

## Interview with Ann McMullan



**Title:** Executive Director of Educational Technology  
**District:** Klein Independent School District  
**City/State:** Klein, Texas  
**District's Web site:** [www.kleinisd.net/](http://www.kleinisd.net/)

### What Ed Tech Programs in Klein ISD are you most proud of?

#### 1) Technology Baseline Standard Initiative (TBSI)

Students have access to appropriate technology learning tools as well as whiteboards, projectors, document cameras, an assessment system, and four networked student computer workstations per classroom. Teachers have professional development classes that focus on the effective use of the technology tools to improve student learning.

The program is in all Pre-K to 8 content classrooms and all high school Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies classrooms. It will extend to foreign language classrooms this spring and modified versions of the TBSI program are in place in fine arts and other elective course classrooms.

#### 2) One-to-One Tablet PC Program

More than 9,000 students have Tablet PC computers

with learning, learning management system and classroom management tools plus a suite of productivity tools and access to online resources, including electronic textbooks and web 2.0 communication tools. The program is being implemented at one campus at a time.

Every teacher and student gets a Tablet PC using a three-step process:

- 1) Installation of a wireless infrastructure at each campus;
- 2) Teacher Tablet PC distribution and extensive professional development, starting one year prior to students' receiving their Tablet PC computers;
- 3) Distribution of student Tablet PCs and progressive changes in instructional strategies. Includes onsite technical and instructional technology support at every campus.

#### Results

Student and teacher enthusiasm, energy level and excitement about what students are learning are palpable. Students demonstrate a high level of creativity through products they create that also reflect a greater understanding of the concepts being taught, usually with more depth and complexity than with traditional paper/pen products.

Teachers see an increase in the efficiency of classroom management that is a great help with overall productivity. They know instantly how well students are grasping the content and are better able to maximize their time to meet the multitude of tasks involved in teaching and learning.

Teachers and administrators use data – including classroom formative assessment, district benchmarks, state standardized tests, and more – to monitor instruction and student achievement. Technology affords access to multiple digital learning resources and tools as well as differentiated and personalized instruction.

Communication among all stakeholders – teachers, students, administrators, parents and the community at large – has improved and has built cohesiveness and strengthened support to the district as a learning community.

### What was the biggest lesson learned throughout the process?

Collaboration in an atmosphere of mutual respect for all and working together as a professional learning community is what drove our success.

### What keeps you awake at night?

I'm concerned that in the larger K-12 community, some may lose sight of the focus on learning because it is so easy to be enthralled with the "latest and greatest" product or trend.

## → Ann's Advice: Key Factors for Success

- Keep sight of the fact that we are in the "learning" business, not the technology or consumer electronics business. Teaching and learning goals drive all decisions about technology.
- Have a common vision and clear understanding of the goals by all involved, including the community at large. Articulate and demonstrate the goals regularly.
- Assure that students have technology tools that allow them to be creators and producers of their own content, not simply consumers of content. Make sure they can show mastery and understanding of the learning objectives in their various subject areas to reinforce and retain knowledge.
- Applaud leadership from the board of trustees, the superintendent, district leaders, and most important, school principals. Principals set the expectations for teachers and staff and monitor and adjust to see that the technology investment is used appropriately and effectively.
- Reinforce that district curriculum leaders see technology as an integral component of instructional strategies and curriculum goals.
- Provide teacher and administrators with self-assessments and ongoing, targeted, job-embedded professional development that integrates learning how to use the technology tools with how to apply the hardware/software to target and support student success.
- Offer committed, responsive technical support to assure that "all systems are working" everyday.



## What are the key leadership qualities you believe are needed today?

- 1) An understanding that the status quo is not good enough and a willingness to be open to new methods to build success for all students to meet their academic and future career needs.
- 2) Ability to bring people together to execute visionary plans.
- 3) Strong communication skills that include the spoken and written words as well as the ability to listen and reflect on other's contributions.

## Who or what inspires you?

The students inspire me. Their excitement about learning and the "joyful noise" that exists in a highly engaged classroom is what keeps me coming to work every day. The teachers and administrators I work with who are willing to take a risk, try something new and share what they learn with others are my other sources of inspiration.

## What accomplishments are most important?

- The way our teachers have leveraged the technology in their classrooms to design learning environments and instructional strategies that meet student needs.
- The products our students create that show their learning process and demonstrate their mastery of the content.
- The fact that in a fairly large school district (46,000 students) we have been able to provide technology tools - tied to effective professional development programs - across the district to all students and teachers and not just a select few.

## What do you hope for the future of your program?

- That we continue to grow the one-to-one program and expand on our other technology initiatives in a fashion that is meaningful and builds on our current success.
- That we always function as a community of learners that includes administrators, teachers, students and parents, and keep growing in knowledge and expertise to meet the needs of our students.

## How do you inspire your staff to embrace change?

I keep the focus on the students. Whenever someone wonders if the effort is worth it, I show them classrooms where technology is used effectively and point out student engagement, sheer joy in learning, and their achievement.

## For More Information

### POWER ON TEXAS

[http://www.powerontexas.com/?page\\_id=2406](http://www.powerontexas.com/?page_id=2406)

Digital Learning Environments Case Study

<http://www.guide2digitallearning.com/node/674>

Partnership for 21st Century Skills <http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/press/successstoriesFINAL.pdf>

K-12 Blueprint Archived Webinar

<http://www.k12blueprint.com/k12/blueprint/ConvertibleTabletsWebinar.php>

Digital Learning Environments Leadership Section

[www.guide2digitallearning.com](http://www.guide2digitallearning.com)

