

# Executive Leadership and Involvement

## Leadership

Superintendent Doug Otto and the Board of Trustees provide overall leadership for technology in the Plano Independent School District.

Jim Hirsch, Associate Superintendent for Technology, coordinates all activities relating to planning and technology use. He reports directly to the superintendent. He is assisted by Directors for technical support services, telecommunications and special projects, information management systems and instructional technology.

## Organization

The Plano Independent School District serves a population of 265,000 living in all or parts of seven municipalities in Collin County:

- Allen
- Dallas
- Lucas
- Murphy
- Parker
- Plano
- Richardson

The district enrolls more than 51,000 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12.

The district operates:

- 40 elementary schools (K-5)
- 11 middle schools (6-8)
- 5 high schools (9-10)
- 3 senior high schools (11-12)
- 3 pre-kindergarten schools
- 1 alternative special programs center
- 7 administrative and support facilities

The district is divided into three geographic clusters, each consisting of one senior high school and its associated high school, middle school and elementary school feeder campuses. Each cluster is served by a team that consists of an assistant superintendent, curriculum directors (2), technology support team (instructional technology coordinator, technology specialists (3), trainer, network engineer, network technicians), special education coordinator, business services representative, human resources representative and facilities services manager.

## Professional Partnerships

Plano ISD continues to have active memberships in organizations that are committed to improved student achievement through the use of technology. The Technology Leadership Network sponsored by NSBA uses Plano ISD consistently in its



publications to demonstrate examples of best practices in technology implementation and integration. Plano ISD hosted an NSBA site visit in November 2002.

As a member of the Western States Benchmarking Consortium, Plano ISD works collaboratively with five other high performing districts throughout the western United States to share best practices in the use of instructional and administrative technology. The group has developed benchmark rubrics to assist in the self-assessment of a variety of identified organizational areas of each district including technology. Plano ISD led the development of a web-based tool to enable the archiving of these self assessments including a library of best practices.

The Consortium for School Networking is a non-profit Washington D.C. based organization dedicated to providing leadership in promoting uses of networks in K-12 schools to promote student learning. The Associate Superintendent for Technology in Plano ISD served two years as the chair and is the current past-chair of CoSN. This organization provided critical support as the E-rate survived challenges on the House and Senate floor and provides national leadership in areas such as total cost of ownership strategies, network strategies and emerging technologies.

Locally, Plano ISD is a charter member of the Dallas CIO Council, a group of North Texas organizations committed to providing an educational and business climate conducive to high technology. Membership in this organization provides Plano ISD with the opportunity to share ideas with corporate and community leaders in the area of technology. Plano ISD is also a member of the Telecomm Corridor Council, a group headquartered in Richardson, Texas which provides a similar forum for high technology organizations.

## **Partnerships with parents**

The Plano Independent School District considers parents as important partners in many areas, including technology.

### ***Parents as partners in technology in the interest of student learning***

Parents are important partners with the school district in providing technology learning opportunities. Every day, throughout the district, parents assist students in classrooms and labs, helping students improve their technological skills, and basic skills of reading, math, and writing through the use of various technology resources. Parents provide valuable input into district and building level technology processes, as members of technology and SBIC teams.

Local parent groups have been indispensable partners in acquiring software and hardware for schools. Parents often have expertise and experience in the workplace that helps them understand how crucial technological competence is to students' future work.



***Parents as partners in the interest of adult learning***

Some schools have made special efforts to open up their facilities to parents to encourage computer skills development and to demonstrate how computers are useful learning tools for students.

***Parents as partners in the interest of a well informed public***

The district and individual schools have created (sometimes with the help of parents) and continue to create Internet pages that provide information to parents and the community at large. Various parent groups throughout the district are exploring the potential communication power of the Internet to share leadership strategies and experiences with one another. Parents communicate with staff over email. Technology creates many possibilities for enhancement of parents' one-to-one and group communication.

Tactical and strategic technology planning is provided for Plano ISD by a technology steering committee created by the superintendent and chaired by the Associate Superintendent for Technology. Committee members represent all facets of district operations and include parent/community members as listed:

Candy Atwood	Central Cluster Instructional Technology Coordinator
Harriet Bell	West Cluster Instructional Technology Coordinator
Richard Butler	Director of Auxiliary Services
Jayne Cantwell	Director of Elementary Curriculum
Mike Collinworth	West Cluster - Renner principal
David Dooley	Director of Telecommunications and Special Projects
Mary Gorden	Communications Specialist
Tamira Griffin	Executive Director of Human Resources
Mary Hewett	Director of Instructional Technology
Jim Hirsch	Associate Superintendent for Technology (chairperson)
Connie Lewellen	Central Cluster - Weatherford principal
Linda Madon	Executive Director for Financial Services
Alan Mann	Community Member
Bruce McCullough	Community Member
Karen McDonald	East Cluster - Clark principal
Lecia Medlock	Director of Information Management Systems
Milton Ramsey	Director of Technical Support Services
Elaine Templeton	East Cluster - Hendrick teacher
Jim Wussow	Executive Director for Curriculum and Instruction
Kathy Yonts	West Cluster - Gulledege teacher
Open position	East Cluster Instructional Technology Coordinator

*Technology is so ingrained in our lives that it does belong in the classroom.* – parent survey comment

