Westlake City Schools
Technology Committee

Mission:
Provide diverse and appropriate technology learning experiences for all students.

Vision:
Research, explore and develop technology platforms, best practices and technology rich learning opportunities for all staff and students.

Membership

Pete Zagray- Technology Director
Tim Barrett- Principal (Dover)
Jim Sanfilippo- Principal (Bassett)
Ron Stephenson- Technician (WCSD)
Dana Hoffman- Staff (Bassett)
Leah Burke- Teacher (Bassett)
Amy Butcher- Teacher (Holly Lane)
Brianne Huber- Teacher (DIS)
Trish Kosik- Teacher (LBMS)
Christina Mars- Teacher (WHS)

October 31, 2016
Westlake City Schools
24525 Hilliard Blvd.
Westlake, OH 44145

Technology Professional Development

Dear Superintendent Goggin,

The members of the Technology Committee are writing you to request that the Westlake City School district improve technology professional development opportunities for all staff.

The challenge is to provide meaningful staff development opportunities at a variety of skill levels to meet the needs of our diverse staff. In addition, professional development opportunities should address an array of relevant topics.

We believe technology professional development should include the following:

- **Choice**: Every staff (classified and certified) member's needs and comfort level are different.
- **Ongoing support**: Needs change over time, technology changes and maintaining skill level requires sustained effort.
- **Focused & Time aware**: PD offerings should be sequential and offered in manageable "chunks" taught in a hands-on fashion.
- **Knowledgeable trainers**: Use an appropriate mix of internal and external experts who understand the context in which the skill will be used and applied.

Technology professional development is a key component in moving instruction forward in today's school environment. As traditional classroom resources like textbooks are replaced with dynamic online learning resources, and the proliferation of affordable devices make access to these resources increasingly realistic, it is important that schools provide appropriate sustainable professional learning opportunities for all staff. This level of importance is reflected in Westlake City Schools Strategic Plan. Technology and the pace of innovation are central in what the community identified as global trends and community changes, "*the committee noted the quickening of the pace of science and industry innovations not only in business, but in educational delivery methods. They linked these trends and changes to a need to implement digital learning at all levels.*" (Strategic Planning Outline, 2016.) Improving technology skills were also seen by the strategic planning committee as an area of concern. As a result technology learning is woven throughout the Strategic Plan either directly like in the *Curriculum & Technology* initiatives, or indirectly, as in the *Finance & Facilities* initiatives.

Our belief is that a systemic professional development framework will provide a method for achieving in Westlake City Schools what Peter Senge, renowned business strategist, refers to as a "learning organization." According to Senge, "*schools can be made sustainably vital and creative, not by fiat or command or by*

regulation or forced rankings, but by adopting a learning orientation. This means involving everyone in the system in expressing their aspirations, building their awareness, and developing their capabilities together." (Schools That Learn, 2012.)

The Westlake City Schools Technology Committee proposes that the school district undertake the following framework to address technology professional development:

- PD Framework/action steps
  - Identify needs, interest, and skill level through staff surveys
  - Provide opportunities for internal trainers to volunteer to teach PD
  - Plan PD to meet a variety of staff needs detailed in the surveys
  - Create and share the knowledge base for these courses
  - Schedule time and resources for PD to occur
  - Create and distribute sign up for staff
  - Deliver the instruction
  - Evaluate and revise the learning

It is our belief that if this framework is used by the Westlake City School District it will establish a sustainable technology professional development model. Please consider supporting our recommendations by making them a core part of the district's technology planning and by making them a budget priority.

Your leadership on this issue is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Westlake City Schools
Technology Committee

Mission:
Provide diverse and appropriate technology learning experiences for all students.

Vision:
Research, explore and develop technology platforms, best practices and technology rich learning opportunities for all staff and students.

Membership

Pete Zagray- Technology Director
Tim Barrett- Principal (Dover)
Jim Sanfilippo- Principal (Bassett)
Ron Stephenson- Technician (WCSD)
Dana Hoffman- Staff (Bassett)
Leah Burke- Teacher (Bassett)
Amy Butcher- Teacher (Holly Lane)
Brianne Huber- Teacher (DIS)
Trish Kosik- Teacher (LBMS)
Christina Mars- Teacher (WHS)