



District
Management
Group

MANAGER'S TOOLKIT

Can the District Free Up Funds from Classroom and Other Instructional Technology?

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Before embarking on investments in new instructional technologies and new models of learning, take stock of your investments to date, assess what works and what doesn't, and examine if there are opportunities to shift spending rather than increase it.

DMC MANAGER'S TOOLKIT

Can the district free up funds from classroom and other instructional technology?

Before a district embarks on investments in new technologies and new models of learning, your district should take stock of its investments in instructional technology to date. Many districts have made significant investments in technology but have found that the technology was not used as intended or has gone unused over the years as staff changed. Begin by taking stock of what is in place, assessing what works and what doesn't, and examining if there are opportunities to shift spending rather than increase it. Some districts have been able to free up funds by reducing little-used software licenses, ending ineffective technology-based programs, or relocating under-utilized hardware, and then have more resources to dedicate to new initiatives and require less new funds for new efforts.

Score Key

0–19 points:	Not worth exploring
20–29 points:	Might be worth exploring the opportunity to redirect resources
30–79 points:	Worth exploring — small potential opportunity
80–119 points:	Worth exploring — significant potential opportunity
120–159 points:	Worth exploring — large potential opportunity
160 + points:	Worth exploring — very large potential opportunity

NOTE

For the purposes of this tool, “instructional technology” refers to all hardware and software devoted to enhancing teaching and learning in and outside the classroom as well as associated maintenance and support costs (e.g., computer labs, remediation and intervention software, computer-based learning programs, online resources used by students, mobile devices for students and teachers, staff time devoted to setup, maintenance, and support of instructional technology tools and software). It does NOT include core infrastructure such as repair/maintenance or Wi-Fi bandwidth, or hardware and software used primarily for administrative purposes such as email, EARP, finance, HR, payroll, or student information systems. It also does not include related professional development costs for either administrative or instructional uses of technology.

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS	POINTS	SCORE
How often does the district track the use of instructional technology and discontinue unused technology (e.g., software licenses "seats," devices)?	At least once per year	0	
	Every one to two years	5	
	Less frequently than once every two years	10	
	Never	20	
Has the district reduced or eliminated any software or online technology based on student outcomes in the last two years?	YES	0	
	NO	20	
Has the district made changes to hardware usage (e.g., which students have access to devices) based on student outcomes in the last two years?	YES	0	
	NO	20	
Before instructional technology is purchased, is a clear way to measure the usage of the technology in place?	Almost always	0	
	Often	5	
	Sometimes	10	
	Rarely, if ever	20	
Before instructional technology is purchased, is there a clear understanding of how the technology will impact student learning and support the district's strategic priorities?	Almost always	0	
	Often	5	
	Sometimes	10	
	Rarely, if ever	20	
Before instructional technology is purchased, is a clear way to measure the impact of the technology in place?	Almost always	0	
	Often	5	
	Sometimes	10	
	Rarely, if ever	20	
Within its budget allocation, can an individual department or school purchase instructional technology without approval from senior district teaching and learning leadership?	Almost always	30	
	Often	20	
	Sometimes	10	
	Rarely, if ever	0	
Has the district recently piloted or launched program(s) requiring the use of many laptops, tablets, and/or other devices in the last two years?	Yes, in most schools	20	
	Yes, in many schools	10	
	Yes, in some schools	5	
	In very few, if any schools	0	
TOTAL POINTS:			