

**DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**  
**Wilmette Public Schools**

---

**INFORMATION ITEM**

**Date:** March 16, 2020

**To:** Members, Board of Education

**From:** Building Principals  
Grade Level Administrators  
Assistant Principals

Ellen Crispino  
Business Manager/CSBO

Kristin Swanson, Ph.D.  
Administrator for Student Services

Angela DeMay  
Assistant Director of Special Services

Tony DeMonte  
Administrator for Technology, Information, and Safety

Heather Glowacki, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent and Administrator for Human Resources

Katie S. Lee  
Administrator for Curriculum & Instruction

**Subject: 2019-2020 Strategic Plan Updates: New Initiatives**

**BACKGROUND**

On September 23, 2019, the Board of Education approved the implementation of the 2019-2020 District 39 Strategic Plan. The yearly planning cycle includes Strategic Plan updates. This executive summary report will focus on mid-year updates of the action steps identified under New Strategic Initiatives.

**Philosophy of Technology**

District 39 revisited and reviewed the technology philosophy/position statement to ensure it was relevant for all grade levels. It was determined that it continues to be appropriate to guide the work as the district moves forward in technology-enhanced learning.

*District 39 believes in equitable access to information and information technology to learn effectively and live productively in an increasingly global and digital society. We strive to empower students and teachers to become critical consumers and creative producers of information in our global society. We teach our students to become enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users of information by incorporating innovative technologies that promote learning through collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking.*

### **Equitable Access to Technology**

District 39 has increased access to technology so that every student has access to one device to be used as a tool for learning. Prior to this year, mobile learning was fully implemented at Highcrest Middle School and Wilmette Junior High School. To effectively integrate technology, adequate access to technology in District 39's elementary schools has been provided in the following ways:

- First grade classrooms have been provided iPads with standard cases.
- Second and third grade classrooms were provided iPads with keyboard cases.
- Fourth grade classrooms have been provided with a cart of iPads to be shared which supplements the already provided Chromebooks from a previous deployment.
- Kindergarten classrooms have access to a shared cart of devices for use when teacher lesson plans are designed with technology enhances instruction and/or learning cycle. This decision aligns with the district's belief in developmental appropriateness for the age group.
- A replacement cycle has been established where one grade level's devices will be replaced per year similar to the grades 5-8 replacement plan.

### **Using a Balanced Approach and Communication**

District 39 advocates for a balanced approach to technology use in the classroom by supporting a blend of traditional and innovative modes of teaching. Teachers are encouraged to use the iPads and the creativity and creation applications as a learning tool for the purpose of supporting and/or enhancing the curriculum when appropriate. For example, an online portfolio and communication tool called SeeSaw for Schools has been provide for all elementary schools. Through this tool, students can showcase their learning by taking a picture of a tangible product to share with families, reflect on their work and the process of learning using video/audio, or create it directly on the application.

### **Professional Development**

A variety of professional development opportunities has been offered to teachers over the course of the school year. One successful and creative approach implemented was the #d39online Challenge. In order to meet the various staff needs and readiness levels, a team of teachers in the Department of Technology and Media designed an optional offering where diverse teams of teachers worked together to accomplish monthly challenges. The activities provided on the challenge boards were created to increase staff capacity in the use of the learning tools. As the teams completed the activities, the members earned points which were totaled and prizes were awarded. This creative, gamified approach to professional development appealed to about half of the district staff.

In addition to the challenge, Apple trainers called Creatives came onsite during an Institute Day to provide a variety of workshops. The teachers chose one of the following workshops based on their topic preference:

- Reaching All Learners
- Digital Workflow in the Classroom
- Video Lab for Teachers: Class Projects with Clips
- Keynote Projects for Every Student

There was also an off-site opportunity for a group of teachers to attend. IDEAcon is a teaching and learning conference designed for all educators including technology specialists, librarians, and classroom teachers. The conference breakout sessions engaged participants on the different ways to effectively integrate technology and explore pedagogical strategies and resources connected to instructional technology.

### **Digital Citizenship, Health and Wellness**

All staff including librarians and technology teachers reinforced District 39's commitment to teaching digital citizenship with students. Books focused on being good digital citizens were highlighted in the school library collections and promoted in activities, displays, and book talks. Library and technology classes placed an additional emphasis on being a responsible digital citizens during technology-based lessons. Also, classroom teachers incorporated appropriate online behavior and responsible use as part of their classroom culture, community, and behavior expectations.

District 39 offered and hosted family and community engagement events that focused on health and wellness by using a balanced technology approach.

- Technology Use and Physical Health
  - On December 4, 2020, District 39 hosted an event that focused solely on physical healthy while using technology. The broad topics addressed were sight, hearing, weight, posture, and electromagnetic field (EMF). The invited panelists included an eye doctor, pediatrician, chiropractor, occupational therapist and EMF expert. Guidance was given and attendees had ample opportunity to get their questions answered.
- LIKE Event and Discussion
  - On January 29, 2020, the attendees viewed the *LIKE* movie from IndiFlix. The movie focused on the impact of social media on people's lives and effects of technology on the brain. After the movie, attendees were engaged in a moderated conversation with multiple mental health experts from New Trier township social service agencies.
- Parenting in the Digital Age
  - On March 11, 2020, District 39 presented on how to support parents in a time where technology is at their child's fingertips. Topics included creating boundaries with mobile devices, monitoring for potentially dangerous applications (Apps), sharing privacy expectations that all children should have, dealing with inappropriate content, and issues around online social conflict.

## **CONCLUSION**

District 39 administrators and staff have worked diligently toward achieving the goals and/or outcomes of the 2019-2020 Strategic Plan. The Board will be presented a full Strategic Plan review in June.

**Recommended for presentation to the Board of Education,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kari Cremascoli", written over a horizontal line.

**Kari Cremascoli, Ph.D., Superintendent**