

# Instructional Technology eNews

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## National Education Technology Showcases SAISD Initiatives

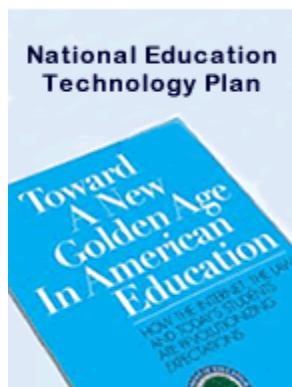
This Spring, 2005, 3 major initiatives from San Antonio ISD were featured on the National Education Technology Plan web site (<http://www.nationaledtechplan.org>). These initiatives addressed the leadership role San Antonio ISD has taken--nationally--in several key areas. These key areas include Leadership, Teacher Training, and Digital Content.

Inclusion of these success stories on a DoE web site testify to the excellent work that Instructional Technology & Learning Services (ITLS) is about, as well as how San Antonio ISD is making significant, nationally-recognized progress in the area of transforming teaching, learning and leadership through the strategic use of technology. We all have a right to be proud of these accomplishments. Without your participation, your suggestions and reflective dialogue, these initiatives would not exist. Please note that you can find links to these initiatives online at <http://itls.saisd.net>.

The titles of these initiatives include the following:

1. The **Palm Handheld Computers**: Describes the partnership between Reading/English Language Arts and Technology Departments to implement handheld computer-based assessments, as well as the use of handheld technology for campus administrators.
2. **Technology Assessment Literacy Institute (TALI)**: The Technology Assessment Literacy Institute transforms how administrative and instructional campus leadership teams approach the use of technology in schools. This multi-hour institute addressed how to assess the level of technology implementation and to use the language of the Texas StaR Chart to plan future growth.
3. **Technology Competency Certification Plan (TCCP)**: The TCCP serves as both a campus, district and individual educators' roadmap to what constitutes technology integration as defined by state and national standards. Although the incentive portion of the TCCP is unfunded at this time, campuses and educators are able to plan their professional learning opportunities.

### ABOUT THE NATIONAL EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY PLAN SUCCESS STORIES



In early 2005, the U.S. Department of Education unveiled the National Education Technology Plan web site (<http://www.nationaledtechplan.org>).

To promote exemplary uses of technology in education, state education technology directors were asked to submit success stories for inclusion in the National EdTech Plan. These success stories reflect exemplary best practices that are worthy of emulation across the nation.

### Dell TechKnow in SAISD

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### Learning in Hand at Graebner Elementary



*"Miss, Miss, Look at my Sketchy of the water cycle."* The level of excitement of fifth grade students has risen for concepts like learning about the water cycle through a pilot project this year at Graebner Elementary. The Handheld Project is a joint effort sponsored by the Instructional Technology and Mathematics Departments.

Five fifth grade classroom teachers participated in three days of professional development which consisted of Palm Basics, Inspiration for the Palm, Documents to Go, Versa Mail, Library and Media Services databases and classroom approaches to using the

Take it apart. Put it together. Take it home.



**Dell TechKnow student - Twain M.S.**

San Antonio ISD has partnered with Dell Corporation to give 200 SAISD 8th graders an opportunity to earn a home computer and learn technology skills that promote self-esteem, academic success, and prepare students for opportunities in today's technology-driven world. Through the **SAISD Dell Techknow program**, ten SAISD middle schools expressed an interest in this program. Each middle school, through a selection process, identified or will identify approximately 10 girls and 10 boys to participate in the program.

The program participants are:

- Phase I Spring 2005 - King Academy and Twain Middle school.
- Phase II Summer 2005 – Cooper MS, Longfellow MS, and Page MS.
- Phase III Fall 2005 – Connell MS, Mann Academy, Poe MS, Rhodes MS, and Tafolla MS.

Students attend a 40-hour, self-paced course where they learn to:

- Disassemble and assemble a computer
- Load and utilize software
- Identify and correct basic hardware problems
- Upgrade computer hardware
- Use the internet

Upon completion of the course, students earn a refurbished Dell desktop computer, with Windows 2000 operating system, Microsoft Office Suite, and 1 year of free AOL internet home access.



**Dell TechKnow students - Twain M.S. - Instructor Diana Saenz**

Ms. Saenz, Phase I - Twain MS instructor, commented that "the students have really enjoyed taking the computer apart and putting it back together. The most memorable part was hearing the students shout and seeing their excitement when they finally turned on their own computer and watched it power up." Ms. Saenz stated that the students were grinning from ear to ear and feeling extremely proud.

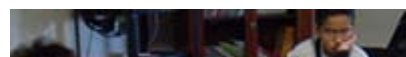
Palm in the classroom. This was a new adventure to everyone involved, but Graebner provided a very willing group ... including the Principal, Ms. Correa.

In order to alleviate some of the problems encountered by teachers who attempt to implement technology in the classroom, teachers were asked to select five students from each class to serve as "Handheld Palm Experts." The students were given one day of intensive training, plus three one hour after school sessions that included training on Palm applications, troubleshooting and some instruction on how to work with other students.

The fifth-grade Graebner teachers allowed students to further hone their skills by teaching their fellow students the applications before implementing them in the classroom. The students were very successful in their efforts.

When teachers were ready to attempt to integrate the Palms into the classroom students were not only eager but prepared. The first area of success was in using an animation program called "Sketchy". Students created some awesome animations of concepts such as the water cycle, the food chain and others. Students created the beginnings of "Word" and "PowerPoint" documents using "Documents to Go". Inspiration for the Palm was used for some webbing projects. Students are learning how to graph on the Palm as well.

Overall, the project has proved successful for teachers and students. Teachers have been very willing to work with the Instructional Technology and Mathematics specialists to refine and improve the ways the Palms are used in the classroom. To continue the project for next year, Palm experts for next year's incoming fifth grade have already been selected as well as a new commitment to keep working on making integration more transparent as this project evolves.





**Dell TechKnow students - King M.S. - Instructor Donald Brownlee**

"The students at King Academy have also put their computers back together and are currently creating their second MS Word project as outlined in the curriculum," stated Mr. Brownlee, King MS instructor.

Both Phase I campuses will host a Dell TechKnow Graduation ceremony in late May honoring the students for their commitment and completion of the program. After the ceremony, the students will pack up their system and take it home.

**THEY TOOK IT APART. THEY PUT IT TOGETHER. NOW, THEY TAKE IT HOME!**

### **MOVING FROM LOTI 0 TO 3:**

Recognizing Success in SAISD

*"SO HOW DO WE MOVE FROM LOTI 0 TO LOTI 3?"*

This was the question Dr. Chris Moersch posed to an impromptu meeting of associate area superintendents, and/or their designees, on Tuesday, May 3rd. In response to this question, the following recommendations were made. Note that some of the initiatives Instructional Technology is responsible for have been added below each recommendation to illustrate what we have already done to address these recommendations. You can find a complete list of initiatives online at <http://itls.saisd.net/initiatives> as well as linked from our web site at <http://itls.saisd.net>.

1. **Merge the focus of both departments (C&I and Technology) concentrating on student achievement.**  
 -Using the *Rigor/Relevance Framework*, Instructional Technology has implemented initiatives that have high rigor and relevance. Some of these have involved collaborations with Curriculum & Instruction (e.g. AgileMind, Handheld Assessments, while others have worked separately (e.g. Problem-Based Learning, a powerful constructivist approach now in use at several campuses).  
 -Use of *Ignite Learning* in collaboration with the Social Studies Office.  
 -*Learning in Hand Palm* Initiative at Graebner.

2. **Merge the online catalogs for technology and curriculum immediately.**

Prior to 2002, San Antonio ISD used paper registrations for its workshops. Instructional Technology changed that with the Professional Development Planner (PDP), an in-house online workshop registration and tracking system developed by the Director of Instructional Technology. Even as it unveiled the PDP for use, handling over 10,000 registrations per semester, Instructional Technology led the effort to acquire a **Learning Management System (LMS)** to automate all workshop registrations and tracking. The LMS would have allowed SAISD teachers and staff to print their own certificates and more. Unfortunately, the LMS initiative was not fully funded. The PDP--working in collaboration with the online calendar--continues to serve, hosted on computers servers purchased 3 years ago,



### **Making the Grade**

SAISD is "making the grade" accessible to parents, campus administrators and district administrators through the implementation of the Gradebook and Attendance Tracking System (GATS). Over the last 9 months, eighty-nine campuses, three thousand five hundred seventy-six teachers, three hundred and eight administrators and ninety-seven clerks have completed training on the use of the electronic gradebook and attendance tracking system. The Office of Instructional Technology Services was pleased to offer over four hundred training sessions held at the Student Support and Network Services building as well as at individual campuses.

even as a second initiative seeks to bring a Learning Management System into the District.

3. **Summative evaluations for building principals demonstrating their staff accomplishments at LOTI Level 3.**

This is a recommendation that has not yet been implemented. At every opportunity Instructional Technology has had access to campus administrators and teachers, it has shared the Levels of Technology Implementation (LOTI) to better define technology integration as more than using web-based research, tutorials and games. Campus Leadership Teams--such as the one at Maverick ES--are now using their LOTI score to plan professional learning for their campus staff. One tool they use is the Technology Competency Certification Plan (TCCP), available online at <http://itls.saisd.net/tccp>

The TCCP takes the mystery out of how to use technology to impact student achievement, whether at the classroom, campus, or district level.

4. **Provide Technology Department access to the CICs.**

This is a recommendation that has not yet been implemented. Pursuing a detour to lack of access to CICs, the Instructional Technology Office sought to establish a reflective dialogue with all campuses via a Campus Technology Representative (CTR) program. This dialogue has proven to be extremely beneficial to campuses, as well as the Accountability and Technology Department. The CTR program has slowly been making the transition from "messengers" to "missionaries," as we move from implementing new initiatives to maintaining comprehensive, district programs. This has meant that more technology integration is modeled at monthly campus technology representative meetings than ever before as opposed to information sharing. Furthermore, the new position of Campus Instructional Technologist has come to be recognized as a necessity by more and more principals. Over 5 campuses now have Title 1 funded CITs, and vigorous support is provided by the Office of Instructional Technology.

5. **Provide professional development to CICs to become "instructional" mentors of technology.**

This is a recommendation that has not yet been implemented. During summer Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Academies, Instructional Technology has received wonderful feedback from Campus Instructional Coordinators. At last, instructional leadership in the use of technology to impact student achievement. These positive comments have continued for CICs participating in CTR meetings, ITLS workshops, and PBL Academies offered each summer.

6. **Train principals.**

Lauded by the United States Department of Education's National Education Technology Plan as a "Success Story," San Antonio ISD's Instructional Technology office is proud to share what it has done for campus principals and assistant principals. While you can read the details online--the link is available at <http://itls.saisd.net>--this SAISD success story clearly helps principals and assistant principals define what technology integration looks like. And, once they understand what technology integration is supposed to look like in the classroom, campus administrators have quickly moved to support teachers in technology integration. This is evident at campuses like Woodlawn ES, Pfeiffer Academy, and Page MS, to name only a few.

Although no definite action has been planned in regards to these recommendations, much is already in progress as shown above. These recommendations were shared with the Curriculum & Instruction Department earlier this month (May, 2005).

"Collaboration between Departments is difficult," share some school districts in Texas. Yet, that is exactly what offices like the Mathematics Office within Curriculum & Instruction Department do on a daily basis. Beyond technical support, the two instructional teams--Mathematics and Instructional Technology--are focused on achieving Quadrant 4 of the Rigor/Relevance Framework. In Quadrant 4, students are able to use their extensive knowledge and skills to create solutions to perplexing problems and take action that further develops their skills and knowledge. This is why the Mathematics and Instructional Technology Offices have partnered on initiatives over the last two years to build activities that use technology to enhance higher order thinking within the context of an inquiry model. **(Click on the image to view full size)**

The electronic system has provided a catalyst in which parents can go online to view their child's current grades and attendance markings. Through iDataPortal, parents can request an account online which not only provides them with information about current grading and attendance information, but also historical data on their children. Parents interested in gaining access to their student files, should visit the SAISD homepage at <http://www.saisd.net> and click on the iDataPortal link.



From the iDataPortal site, parents will find a tab labeled "My Child", from this location parents can request a user account to access their child's information.

GATS has also proved to be a time saving feature for teachers and administrators through the ease of grade reporting and attendance marking. Teachers are able to report end of cycle grades by the touch of a single button, as opposed to the old system which required teachers to manually calculate averages and then mark them manually on a scanning sheet. GATS provides immediate averaging of grades for all teachers, thus making interim grade reporting less time consuming. Campus and district administrators also have unlimited access to view any student's attendance or grade markings for a grading period. The provision of administrator access has increased response time to parents from campus and district administration.

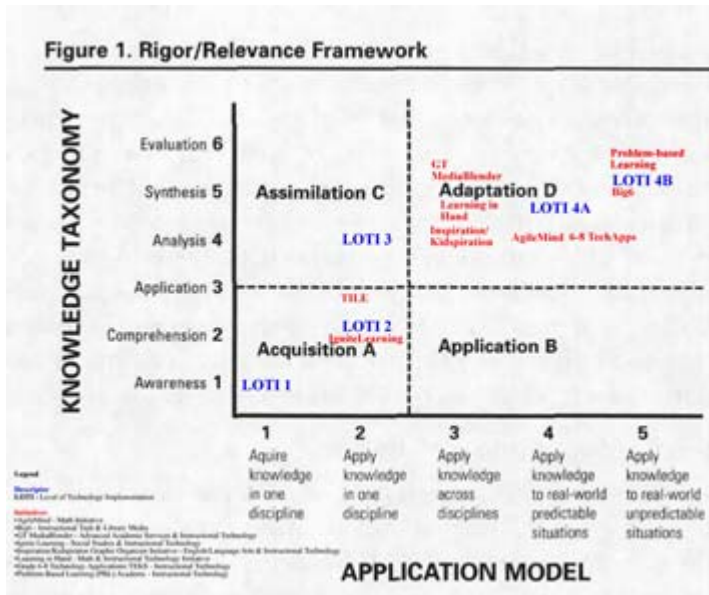
As the 2004-2005 school year comes to a close, the Office of Instructional Technology is looking forward to the start of the 2005-2006 school year. As with any new school year, new teachers will be joining the SAISD team. In anticipation of this event, IT Services has scheduled GATS training classes beginning in August 2005 for new teachers to the district which can be access through the **District Staff Development calendar online.**

Review classes beginning in August 2005 will also be offered to veteran teachers who are interested in learning about new or added features of the program to enhance their user experience. These classes are also available for registration through the **District Staff Development calendar online.**

**Instructional**

**Technology eNews**  
Past ITLS eNews

- Volume 1 - Issue 2 (03/09/04)
- Volume 1 - Issue 3 (04/20/04)
- Special Edition - (05/11/04)
- Volume 2 - Issue 1 (09/10/04)
- Qualified Vendors - (10/19/04)



**Instructional Materials**  
ITLS Document Management System



Available Titles:

- Anti-Spyware Toolkit for Elementary, Secondary, and SAISD Workstations
- Creating Historically Based Newspapers
- Digital Curriculum
- Inspiration Standards Match for Texas (705 pages)
- Webquests for Beginners
- GATS Administrator, Campus Contact, and Teacher Training manuals
- MS Office Guides (Excel, Power Point, Publisher, and Word)
- and much, much, more.

**Summer Workshops**

On Monday, May 16th, all summer workshop offerings will be accessible via the Online Professional Learning calendar accessible at the address below:

<http://www.saisd.net/online.htm>

**Robotics in SAISD – Summer 2005**

Advanced Academic Services and Instructional Technology Services are partnering to offer a Summer School program which integrates the use of Robotics into the Summer School Science Curriculum.

Gifted and Talented students in grades

**Rigor & Relevance Framework: What is it?**

The Rigor/Relevance Framework is based on two continua, a knowledge taxonomy and an application model. The knowledge taxonomy (familiar to educators who have studied Bloom's Taxonomy of learning) describes the increasingly complex ways in which people think. At the low end is the ability to acquire knowledge and recall or locate that knowledge in a simple manner. The high end of the knowledge taxonomy denotes more complex and abstract cognitive activities. At this level, knowledge is fully integrated into one's mind and can be located and combined in logical and creative ways. Assimilation of knowledge is a good way to describe the activity represented by this high end of the knowledge taxonomy. The assimilation level is often referred to as higher-order thinking skills; individuals performing at this level can solve complex problems and create unique work.

The second continuum, known as the application model, is one of action. Although the knowledge continuum is largely passive, the action continuum describes putting knowledge to use. At the low end, an individual acquires knowledge for its own sake; at the high end, an individual uses that knowledge to solve unpredictable real-world problems.

*The Rigor/Relevance Framework is represented by a four-quadrant model.* Quadrant A (acquisition) represents gathering, understanding, and storing bits of knowledge for its own sake. Quadrant C (assimilation) represents more complex thinking: students extend and refine their knowledge to use it automatically and routinely to analyze and solve complex problems and create unique solutions, but it is still knowledge for its own sake. Quadrants B (application) and D (adaptation) represent knowledge in action. In Quadrant B, students use acquired knowledge to solve problems and design solutions. The highest level of application is to apply appropriate knowledge to new and unpredictable situations. At the Adaptation level (D), students are able to use their extensive knowledge and skills to create solutions to perplexing problems and take action that further develops their skills and knowledge.

*Source for Framework and Supporting Information*

Moving from standards to instructional practice Willard R Daggett. National Association of Secondary School Principals. NASSP Bulletin Reston: Dec 2000. Vol. 84, Iss. 620, p. 66-72 (7 pp.)

**Matching LOTI to the Rigor/Relevance Framework**

The Levels of Technology Implementation (LOTI) are already matched to the knowledge taxonomy. As one proceeds from Level 0-Non Use of Technology to Level 4b-Routine Integration of Technology, there is a corresponding increase in the knowledge taxonomy. Levels 4a-Mechanical Integration and 4b-Routine Integration can be placed entirely in Quadrant D-Adaptation where students are able to use knowledge and skills to create solutions to perplexing problems and take action. Technology at Level 4 of LOTI is best described as "the use of technology to identify and solve real life, authentic problems." Higher levels of

LOTI-Levels 5 & 6-focus on expanded student experiences directed at problem solving, issue resolution, and student activism surrounding a major theme or concept, as well as are comfortable with a wide variety of technology tools. A quick overview of the LOTI is shared below ([Click on the image to view full size](#)):

Level	Classroom Observation	Rigor/Relevance Quadrant
0-NonUse	There is no visible evidence of computer access in the classroom or computers sit idle during the instructional day.	None
1-Awareness	Available classroom computer(s) are used exclusively for teacher productivity (e.g. Powerpoint presentation)	None
2-Exploration	Student projects (e.g., designing web pages, research via the Web, creating multimedia presentations, creating graphs and charts) focus on lower levels of knowledge taxonomy	Acquisition - Quadrant A
3-Infusion	Students use tool-based applications primarily for analyzing data, making inferences, drawing conclusions from an investigation or related scientific inquiry. Students use the web for research purposes or interact with selected software applications that require them to take a position or role play an issue.	Assimilation - Quadrant C
4a-Integration (mechanical)	Technology-based tools are mechanically integrated, providing a rich context for students' understanding of the pertinent concepts, themes, and processes. Heavy reliance is placed on prepackaged materials and sequential charts.	Adaptation - Quadrant D
4b-Integration (routine)	Technology-based tools are easily and routinely integrated, providing a rich context for students' understanding of the pertinent concepts, themes, and processes. Technology (e.g., multimedia, telecommunications, databases, spreadsheets, word processing) is perceived as a tool to identify and solve authentic problems relating to an overall theme/concept.	Adaptation - Quadrant D

### Technology Profile - Woodlawn ES's ePal Project

Motivating students to write can be difficult. That's where the ePals project -- enabling communications with students across the Nation -- helps motivate students, possibly impacting their Writing TAKS scores as they learn to write more for diverse audiences. Our ITLS eNews will feature Woodlawn ES in its next issue.



A picture to sent to Woodlawn ES ePals in Arizona for the holidays. ([Click on the image to view full size](#))

2 -5 will be participating in the summer school program. The curriculum focuses on Math and Science objectives with a concentration in the Solar System. The students involved in this summer school program will be introduced to the world of Lego Robotics. Through this program, students will construct robots using the Lego Educational Kits, and each robot will be programmed through the use of computer technology to perform specific tasks. Tasks associated with mission will include traveling a specified distance, taking light reading samples, and tracking terrain changes and alterations.

The teachers involved in the program will complete a one day intensive training on the robotics curriculum and use of the kits in the classroom. The Instructional Technology Staff will be available throughout the summer school program to provide assistance to teachers as the students begin to utilize the robotics program.

At the end of the summer school session, students will be competing in a Robotics Competition to be held in the San Antonio area. All students involved in the summer school program will meet together to participate in the competition. Each robotics team will be provided with a specific task and building time. Upon the completion of the building and development time allotted, students will compete to determine the champion builders of Summer School Robots.

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Journey Journal Activity - Our students receive a journal and write about their state and color the picture of Texas on the front cover to show that the journal has been there. The journals are then sent to the next state on the agenda.  
**(Click on the image to view full size)**

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