



February 16, 2017

Dear Givins/Shaw Parents/Guardians:

The feedback that both the Givins/Shaw staff and the School Council have received since holding our Digital Education Information Night on February 2, and distributing and posting our technology plan fund-raising initiative this week, has been extremely positive. On the information night, we were able to share Givins/Shaw's technology 'Why Statement' (included below) which looks to succinctly explain why we believe that enhancing our school's collective technological acumen will prove so beneficial for our students.

At Givins/Shaw, we strive to be flexible and to take risks in our learning. We, as educators in concert with our community, nurture curiosity and creativity in our students. By integrating technology, it is our goal to foster further innovation. Through a collaborative approach, it is our goal for our students to become responsible citizens, problem-solvers, and critical thinkers.

Of course, as interest grows in our technology plan, questions arise from all involved. In the past few days, we have received questions from various members of our community and I would like to use this forum to provide a few answers.

Q: Please explain the professional development plan and how will you evaluate the effectiveness of the technology plan?

A: At a staff meeting in September 2016, the Givins/Shaw staff had the opportunity to complete a survey which led to the creation of an educational technological profile for our school. All the teachers completed the survey which is an indicator of just how committed the Givins/Shaw staff is to our plan. The profile the survey produced has provided us with invaluable base-line data for our school and we will use it as a metric by which to measure our progress. We will look to complete the same survey either at the end of this school year, or the start of the 2017/18 year, so we can have a point of comparison. In general, we are looking to follow the model for advancing our digital fluency that has the acronym of SAMR (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition). A more detailed explanation of the SAMR model can be found at:

<https://sites.google.com/a/msad60.org/technology-is-learning/samr-model> .

One of the areas of school improvement that sprung from the examination of our technological profile was the establishment of a staff technology committee that consists of four teachers and Principal Taylor. Since September, the technology committee has worked diligently, in concert with our School Council, to establish key foundational pieces to our plan such as collectively creating the 'Why Statement', participating in professional development with technology educational experts, and becoming 'model' teachers whose expertise would be made available to the rest of the staff and whose classrooms would be open for other teachers to visit. The term we use in education for increasing our overall professional practice in a certain area is 'building capacity' and we believe we have a model in place that will allow us to successfully build capacity amongst the entire staff. We will also be able to plan more technologically-specific PD, when the materials are more available to the entire staff.

Q: I notice that sometimes the items listed in our technology plan are available in certain stores for less than is indicated in the school's plan. Can we purchase the items from different vendors?

A: The Toronto District School Board has a purchasing division that negotiates the cost for the different items and as a school in the TDSB we must purchase through the TDSB's catalogue. One of the questions we did receive about a specific element of our plan is the cost of the pack of 10 ipads as it seems to be more money than the cost of buying ten separate units. The ten pack comes with the 'Apple Care' maintenance package for all ten devices. Buying ten individual ipads, and getting the same amount of Apple Care, would be more expensive than the cost of the ten pack.

Q: Will there be clubs or after school programs that focus on the use of technology?

A: Givins/Shaw co-curricular clubs, programs, or teams, are made available through the willingness of teachers to volunteer their time. Just this week, Givins/Shaw's boys' basketball team, hockey team, lunch-hour house-league soccer, Forest of Reading program, skating trip, and ski excursion for our grade 5 and 6 students all occurred because our staff understands how beneficial co-curricular activities are for our students so they volunteered their time to enable these activities to happen. As much as we can never guarantee from year to year exactly what co-curricular activities will be offered, we do have a strong tradition of enrichment programming at Givins/Shaw. With the robots we have currently on loan from a TDSB professional lending library, one of our teachers has been offering a robotics club for interested students during lunch.

Q: How will you communicate the manner in which the technology is being used in the various classrooms?

A: One of the areas in which we have placed a pronounced focus this year is on improving the manner in which Givins/Shaw communicates with the community. Since August 2016, we have revamped the website (www.givinsshaw.com) and we update it regularly. Our website also includes our twitter feed which is also updated on a consistent basis. We have already tweeted out several photos this year which show how we are currently using technology in our classrooms. We also work in concert with our School Council and they will share the information via the "Bulldog Bulletin", Council meeting minutes and the community Facebook page. All of our staff communicates with their families in various ways with several of them maintaining their own class blog or website. Due to the new technology that has been made available to the school this year, some of the classes are now using web-based communication tools such as Class Dojo or Seesaw in order to keep families informed. We are very excited about the way in which we will be able to update the Givins/Shaw community with regards to how we are using the technology in our classrooms.

Q: How can I donate to the technology plan at Givins/Shaw?

A: You may donate either through writing a cheque or completing a donation on-line. Here are the instructions:

Cheque Instructions:

- Make cheque payable to "Toronto District School Board"
- Memo: "Givins/Shaw Junior Public School Technology"
- Donation receipts will be issue for cheques \$25 and over once the cheque has cleared
- Cheques can be dropped off at the school office

Online Instructions:

- Go to: <https://tdsb.schoolcashonline.com/Fee/Details/457/153/false/true>
- Select or enter amount of donation (if you or your company wishes to donate more than \$5000.00 it will need to be done as multiple entries)
- Select Fund Destination - "Givins/Shaw Junior Public School"
- Enter "Technology" in the Message Section
- Click "Add to Cart" and then "Continue"
- Sign In or Register for an account (Name, address, and email are required to register) – if you have trouble with this please call 1 866 961 1803
- Go to your email to "confirm your email address"
- Select method of payment and complete order (Visa, Master Card, Interac, or eCheck)
- Can print an official tax receipt immediately (or login at anytime in future to reprint or save tax receipt). An email of the tax receipt will also be emailed to you immediately.

Please consider asking your employer or other members of your community if they would be interested in supporting our school.

Individuals' names with their associated donation amounts will not be published without your consent.