The World at our Fingertips: A Vision for Technology in Schools

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 Jonathan Swift once stated that “Vision is the art of seeing what is [invisible](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/j/jonathansw122246.html) to others.” As a technology leader in education, this is the way I see the charge to integrate technology into schools and into the academic experiences of our students. Oftentimes for those who are not “technology-savvy,” the push to infuse technology into our daily classroom lesson plans feels threatening and even intimidating. Many would rather push their heads into the sand than learn new and innovative ways to deliver instruction. As a technology leader, my vision for technology use in P-12 schools is to involve all stakeholders in an ongoing endeavor to use technology to bring the world into our classrooms.

 Creighton (2003) posits that “our strategic plans (and vision) must be linked to teaching, student achievement, staff development, parent involvement, teacher workloads, and instructional delivery” in order to avoid failure (p.29). This is true and has been my experience over the past two years of working on my Masters in Instructional Technology. I have found that by involving everyone in the development of the school vision for technology, buy-in and implementation stand a far greater chance for success. It is necessary to open the minds of our teachers to share with them the many ways that technology can simplify their complex job responsibilities, while also making learning fun and engaging for students. Technology can also be utilized to facilitate collaboration between teachers as well as students to ensure communication and learning is constantly evolving. Students, already far more advanced than their teachers in technology, must be taught how to efficiently and effectively employ technology to facilitate desired outcomes in their personal and academic lives. Parents also need to stay abreast of the rapidity with which technology changes, so they can keep pace with their children and support them in their personal, academic, and social development. All these ideas must be nurtured and directed to ensure that a culture of technology can be woven into the fabric of the school’s vision and mission.

As Creighton shares, “technology by itself will not get us where we want to go. It must be driven by teachers and students using technology as a tool to perform at a higher level” (p. 102). This is indeed where we need to focus our efforts, by using technology to promote critical thinking. Gone are the days of simply using PowerPoint as a presentation tool for research. Our striving must be for the use of technology as an agent for change and as a way of promoting cultural and global awareness. With the tap of a finger, our students can interact with the whole world today. By delivering technology to our students in meaningful ways, by integrating technology with the goal of increasing critical thinking skills, by embracing technology in such a way as to engage learners of all ages, increased student achievement becomes a simple by-product of global thinking.

References

Creighton, T. (2003). *Principal as technology leader*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.