

**Technology Standards for School Administrators  
TSSA Draft Introduction (v2.1)  
for National Review and Feedback**

The Collaborative for Technology Standards for School Administrators (TSSA Collaborative) is leading an initiative to develop and document a national consensus on what PK-12 administrators should know about and be able to do to optimize benefits of technology use in schools. This consensus will be published by the Collaborative in October 2001 as *Technology Standards for School Administrators* (TSSA).

The effort is grounded in the belief that effective implementation of technology in all facets of an educational system is, in itself, large-scale systemic reform. There is clear and critical evidence of the key role leadership plays in successful school reform. Therefore, the Collaborative's standards will identify a common focus for the role of leadership in enhancing learning and school operations through the use of technology. More fundamentally, the Collaborative addresses leadership for technology with the ultimate purpose of preparing students for their futures.

These standards present targets for school administrators. They are indicators of effective leadership for technology in schools. They define neither the minimum nor maximum level of knowledge and skills required of a leader, and are neither a comprehensive laundry list nor a guaranteed recipe for effective technology leadership. Rather, these standards represent a national consensus among educational stakeholders of what best indicates effective school leadership for comprehensive and effective use of technology in schools. The standards should stretch almost every school administrator in some areas, yet each individual standard is attainable by the accomplished educational leader. Although a national consensus, in no way are these meant to inhibit new development, innovation, or progress for schools or for school leadership.

The TSSA Collaborative and the myriad of professionals who have contributed to this effort to date openly acknowledge the wide range of roles administrators play in schools, even when titles are similar. School and system size, degree of site-based governance, community characteristics, and strengths of individual administrators are but a few of the parameters that may cause variations in actual job roles. For this reason, these standards must be used in a way that acknowledges the local context of school leadership. Wise consumers of these standards and indicators must acknowledge a responsibility to apply this national resource appropriately within the local context.

A rich array of expectations exists for use of these standards. Drawing from individuals, institutions, firms, and other organizations that have expressed keen interest in the TSSA Standards, these standards will find application in:

- pre-service and inservice program design
- assessment and evaluation
- role definition and job descriptions
- individual and system accountability
- accreditation of schools and of administrator preparation programs
- certification (credentialing) of administrators
- self-assessment and goal setting
- design of technology tools for school administrators

The audiences to which these standards must communicate are equally varied. Obviously, school boards, administrators, human resources staff, staff developers, higher education faculty, and state department educators will make use of this resource. Some audiences that may not be so obvious, however, include state and federal policy-makers, industry representatives and service providers, professional organizations, parents, taxpayers, and other community constituents. This places priority, then, on clarity and simplicity of language, free from specific education jargon. For example, the performance indicator, "allocate financial and human resources to ensure full implementation of the technology plan" encourages leadership to understand concepts such as total cost of ownership and total cost of management if those are the current sets of principles that are receiving emphasis. The wording choice communicates to a variety of audiences, and it also encourages accomplished leaders to stay current as strategies and accepted principles evolve.

There is consensus as well among those participating in the early stages of TSSA development that an underlying assumption to these standards should be explicitly stated. Administrators should be competent users of information and technology tools that are common to information-age professionals. That is, they must be 'doers' with technology. It is not 'okay' or 'understandable' for school administrators to have a support person 'do' the e-mail for them or 'manipulate' the assessment data and 'bring' them the summary. Certainly, technology empowers administrators by the information it can practically produce and communicate, but it empowers the administrator many-fold who masters the tools and processes that allow him/her to be creative with its use firsthand and to work with information dynamically.

The vision of the TSSA Collaborative is that the Technology Standards for School Administrators will identify knowledge and skills that constitute the 'core' -- what *every* PK-12 administrator needs regardless of specific job role -- and, then extend that core to the specific needs of administrators in each of three job roles: (1) superintendent and cabinet-level leaders, (2) district-level leaders for content-specific or other district programs, and (3) campus-level leaders including principals and assistant principals. This phase of the effort does not address role-specific standards for business officers or technology directors.

The TSSA Collaborative recommends the standards be communicated as six **standards statements** along with corresponding **performance indicators** for each. In addition, there are three profiles of **performance tasks** (under construction) describing different expectations at the three administrative levels. For clarity and brevity, performance indicators that are supportive of more than one standard statement are listed only with the standard statement most closely aligned.

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## ABOUT THE TSSA COLLABORATIVE

The Technology Standards for School Administrators (TSSA) Collaborative represents significant project stakeholders who are committed to producing a set of standards necessary for school administrators to ensure effective use of technology in schools. Collaborative members include the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the National School Boards Association (NSBA), the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), the Association of Education Service Agencies (AESAs), the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN), the North Central Regional Technology Consortium/North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the Kentucky Department of Education, the Mississippi Department of Education, the Principals' Executive Program - University of North Carolina, and the College of Education - Western Michigan University.

## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS IN THE TSSA STANDARDS INITIATIVE

Not-for-profit organizations that have applied and been approved by the TSSA Collaborative as Participating Organizations in the TSSA Standards Initiative are committed to supporting the standards by providing expertise in the development and refinement of the standards, assistance in disseminating the standards, and support in implementing the TSSA Standards. This group is growing weekly, and current members are: American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), California Computer Using Educators (CUE), Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Louisiana State Department of Education, MASS Networks Educational Partnership (MNEP), Massachusetts Elementary Principals Association (MESPA), National Educational Computing Association (NECA), Nebraska State Department of Education, Oklahoma Technology Administrators (OTA), Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS), Virginia Educational Technology Alliance (VETA), Virginia State Department of Education, WestED RTEC.

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Project management is provided by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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**Technology Standards for School Administrators**  
**TSSA Draft Framework, Standards, and Performance Indicators (v2.1)**  
**for National Review and Feedback**

- I. **Leadership and Vision** – Educational leaders inspire the development of a shared vision for comprehensive integration of technology and foster an environment and culture conducive to the realization of that vision.

Educational leaders:

- A. facilitate the development of the vision for technology shared by all stakeholders and communicate it widely.
- B. develop, implement, and monitor a dynamic, long-range, and systemic technology plan that supports the vision.
- C. maintain cohesion and momentum within the school community to reach the shared vision.
- D. foster and nurture a culture of responsible risk-taking that promotes continuous innovation in technology.
- E. use data to drive leadership decisions.
- F. advocate for research-based best practices in all uses of technology.

- II. **Learning and Teaching** – Educational leaders ensure that curricular design, instructional strategies, and learning environments integrate appropriate technologies to maximize learning and teaching.

Educational leaders:

- A. identify, use, and evaluate appropriate technologies to enhance and support curriculum and instruction that lead to high levels of student achievement.
- B. facilitate and support collaborative technology-enriched learning environments that are conducive to innovation.
- C. provide for the use of technology to meet the individual needs of learners in a student-centered learning environment.
- D. facilitate the use of technologies to guide and support instructional methods that promote higher-level thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills.
- E. assure that quality professional development opportunities exist for learning and teaching with technology.

- III. **Productivity and Professional Practice** – Educational leaders apply technology to enhance their professional practice and to increase their own productivity and that of others.

Educational leaders:

- A. use technology to facilitate change for organizational improvement.
- B. model the routine, intentional, and effective use of technology.
- C. use technology resources to engage in sustained, job-related professional development.
- D. employ technology for communication and collaboration among peers, staff, parents, and the larger community.

**IV. Support, Management, and Operations** – Educational leaders provide direction to integrate technology tools into productive learning and administrative systems.

Educational leaders:

- A. develop, implement, and monitor policies and guidelines to ensure compatibility of technologies.
- B. allocate financial and human resources to ensure full implementation of the technology plan.
- C. integrate strategic plans, technology plans, other improvement plans, and policies to align efforts and leverage resources.
- D. design policies and procedures to drive continuous system improvements and to support technology replacement cycles.

**V. Assessment and Evaluation** – Educational leaders use technology to facilitate a comprehensive system of effective assessment and evaluation.

Educational leaders:

- A. use technology to collect and analyze data, interpret results, and communicate findings to improve instructional practice and student learning.
- B. assess staff knowledge, skills, and performance in using technology and use results to facilitate quality professional development and inform personnel decisions.
- C. use technology to assess and evaluate managerial and operational systems.
- D. assess and evaluate, using multiple methods, appropriate uses of technology resources for learning, communication, and productivity.

**VI. Social, Legal, and Ethical Issues** – Educational leaders understand the social, legal, and ethical issues related to technology and apply that understanding in practice.

Educational leaders:

- A. ensure equity of access to technology resources that enable and empower all learners.
- B. identify, communicate, model, and enforce social, legal, and ethical practices related to technology use.
- C. promote and enforce security and online safety related to the use of technology.
- D. promote and enforce environmentally safe and healthy practices in the use of technology.

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