alignment to Michigan's Content Expectations, all Northwest Academy courses must provide learning activities that promote student learning of the stated objectives.

Activities:

- Provide Professional Development days for teachers to create online courses.
- Provide specific Professional Development in the use of It's Learning Courseware
- Review and align online course environment with Northwest Academy curriculum in the core content areas.

Goal 3: Regularly review and maintain student access to state of the art technology.

Rationale: Technology hardware and software is constantly upgraded and new opportunities become available. To ensure Northwest Academy students continue to have access to the most recent software and hardware, a system must be in place to research and acquire new technology equipment.

Strategy 1: Provide every Northwest Academy student in grades 7-12 with an Electronic Reader that contains all textbooks that student will use for learning.

Activities:

- Research available E-Readers for the use
- Research and purchase Electronic Textbooks

Strategy 2: Pursue the acquisition of updated computer software bi-annually.

Activities:

- Annually review current technology software
- Maintain a list of “wish list” software with the IT department.
- Bi-annually review the “wish list” and pursue acquisition of new software in accordance with the technology budget.

Strategy 3: Pursue the acquisition of updated computer hardware bi-annually

Activities:

- Annually review current technology hardware and its state of repair.
- Maintain a list of available resources with the IT department.
- Bi-annually review the needs and ability of current hardware to accommodate software needs.

Goal Alignment

Goal 1: Northwest Academy will offer Technology Electives for middle and high school students including Introduction to Applied Technology, Video Production, Studio Recording.

Goal 2: Integration of Seat Time Waiver Program and On-Site Courses

Goal 3: Regularly review and maintain student access to state of the art technology.

Alignment to Northwest Academy's Technology Vision

Technology electives will prepare learners to live in today's society that is driven by technology. Students will become adept at the use of technology tools through their experiences in elective courses, the use of technology in daily classroom experiences, whether through the use of online courseware, E-Readers, or the use of the computer lab and facilities. In order to continue to provide this ability, Northwest Academy will systematically review current technology tools and acquire new tools as necessary to support our vision to remain a statewide leader in Online learning and technology.

Alignment to the School Improvement Plan

Since our technology goals address all content areas and incorporate technology into every aspect of learning, School Improvement goals will be met through the use of technology. For our Writing goal, students use notebooks, laptops, and the computer lab in frequent writing projects. The reading comprehension goal will be supported as students are explicitly taught how to read online texts and Electronic textbooks.

Timeline

2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<p>Professional Development opportunities will be provided for teachers in how to develop effective online courses</p> <p>Teachers will begin creating online courses, with a goal of 2 courses available per content area</p> <p>A highly qualified technology teacher will work part-time creating course curriculum for Applied Technology, Video Production, and Studio Recording.</p> <p>Research will be conducted in the purchase of E-Readers and grants pursued to fund the purchase of E-Readers</p>	<p>Teachers will continue to create online courses, with a goal of 3 courses available per content area.</p> <p>Applied Technology will be offered as an elective.</p> <p>E-Reader textbooks will be researched, and possibly used for 1-2 courses.</p>	<p>All core content area courses will be available on It's Learning and On-Site.</p> <p>Applied Technology, Video Production, and Studio Recording will be offered as elective courses.</p> <p>E-Reader textbooks will continue to be researched and purchased as current textbooks become outdated.</p>

Distance Learning

Northwest Academy's Seat Time Waiver program is in its third year of operation. Through this program, high school students are able to access 100% of high school content and learning activities through “distance learning” using online courses. Currently, seat time waiver students who don't already have access to NWA online classes are provided with computers for this purpose.

It's Learning is a Course Management software that is accessible for students online. As part of our Technology goals, NWA is working to offer all core content classes simultaneously through the online environment as well as on-site.

Parent Communication and Community Relations

Northwest Academy is becoming a trend setter in the Charlevoix county area in the use of technology in education. To promote this aspect of Northwest Academy, it is necessary to effectively communicate this Technology Plan to parents and community members. Copies of this Technology Plan will be distributed to school officials and available in hard copy at our Main Office. Additionally, the Technology plan can be accessed on the district website: nwa.edu.

Northwest Academy currently sends a weekly newsletter home that is also available on our website at nwa.edu. Technology is also used for communication via a Facebook organization. An e-mail list with all parent and student e-mail addresses is also used for necessary reminders and

information dissemination.

Parents were involved in the creation of this plan by participating in our Parent Survey. Parents will continue to be involved in the implementation and assessment of the NWA Technology Plan through the Technology Committee, comprised of the IT Specialist, Administrator, one staff member, and two parent volunteers. This committee will meet semi-annually to review the Technology Plan and our progress toward the stated goals.

Collaboration

Northwest Academy offers technology courses to Adult Education and the community via Community Education programs. All of the technology resources of the district are available to these programs as they serve the adult populations of our community. Community Education offers direct coursework in computer applications at our school lab such as computer applications for senior citizens, and classes on Microsoft Windows and Microsoft Office Suite.

Professional Development

All teachers will attend three professional development days before the start of the school year, focusing on how to effectively teach online courses. Throughout the school year, two professional development days will focus on creation of online course content through It's Learning courseware. This work will involve all content areas and thoroughly embed the use of technology with content learning.

2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<p>August: 3 PD Days: How to teach online courses</p> <p>October: PD Day for It's Learning Course Creation: How to Teach Online Learners</p> <p>November: PD Day for It's Learning Course Creation</p>	<p>October: PD Day for It's Learning Course Creation: Specific Needs of Online Learners</p> <p>November: PD Day for It's Learning Course Creation: Effective Online Teaching Strategies</p> <p>January: PD Day for SmartBoard Use</p>	<p>October: PD Day for It's Learning Course Creation</p> <p>November: PD Day for It's Learning Course Creation: Effective collaborative tools for use with Online Learners.</p> <p>January: PD Day for Integration of Technology in the Classroom.</p>

The ITSE standards for teachers that will be addressed through our It's Learning Course Creation Professional Development include (but are not limited to):

- model collaborative knowledge construction by engaging in learning with students, colleagues, and others in face-to-face and virtual environments.

- design or adapt relevant learning experiences that incorporate digital tools and resources to promote student learning and creativity.
- develop technology-enriched learning environments that enable all students to pursue their individual curiosities and become active participants in setting their own educational goals, managing their own learning, and assessing their own progress.
- exhibit leadership by demonstrating a vision of technology infusion, participating in shared decision making and community building, and developing the leadership and technology skills of others.

The ITSE standards that will be addressed both in regular staff meetings and the remainder of our Professional Development include (but are not limited to):

- participate in local and global learning communities to explore creative applications of technology to improve student learning.
- evaluate and reflect on current research and professional practice on a regular basis to make effective use of existing and emerging digital tools and resources in support of student learning.
- address the diverse needs of all learners by using learner-centered strategies providing equitable access to appropriate digital tools and resources.

Infrastructure, Hardware, Technical Support and Software

Hardware

- SMARTBoards in all classrooms
- 15 notebooks for student use
- 10 TI83 Math Calculators
- 4 Digital Video Cameras
- 20 Intel Microsoft Computers
- 5 Mac G-5 Computers
- 2 Digital Cameras
- 4 Flip Digital Video Cameras

- 30 Boogie Boards

Software

- Faronics/DeepFreeze
- SmartMusic
- PowerSchool Student Data Systematic
- Microsoft XP Pro
- Windows 7
- Mac OS
- It's Learning Courseware

Infrastructure

- 3 Wireless Access Points
- Cable Internet
- Northwest Academy Local Area Network (LAN)
- Networked printers/copier
- Multi-Line Networked Phone System

Technical Support

- Information Technology Department includes an IT Specialist responsible for monitoring all technology systems and performing upgrades and maintenance as necessary.

Technical Support: Students

- Computer and internet access provided for seat time waiver students in need of them.
- Access to IT Specialist

Status/Description of Current Technology Inventory

Northwest Academy's technology resources have been recently acquired. SmartBoards, student laptops, Computer Lab computers, Digital Video Cameras, and Math Calculators were all

purchased within the last 2 years. Software is the most current available and meets our needs for the foreseeable future. Northwest Academy also has recently acquired the LAN network with three wireless hook-ups, which is capable of serving our current and future student population.

Supporting Resources

Northwest Academy has many additional and external resources available to support the technology programs:

- REMC Materials via Char-Em
- Subscription to Discovery Learning
- Online subscription to Scholastic.com
- Lending via WebMax through ISD services

Technology Budget

Long Range Technology Budget

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Internet ISP Fees	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
IT Staff	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Professional Development	\$3000.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Consumables	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Acquisition of new technology tools	\$4000.00	\$4000.00	\$4000.00	\$4000.00	\$4000.00

Coordination of Resources

Northwest Academy uses many and varied resources to assist in the implementation of the District Technology Plan

- REMC Statewide Cooperative Acquisitions Project
- Other grants as awarded via the State of Michigan, Char-Em ISD, Federal Programs, Charlevoix Community Foundations

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Information Technology Specialist will annually review all components of the Technology Plan to determine its effectiveness and relevance. He will then meet with a committee including the CAO, Curriculum Director, and one interested parent to report the progress made toward stated goals. Additionally, the review of hardware and software, as well as necessary acquisitions will be reported at this time.
- Progress on It's Learning course creation will be monitored by the CAO ~ ensuring the complete NWA curriculum is available online by June, 2014.
- CAO will supervise creation and implementation of Electives courses by Tech Teacher and Curriculum Coordinator
- Measures of Success:
 - Goal 1: Northwest Academy will offer Technology Electives for middle and high school students including Introduction to Applied Technology, Video Production, Studio Recording.
 - By the year 2012-13, NWA will offer Introduction to Applied Technology to middle and high school students.
 - By 2013-2014, NWA will offer Introduction to Applied Technology, Video Production, Studio Recording to middle and high school students.
 - Goal 2: Northwest Academy will provide curriculum that is integrated and uniform for on-site and seat time waiver students. All core content classes will be offered simultaneously on site and through It's Learning courseware.
 - By the 2011-2012 school year, 9th grade English and Algebra will be available through It's Learning and on-site.
 - By the 2012-2013 school year, all core content classes will be available both through It's Learning and on-site.
 - By the 2013-2014 school year, all on-site courses will also be available through It's Learning.
 - Goal 3: Regularly review and maintain student access to state of the art technology.
 - By the 2012-2013 school year, all students will use an Electronic Reader for their textbooks.
 - Annually, computer software and hardware will be reviewed and any resultant recommendations will be given to the School Leader.

Unmet goals will be reviewed by CAO and IT Specialist to determine appropriateness and to modify goals or strategies.

Acceptable Use Policy

- I. The Board supports the use of computers and related technology to enhance classroom instruction. The use of computers and related technology should significantly increase the opportunity for the expansion of student reasoning and thinking ability. It should also improve the management and delivery of instruction to all students, and other uses in support of the

Board approved curriculum.

II. Each student and his/her parent/guardian must sign the Rules for Appropriate Use, and the student must abide by them.

1. Rules for Appropriate Use

1. Do not use a computer to harm other people or their work.
2. Do not damage the computer or the network in any way.
3. Do not interfere with the operation of the network by installing illegal software, shareware, or freeware.
4. Do not violate copyright laws.
5. Do not view, send, or display offensive messages or pictures.
6. Do not share your password with another person.
7. Do not trespass in another's folders, work, or files.
8. Notify an adult immediately, if by accident you encounter materials which violate appropriate use.
9. Be prepared to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privileges if the Rules of Appropriate Use are violated.

2. Internet Safety

1. **General Warning; Individual Responsibility of Parents and Users.** All users and their parents/guardians are advised that access to the electronic network may include the potential for access to materials inappropriate for school-aged pupils. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the computer network and Internet and stay away from these sites. Parents of minors are the best guide to materials to shun. If a student finds that other users are visiting offensive or harmful sites, he or she should report such use to his/her supervising teacher.
2. **Personal Safety.** Be safe. In using the computer network and Internet, do not reveal personal information such as your home address or telephone number. Do not use your real last name or any other information which might allow a person to locate you without first obtaining the permission of a supervising teacher. Do not arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you "meet" on the computer network or Internet without your parent's permission. If someone attempts to arrange a meeting with you as a result of an internet contact you must report the communication, immediately, to your supervising teacher.
3. **"Hacking" and Other Illegal Activities.** It is a violation of this Policy to use the School's computer network or the Internet to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or to attempt to gain such unauthorized access. Any use which violates state or federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, the distribution of obscene or pornographic materials, or which violates any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited
4. **Confidentiality of Student Information.** Personally identifiable information concerning students may not be disclosed or used in any way on the Internet without the permission of a parent or guardian or, if the student is 18 or over, the permission of the student himself/herself. Users should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the Internet, particularly credit card numbers and Social Security numbers. Only a member of the school administration may authorize the release of student information, as defined by Georgia law, for internal administrative purposes or approved educational projects and activities.
5. **Active Restriction Measures.** The School, either by itself or in combination with the

Data Acquisition Site providing Internet access, will utilize filtering software or other technologies to prevent students from accessing visual depictions that are (1) obscene, (2) child pornography, or (3) harmful to minors. The School will also monitor the online activities of students, through direct observation and/or technological means, to ensure that students are not accessing such depictions or any other material that is inappropriate for minors.

6. Internet filtering software or other technology-based protection systems may be disabled by a supervising teacher or school administrator, as necessary, for purposes of research or other educational projects being conducted by students age 17 or older.

3. PRIVACY

1. Network and Internet access is provided as a tool for your education. The School District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the School District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.