

Assessing Individual Tech-Savviness

The table below (published with permission from the author) shows how award-winning “tech-savvy superintendents” think and talk about tech use in their organizations. It also shows how the approach to tech integration can (and should) change over time. You will use the table as a guide to self-assess your tech-savviness as a school or district leader. There is a second activity (not provided here) that requires a broader group of stakeholders—central office personnel, school and teacher leaders, students, parents, and community members. This activity is an audit of your organization’s tech capacity and can serve as the beginnings of a comprehensive strategic “technology” plan. Reach out to matt@spanningboundaries.com if you’d like more information.

[Use this link](#) to access a video explaining how to work through the activity.

Table 3. Challenges and Successes of Being a Technology-Savvy Superintendent.

Group 1: 2001 to 2010 Technology-Savvy Award-Winning Participants	Group 2: 2011 to 2014 Technology-Savvy Award-Winning Participants	Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating shared vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School board buy in ○ School level buy in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating shared vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shifting mind-sets about learning ○ Community buy in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster a broad shared vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funding to begin initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funding to improve initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant improvement of infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing communication to stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing communication with stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace dialogue through modern communication tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring professional development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ District wide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring professional development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individualized and just-in-time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on individualized development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a risk taker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcoming fear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting the unknown



Self-Reflection

Directions: This activity has five parts representing the five broad categories defined by Richardson and Sterrett (see table above). Each table shows Group 1 themes, Group 2 themes, and change across groups. Situate yourself within these five categories: Do you have a personal vision for tech use in your organization (school, district, state department, etc.)? How do you think about the purpose of tech (hardware, software, network infrastructure)? Would you consider yourself tech-savvy? I've included a series of guiding questions to support your thinking. These are by no means comprehensive, but they should provide a good starting point for an internal conversation. This document is for YOU. You do not need to answer these questions. If you'd like to jot down your thinking, the light green box is there for you to do just that. If you are inclined to share your responses, feel free to send your work to matt@spanningboundaries.com. Finally, headings have been added, allowing you to use the outline feature to make navigation a bit easier.

1.1: A Shared Vision

Group 1: 2001-2010 Tech-Savvy Award-Winning Sups	Group 2: 2011-2014 Tech-Savvy Award-Winning Sups	Change
<i>Creating shared vision</i> - School board buy in - School level buy in	<i>Creating shared vision</i> - Shifting mind-sets about learning - Community buy in	<i>Foster a broad shared vision</i>

WHERE AM I? A few guiding questions: Do I (as a school or district leader) have a vision for technology integration? If so, what is it? How comfortable would I be sharing this vision with other stakeholders? Do I value the input and experiences of all stakeholders? Does that vision have a purpose? Does it link technology and learning? If I don't have a cohesive vision for tech use, why not? Do I think it's important to have one? If yes, how might I go about developing one?

(insert response here)



1.2: Infrastructure

<p>Group 1: 2001-2010 Tech-Savvy Award-Winning Sups</p>	<p>Group 2: 2011-2014 Tech-Savvy Award-Winning Sups</p>	<p>Change</p>
<p><i>Infrastructure development</i> - <i>Funding to begin initiatives</i></p>	<p><i>Infrastructure development</i> - <i>Funding to improve initiatives</i></p>	<p><i>Constant improvement of infrastructure</i></p>
<p><i>WHERE AM I? What do I think is the purpose of investment in technology? Is it about the “stuff”? Have I thought about how software and hardware can work together to create a dynamic learning environment? How does tech infrastructure fit into other strategic organizational initiatives? Have I tried to take advantage of funding opportunities to both build up and maintain my organization’s infrastructure? Is the stuff spread equally across my organization, or does certain populations have access to better tech?</i></p>		
<p>(insert response here)</p>		



1.3: Embracing Modern Tools for Communication

<p>Group 1: 2001-2010 Tech-Savvy Award-Winning Sups</p>	<p>Group 2: 2011-2014 Tech-Savvy Award-Winning Sups</p>	<p>Change</p>
<p>Ongoing communication <u>to</u> stakeholders</p>	<p>Ongoing communication <u>with</u> stakeholders</p>	<p>Embrace dialogue through modern communication tools</p>
<p><i>WHERE AM I? Why do I communicate with various stakeholder groups—what is the purpose of that communication? How do I use technology to support those processes? Do I use it to communicate <u>to</u> or <u>with</u> these groups? What tools do I use? Why do I use <u>those</u> tools? Does district communication reach all populations equally? Is district communication transparent and delivered in a timely fashion?</i></p> <p>(insert response here)</p>		



1.4: Professional Development

<p>Group 1: 2001-2010 Tech-Savvy Award-Winning Sups</p>	<p>Group 2: 2011-2014 Tech-Savvy Award-Winning Sups</p>	<p>Change</p>
<p>Ensuring professional development - District-wide</p>	<p>Ensuring professional development - Individualized and just-in-time</p>	<p>Individualized development</p>
<p><i>WHERE AM I? How comfortable am I using tech? Would I consider myself tech-savvy? If not, is this something I should work on? If I do consider myself tech-savvy, have I modeled this in my organization? If not, how can I do that? Regardless of my individual tech capacity, how can I continue to improve my skills? What areas of improvement would help my organization the most? Have I created an environment where other stakeholders have the opportunity to develop themselves as tech-savvy educators? If yes, is there cohesion to these professional learning experiences (meaning, does individual skill development align with broader strategic goals)? If no, is it important to develop such a culture?</i></p>		
<p>(insert response here)</p>		



1.5: Taking Risks

Group 1: 2001-2010 Tech-Savvy Award-Winning Sups	Group 2: 2011-2014 Tech-Savvy Award-Winning Sups	Change
Being a risk taker	Overcoming fear	Accepting the unknown
<p><i>WHERE AM I? How willing am I to take a risk? Reflect on the answer to that question. Have I created an environment where educators are willing to take risks? Am I fearful of innovation? Does the rapid pace of technological change feel overwhelming? Am I able to embrace uncertainty?</i></p> <p>(insert response here)</p>		

