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Educator Brief

District Develops ICT Skills Program to Jump-Start Teachers' Technology Proficiency

Moss Point School District

LOCATION: Moss Point, Jackson County, MS
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS: 8
NUMBER OF STUDENTS: ±3,000

GRADES: K-12
SCHOOL STRUCTURE: Rural
PERCENT OF STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH: 85



The Objective

The Moss Point School District wanted its teachers to be able to equip students with the technical skills and knowledge they need to thrive in today's society.

The Process

The district created an information and communication technology (ICT) skills development program to help Moss Point teachers transition from lecture-based lessons to student-centered and project-based learning. At the same time, the district participated in the Cisco® 21st Century Schools Initiative (21S), which also supported teachers as they developed new ICT skills and incorporated new pedagogy.

To help teachers develop the ICT skills they needed to transform learning activities for their students, the district designed a program that met the following objectives:

- Set clear goals aligned with the primary objectives—lessons should connect district learning objectives to real-life situations and engage students in higher-order thinking, and teaching should involve daily use of fundamental technologies and regular use of advanced technologies.
- Aligned with the Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3), which all teachers in the district were required to attain.
- Used self-assessment based on the IC3 pyramid of ICT skills as a means of assessing teachers and identifying skill gaps.

- Accommodated the varying schedules, experience levels, and learning styles of the teachers in the district.
- Used classroom observation to assess teachers' use of ICT skills.
- Reinforced skills and provided ongoing support and coaching to help ensure continuity and sustainability.

The Outcome

Within a year, 80 to 85 percent of the teachers are using advanced technologies in their classrooms. Ninety teachers have obtained their IC3 certification, and students are actively engaged in classroom learning.

Lesson Learned

Moss Point instructional technologists learned the following lessons while implementing the ICT skills training program:

- Informal assessment worked well to foster initial engagement and a collaborative atmosphere.
- The key to success was to organize the workshops into digestible chunks that the team could easily adapt to the individual needs of teachers.
- Collaboration was central to maintaining momentum and excitement.

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