

*Abstract for Session:*

### **Assessment Strategies for Understanding the Value of Technology**

Presenters: Dr. Linda Hays and Dr. Shari Camhi

**Description:** There is heavy pressure on schools to explain how they infuse technology in the curriculum and instruction and to demonstrate how well they are doing it. A number of questions are being addressed - How has technology impacted the classroom? Are students learning more? Is there evidence of change for the better in student engagement and achievement? Is teaching more effective?

An assessment component geared toward measuring the impact of instituting innovative programs respond directly to concerns about better learning and more effective teaching. Through close observation of students in the process of learning, the collection of frequent feedback on students' learning, and the design of classroom experiments, classroom teachers can learn much about how students learn and respond to technology infused teaching approaches. Teachers can then use this information to refocus teaching and make learning more effective and efficient for students. This seminar will discuss the following:

- ◆ Methods of assessing students, teaching and learning, and the effectiveness of technology through authentic and scientific instruments will address the following questions.
- ◆ How has technology had an impact on the goals of the school/district?
- ◆ Has it had an impact on the classroom? The district? The school community?
- ◆ What kind of impact?
- ◆ Is there evidence of change in teaching and learning?
- ◆ Where is the evidence?

In this seminar, a plan will be developed to assess how your school, project, or classroom measures up to your intended goals in using technology as a teaching tool. Various data collection instruments will be discussed, from student observation checklists that can be used for feedback to students, to questionnaires and surveys internal and external to the project/class. The data gathered through these instruments could be used to support future planning and decision-making at various levels within the school/district.

School districts who participate will benefit from the discussion among colleagues, and the knowledge and experience of the presenters who will also provide on-site consultation. It is suggested that a district send a team of 2 people for training.

#### **Outline:**

##### 1. Defining the Purpose of Your Technology Program: What Do We Want to Assess?

Participants will develop a snapshot of what the program would look like if it were perfect, including what students, teachers and the school would look like. What is the picture we have in mind? What are our goals and expectations for the use of technology? Is our focus classroom or district wide use of technology? Are we trying to assess the effectiveness of your technology plan or its implementation?

Participants will determine what questions need to be answered to obtain a realistic snapshot. Participants will discuss assessment options. They will review the pros and cons of methods such as surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, interviews and checklists for collecting information.

Participants will examine who needs to have input into the assessment process. From the district and school levels, what needs to be done to properly assess the use of technology? Will the

technology committee be involved? How will the administration participate? Who needs to sign off on the proposed plan for assessment? What resources are available in district to help develop, analyze and communicate the results of this assessment?

## 2. Developing a Data Collection Instrument That Is Cost Effective to Use And Analyze.

In this session, participants will critique various models and instruments, discuss the process for developing an instrument and testing it with peers.

Participants will explore the following questions:

- ◆ What assessment tools currently exist?
- ◆ Should we modify an existing instrument or develop a new instrument?
- ◆ How do we design questions that will correlate directly to our assessment goals?
- ◆ Do internal or external benchmarks currently exist for what we are trying to assess?

Participants will develop a plan for implementing their assessment strategy, discuss timetables, policies, procedures, and issues of confidentiality and bias.

## 3. Analyzing the Data and Report Results

After the data is collected and analyzed, participants will examine what it all means and what the implications are for the school/district's current technology plan? They will learn to:

- ◆ Determine what is and is not significant.
- ◆ Use graphics, numbers and text.
- ◆ Interpret the results - just the results.
- ◆ Examine the implications in an effort to strengthen a current or future technology plan.