

Teachers Leap into Twenty-first Century Technologies  
in Killeen Independent School District

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Killeen I.S.D.'s current technology plan began as part of the district's strategic plan. The action team for Strategy Nine (technology) met with the goal "to develop and implement a complete application of current technology in the instructional and operational programs". In September 1991, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the plan.

COMPUTERS  
FOR TEACHERS  
PROGRAM

One major focus of the plan is the "Computers for Teachers" (CFT) training in which teachers are given the opportunity to participate in 45 hours of hands-on training after which they receive a computer to use in their classroom. Initially, training was offered to teachers who taught fifth and sixth grades and secondary math. Each successive year, the training was opened to additional grade levels and subjects. Participants must have taught in the K.I.S.D for one year, and no prior computer knowledge is required. Teachers are given their choice of training sessions: after school, on Saturdays, or weekdays during the summer. Nine training sessions of twenty-four teachers each are offered at three different times during the school year, and summer sessions are offered as the budget allows. The format of the training includes lecture and hands-on activities. The district's commitment to technology has enabled the establishment of a Macintosh computer lab which consists of 26 LC IIIs with ImageWriter II printers located at the district support center. LCD projection panels and Covid monitors are used both for lecture and demonstrations in the lab. K.I.S.D. expects an equally strong commitment from teachers who MUST complete the entire 45 hours of training in order to receive their computer. Make up sessions are available throughout the year.

The training consists of introducing the basics of Macintosh (four hours), use of a word processor (eight hours), spreadsheet (eight hours) and database (eight hours) in ClarisWorks 2.0, an introduction to HyperCard (eight hours), ABCD curriculum (two hours), a demonstration of Tenet (one hour), a discussion on ethics and copyright information (one hour), and a final projects lab (four hours). The training concludes with a multimedia presentation and a celebration where graduates are rewarded with a complete computer system.

Each unit of study starts with a two-hour lecture by Dr. James Maness, Director of Instructional Technology. A team of three campus technolo-

gists continue the lesson in the lab with two hours of guided practice using activities designed by the technology team. In the next four-hour block, teachers are given the opportunity to work on their own projects utilizing skills specific to that unit. During all sessions, a K.I.S.D. technology consultant is available to assist.

Our goal throughout CFT is to get the technology into the hands of the students via the teachers. In order to first help teachers feel comfortable with the computer, productivity projects such as grade books, classroom databases, merged progress reports, and a variety of word processing documents are created by the participants. When teachers are comfortable with these basic tools, they then will be empowered to generate ideas for successful student activities, such as the following:

- Word Processing: Progressive Stories - Each student takes a turn at the computer to continue a story.
- Student Reports:
  - Spreadsheet: Probability with M&Ms - Gather data about number and color. Miniature Golf - chart and compare predictions, find averages.
- Database: Dinosaurs - name characteristics to generate a database, sort.
  - Class Interest Inventory - Students build a database of “favorites” (i.e. color, food, book, music, etc.) after interviewing each other.
- Merging a Database into a Word Processing Document:
  - Research Reports, Student Interest Report.
- HyperCard:
  - Study Guide on Bones, Pictorial Class Interest Inventory, Student Generated Reports and Presentations.

Successful implementation of any kind of technology requires the availability of immediate support and assistance in resolving problems when they occur. To enhance the learning environment and encourage the integration of technology into the curriculum, teachers must be provided with constant support through training, maintenance and collegial networking. To insure the success of CFT, technologists were hired for each campus. The district drew both from industry (more technical experience), and from education (teaching experience). This combination allows the campus technologists (CTs) to draw on each others’ strengths. On campus, the CTs troubleshoot a variety of problems, assist teachers with

individual technology-based projects, continue in-depth training and training follow-up, provide demonstrations of effective use of technology in the classroom, assist in grant writing, participate in campus planning and evaluation, and keep faculty and staff current on innovations and curricular issues involving technology. As a group, the CTs meet on a regular basis for continued training to advance skill levels and to exchange ideas.

**DISTRICT-WIDE  
TECHNOLOGY  
GRANTS**

Another component of the district technology plan is the opportunity to participate in "Phase II" grants. Each year graduates of CFT are invited to write a proposal focused on the innovative application of technology in the classroom. This initiative provides an avenue for classroom teachers to improve student achievement with technology. This innovative opportunity empowers teachers to dream, while making the K.I.S.D. vision a reality. Grants may be submitted for amounts from \$2,000 to \$20,000.

Teachers' response to K.I.S.D.'s technology plan has been overwhelmingly positive. Two years after its implementation, 720 teachers will have completed CFT. Teachers eagerly await their opportunity to participate. In 1993, the first year of Phase II grants, 80 proposals were submitted and fourteen grants were awarded for a total of \$225,000. This year (1994), 52 proposals were submitted; awards will be announced in May.

Teachers and administrators agree that the technology plan would not be successful without the strong campus support system provided by the campus technologists and the Department of Instructional Technology. Making that leap into twenty-first century technologies is much easier when a network of support is in place. K.I.S.D. provides that for its teachers and students.

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