

APPLICATION: June Jordan School for Equity

Describe the critical challenge you would like to tackle in a different way.

In the 21st century, learning with technology is as basic as learning with books and paper was in the 20th century. According to the recent report *Students, Computers, and Learning: Making the Connection* (PISA, OECD Publishing, 2015), 96% of 15-year-old students in OECD countries have computers at home.

By contrast, according to a survey last spring, less than 50% of students at X School have access to a computer at home. Our computer lab is over 7 years old, with many non-functional computers, and access to laptop carts is extremely limited. Many young people report typing entire research papers or science lab reports on their cell phones. Our students frequently say that they cannot finish essays on time due to a lack of computer access. When students took the new Smarter Balanced state assessments last year, many felt awkward and struggled with an unfamiliar computer-based testing situation. When employees at our tech partner company AdRoll asked our students last spring if they could see themselves having jobs in the city's tech industry one day, the vast majority said no.

This school-level data reflects the larger digital divide in San Francisco. X School serves one of SFUSD's highest percentages of low-income students, and Black and Latino students. According to a Policy Analysis Report published by the Board of Supervisors in April 2015, 98 percent of SF households with incomes over \$100,000 have home internet access compared to 75 percent of households with incomes of less than \$25,000; and 90 percent of Caucasians and 89 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders have home internet access compared to 70 percent for African Americans and 84 percent for Latinos.

If we are to realize the goals laid out in Vision 2025 and create an equitable city for all, then students like those at X School must have equal access to technology both

in school and at home. Therefore, our critical challenge is that we would like to provide 1-1 computer access for all X School students both inside and outside of regular school hours.

What outcome(s) or change(s) would you like your design to achieve at your school site?

Most middle-class children have access to smartphones, iPads, and fast modern computers throughout their day and evening, and are able to use these technological tools to do school work as well as to learn skills such as coding and internet research. Many low-income students, on the other hand, only have time-limited computer access at school, often on outdated technology or with inadequate internet speeds. If we successfully address our critical challenge, this digital divide will not exist: All students will have access to basic computing and internet tools both at home and at school.

We are aware that technology by itself does not lead to learning. The recent OECD report cited above notes that computer access by itself does not address achievement gaps, and that over-use of technology can actually reduce learning. Nevertheless, it is clear that for students to thrive in today's digital world, they must have baseline access to computers and the internet.

When our problem no longer exists, our students will no longer have to type papers on their cell phones or miss assignment deadlines because they do not have computer time. They will be able to do internet research, revise papers thoroughly, and be ready to take computer-based assessments. They will be able to envision a

future for themselves in the City's tech industry if they so choose. In other words, they will have the opportunity to fully achieve the Graduate Profile in Vision 2025, which includes "Global, Local, and Digital Identity: The ability to navigate and engage in a 21st century global society that is more inclusive and interconnected."

How have you engaged your school to identify your critical challenge?

Our technology challenge has come up repeatedly in the past several years as a critical issue for the school, including in the strategic planning process leading to the development of the Balanced Scorecard and our WASC accreditation process last year. Students, parents, and staff all agree that this is an essential area of need for the school, and there is a great deal of support for innovation around this challenge. Our Circle the Schools partnership with AdRoll has helped create even more urgency, and AdRoll staff are eager to help us.

Our technology planning process last spring built additional support within the community and also illustrated our current strengths. For example, our teachers are already using technology in myriad ways to facilitate student learning, including writing and research (including collaboration and feedback using Google Docs); portfolios as part of our annual performance assessment system; real time data collection using Google forms; data analysis, spreadsheets, graphing in math; and speaking and listening in Spanish class. When we realize our goal of 1-1 computer access, our teachers are ready to deepen and expand this work considerably.

Finally, our school went through a successful design process last spring to develop our new Internship and Service Learning program. The iLab and the design process have credibility within the community because people have seen how it can help develop an effective program.

What solutions have you tried or considered to address this challenge so far?

Last spring, with help from our Circle the Schools partner AdRoll, we developed a technology plan. We surveyed staff and students and talked with AdRoll Chief Technology Officer Valentino Volonghi and several other AdRoll staff about what it would take to prepare high school students for potential entry into the tech industry as well as other fields.

As part of this planning process, we identified 1-1 chromebook and internet access as a key goal. At the time, we were thinking about purchasing chromebook carts for students to use at school. However, we have realized that there are myriad challenges with school carts, the most significant of which is that student use time is still extremely limited. Because many students do not have computers and internet at home and cannot do individual writing and revision outside of school, teachers end up allocating significant class time to "computer work time" which cuts into time for instruction and revision.

Although we have identified a clear goal (1-1 computer and internet access, both at school and at home), we have a number of challenges which we would like to address through the design process, including:

Financing: How would the computers be paid for? Would they be bought? Leased? How much would students/families pay? How would replacement and repair be paid for? How would we raise the initial capital required to start the program?

Theft/Loss: How would we keep the computers safe? How would we prevent students from being targets of theft outside of school? What would happen when computers are stolen, lost, or damaged?

Home Internet: How would we ensure that students have home internet access? Can we tap into existing programs such as the Comcast low-income program? How do we ensure access for homeless youth or others with unstable housing situations?

Responsible Use: How do we establish effective guidelines for responsible technology use?

We want to be clear that we are not requesting that the Innovation Grant pay for the entire cost of the program. We are seeking seed money and as part of the design process, we will make a plan for raising private funds to cover the start-up costs. Based on our initial analysis, we believe ongoing costs in future years can be included in the school budget.

How is this challenge an equity dilemma, one that is interfering with your school's ability to ensure that all of your students will thrive?

It should be clear from the data presented above how the digital divide is a critical equity dilemma for the predominantly low-income students at X School. Yet we believe the equity issue is much deeper and impacts all SFUSD high schools.

Consider the fact that the Urban School, one of San Francisco's elite private schools, has provided 1-1 technology access for its students since the year 2000. According to their website, "All members of the Urban community are issued state-of-the-art MacBook Air laptops for school and home use, fully installed with software programs

used in our classrooms.” Fifteen years later, not a single SFUSD high school has provided 1-1 laptop access for its students.

We need to pilot a 1-1 computing program not just to benefit X School students, but so that we can learn how to implement such a program at all SFUSD high schools and ensure equitable access to technology across the city. We cannot allow SFUSD high school students to be left behind while their peers whose parents can afford \$40,000 a year in annual tuition get robust technology access.

SFUSD’s Vision 2025 demands that we “reimagine the classroom” as a “dynamic 21st century learning environment” and says that “all our schools will be equipped with technologies that support blended learning and increase personalization.” We are ready to help advance this work.

Who is on your design team? (the more diverse the better)

The following individuals have already committed to being on our design team:

- School Principal
- XYZ & XYZ, X School teachers
- former X School teacher & current technology advisor
- X School parent
- X School student
- Chief Technology Officer at AdRoll and/or VP of Engineering at AdRoll
- Chief Technology Officer at SFUSD and/or one of her Executive Directors

How will you make sure your team will commit the time needed to succeed?

Our team is committed, excited, and ready to go! We have more teachers and AdRoll staff members interested than listed above; we will be able to engage those people and others as the work moves forward.

In addition, we have been talking with SFUSD Chief Technology Officer Melissa Dodd about this idea since August. Melissa already has started a conversation with Myong Leigh around leasing options, and she or one of her executive directors will participate on the design team to ensure that our plan is feasible and in line with the IT department's priorities.