

Chapter 30

Technology, E–Leadership and Educational Administration in Schools: Integrating Standards with Context and Guiding Questions

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents many of the issues surrounding the use of electronic (e) learning and information technology (IT) in the development of K-12 school administrators, curriculum supervisors, district-level leaders, and others as they prepare to become technology leaders in K-12 educational settings. Using the International Society of Technology in Education National Educational Technology Standards for Administrators (ISTE, NETS-A) as a guide, this chapter identifies a critical need for e-learning and information technology to be a part of the process for developing 21st century school leaders. The NETS-A are illuminated by elaborations and connections to issues in the field of education, contextualized activities, and guiding questions which add meaning and allow readers to consider each standard from the perspective of students (candidates) in a school administration preparation program. These contexts and questions are derived from the authors' thirty years of collective experiences in education, leadership, and technology.

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Because of the ambiguity of terms for school leaders from country to country (principal, head, administrator, etc.), for the purposes of this chapter, candidates studying to become K-12 school administrators are referred to as “future educational leaders,” while active or current K-12 school administrators are referred to as “educational leaders.” This information will be useful at both the school and district levels, further supporting the use of the term “educational leaders.”

INTRODUCTION

With the pending retirement of many current educational leaders who can be described as the “Baby-Boomer” generation, there is an increasing need for new public school leaders during the next decade. Future educational leaders will face many issues related to the use of information technology and e-learning in leading 21st century schools. Individuals in educational leadership positions will also need to have personal technology productivity skills and a working knowledge of information technology to make the best decisions for their schools. Technology-related functions, operations and processes in today’s schools include purchasing, personnel, communication, infrastructure, learning applications, and information management. Perhaps most importantly, educational leaders should also be technological role models for their students, faculty and staff. Future educational leaders can understand and define their roles as school technology leaders by analyzing relevant educational standards in context and by thinking through case study scenarios via guiding questions in their preparation programs. This will provide them with valuable knowledge and a mindset to identify problems and develop rational solutions during their preparation.

The International Society of Technology in Education National Educational Technology Standards for Administrators (ISTE NETS-A) are used as a guide for preparing school leaders to effectively use technology. Educational leaders face many challenges related to technology in today’s schools. These include:

1. Incorporating e-learning as a standard (not supplementary) part of instructional delivery
2. Teacher and curriculum supervision in e-learning environments
3. Management of school information technology infrastructure
4. Technology-related personnel management and decisions
5. Providing support for classroom technology integration in face-to-face instruction
6. Developing and maintaining a school or district’s web presence
7. Developing the personal technology productivity skills needed for today’s school teachers and school leaders
8. Policy formation and guidelines for information technology purchasing and personal/professional use
9. Technology systems for data management
10. Technology and social/legal/ethical issues associated with students and school personnel.

This chapter addresses these issues by presenting a brief review of related literature, an analysis and overview of ISTE NETS-A, and by providing contexts, activities and guiding questions for each standard. The ideal reader of this chapter is a person who is either preparing for or currently holds a school leadership position, as well as stakeholders in educational organizations.

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