The leadership of today’s schools supports both students’ academic success and their preparation for employment in a global work environment. As stimulus funds become available to U.S. school districts, it remains critical that we align technology acquired with those funds with system-, school-, and classroom-identified student academic outcomes.

In support of embedding technology solutions within the continuous improvement planning process, ed tech leaders acknowledge the need to become actively engaged in the dialogue about research-based strategies supporting student success. Those strategies, valued by school leaders across the United States, include:

• Balanced assessments for learning with an emphasis on frequent formative assessments
• The development of professional learning communities that foster teachers’ ability to regularly collaborate together
• Personalization of learning
• Standards-based classrooms
• The effective use of data analysis to inform teaching and learning

These strategies resonate with educational leadership organizations such as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), the National School Boards Association (NSBA), ISTE, and the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN).

To align appropriate technology solutions, it is increasingly important that technology leaders have a common language with which to communicate about the school improvement planning process and proven, research-based strategies. The research-based resources within the Georgia Department of Education’s (GaDOE) Keys to Quality: Unlocking Excellence through Georgia School Standards provide a platform upon which technology leaders can build such a common language.

The Keys to Quality describe what Georgia’s schools need to know and be able to do in the same way that Georgia Performance Standards describe what Georgia’s students need to know and be able to do. The Keys to Quality set of resources, which Georgia has provided to every school in the state, defines targets using rubrics and resources to assist educators with ways to “take their school improvement temperature” periodically to monitor the effectiveness of their school improvement plans.

In the same vein, the Keys to Quality provide technology leaders with a common language about research-based strategies that school leaders value in the pursuit of student and school success. The Keys to Quality rubrics define the optimum target as “fully operational.” The areas of instruction, assessment, curriculum, and professional learning serve as examples of where users can easily infuse and align appropriate technologies and 21st-century skills. The GaDOE plans to make ISTE’s NETS for students, teachers, and administrators available within the Keys to Quality resources during the 2009–10 school year.

Aligning appropriate technology tools and resources within the continuous improvement planning process positions technology leaders to engage in dialogue with system and school leaders who are working toward the common goal of student and school success. Technology leaders can improve the process by considering several of the following action steps:

• Become familiar with the goals and strategies in your schools’ improvement plan system
• Align and embed your technology plan within your school system’s continuous/strategic improvement plan
• Consider serving as an advocate for the development of technology-infused professional learning as part of the strategies that your schools have identified within their improvement plans
• Participate in conferences that foster research-based strategies, such as ASCD, NSBA, and NECC, and that provide opportunities to learn along with peers
• Read and share publications such as L&L and ASCD’s Educational Leadership
• Consider becoming an active participant in your state’s technology leadership organizations
• Consider mentoring or requesting mentorship from your state...
### Assessment Standard 2: A variety of effective and balanced assessment techniques is routinely and systematically implemented by all instructional personnel as part of a comprehensive school-based assessment and evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A 2.1 Diagnostic Assessment</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Addressed</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little if any evidence is present of diagnostic assessment.</td>
<td>Diagnostic assessment is administered sporadically in limited number of classrooms and subject areas with little evidence of teachers’ use of diagnostic data to design and adjust instruction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A 2.2 Formative Assessment</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Addressed</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little if any evidence is present of staff use of formative assessment from the beginning to end of instructional units.</td>
<td>Some evidence is present in a limited number of classrooms of teachers’ use of formative assessment to monitor student progress over the course of instructional units. Much more attention to this form of assessment is required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excerpt of a rubric from the GaDOE Keys to Quality website.

The Keys to Quality site hosts numerous helpful resources.

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**Technology leaders who understand the significance of aligning their work to the school improvement planning process**

Technology leaders are poised to become actively engaged with educational leaders’ ongoing commitment to student and school success. Take time from your busy days to meet with peers to share both proven practices and struggles in aligning your work with the school improvement planning process.

In the accountability oriented environment of education, the continued alignment of appropriate technologies within strategic improvement planning processes can provide results that support job-embedded professional learning, student academic success, and the development of 21st-century skills.

**Resources**

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development: www.ascd.org

Consortium for School Networking: www.cosn.org

Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE): www.gadoe.org


National Educational Technology Standards (NETS): www.iste.org/nets

National School Boards Association: www.nsba.org

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