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Name of School:	Thomas Starr King Middle School
Location of School:	4201 Fountain Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90029
Phone and Fax Numbers of School:	Tel: (323) 644-6700 Fax: (323) 913-3594
Date of plan :	2004 - 2006
Persons responsible for creating plan:	School's Technology Coordinator and Committee

Brief description of the school or district:

Thomas Starr King Middle School has been educating students in Los Angeles since 1926. Thirteen elementary schools, in communities as economically and culturally diverse as Franklin Hills, Los Feliz, Silverlake, Echo Park, and Hollywood, send students to this school. An analysis of this school's ethnic make-up done in 1998-1999 shows that this school's student body of over 2200 is 68.6% Hispanic, 16.3% White, 7.6% Asian, 4.4% Filipino, 2.4% African-American, 0.4% Native American and 0.2% Pacific Islander. They speak over thirty languages and come from more than forty different countries; some are newly arrived in this country, others are native born. Groups with strong cultural representation include Mexican, Central American, Armenian, Chinese, and more.

In 1995, Thomas Starr King Junior High School reconfigured to a 6th through 8th middle school. This brought about many changes, among them grade level houses, common planning periods, interdisciplinary instruction teams, and COREs. Their instructional programs are designed to both meet the required standards and provide supplemental or enriched education to students so identified. Thomas Starr King Middle School has just completed the Coordinated Compliance Review for the 1999-2000 school year. The findings of this self-review indicate that the school is aligning its instructional program with a standards-based assessment and accountability system, per the LAUSD's Focus on Achievement program. Effective practices in instruction are incorporating standards-based, interdisciplinary alignment of the curriculum in reading, language arts and mathematics.

Thomas Starr King Middle School is a public school that provides a quality, challenging education that fosters equality, respect, and responsibility among a diverse group of students, staff, parents, and communities. They envision a school in which all students will be equipped with meaningful life tools, such as skills in literacy; critical thinking; basic academics; educational technology; the appreciation of art; democratic values of acceptance, participation and accountability, and the ability to work with a variety of people from diverse backgrounds.

Thomas Starr King Middle School Technology Plan (Brief Vision and Goals)

Thomas Starr King Middle School will use technology as a tool to enhance their reform efforts through theme based multidisciplinary projects, taught in a collaborative manner. Technology will be used as a tool to maximize the students' learning. This will encourage and enable the students to use technology to achieve California State and Los Angeles Unified School District student learning standards and to promote higher student achievement. I like how they are prioritizing the use of computers.

Thomas Starr King Middle School Technology Plan Critique

Persons responsible from the plan: The persons who are responsible from the plan is missing.

The committee names should be also listed as of under list of technology committee members. Also, I don't think there is enough tech aide staffs available to handle all the computer problems that arise. It is stated in the "Notes" part but I think the computer lab is lacking tech aide staffs since they handle too many computers but there are only few tech aides.

Process used to create the plan:

The technology plan for this school was created properly. It first shows you each grade level practices and the plans for using an appropriate ergonomic practices, and after that it shows you their goals how to achieve these practices for each grade level and how they are going to attain their goals. I think prioritizing the use of computers also helps their goals as well. It also tells you the step by step process in the "Deployment of Computers and Technology", "Use of Printers" and "Assignment of Computers to Classrooms" parts, as well as shows the methods, the teachers are planning to use in the "Assumptions" part, where they need the technology, what they need and how to setup their technology needs in this particular school.

Vision statement:

The school's vision statement is explaining the use of technology as a way to maximize their students learning. They want to make sure that their students use technology to achieve California State and Los Angeles Unified School District student learning standards and to promote higher student achievement with it. I really like their approach and how they look at technology. Their statement clearly summarizes their intent by saying they will continue to expand student access to technology, upgrade their systems and provide professional development and teacher support to them. This is very important in technology because technology is always improving and always changing overtime so that is why it is an important to upgrade systems in the computer labs with new technology tools and have the students learn current tools. I think this school's vision statement is very ambitious and also very respectable in my opinion.

Timeline/implementation plan:

In the timeline part of this school technology plan, I think that the goals are set in line with the vision of their Technology Plan. I personally like how they have preplanned before any action is to take place. Only thing is the timeline is not very specific, it just shows the year and only says that they are all "on going", which is fine, but it doesn't let you know the exact dates and the duration of the action taking places for the particular implementations, which can be hard to guess or to assess if this will be an achieved goal through the years or not. Although it does let you know that it will be achieved between three to four years the exact dates are needed to let you know just how much commitment is needed by the school's staff and faculty to make sure they succeed.

Evaluation of future progress:

The evaluation plan is lacking benchmarks and dates. It only gives you the action taking place but it's just general. Although it does mention that it will take place certain times a year, I feel that other monitoring system also could take a place within that time frame.

Staff development:

This plan shows us that the teachers and/or review strategies for working with technology as an instructional tool to supplement, reinforce and enrich instruction is "Ongoing". What is lacking in this plan is not knowing what kind of training they will receive, for example what software or hardware they will be trained, this is unknown in this plan. I think that should be included in the technology plan so teachers would know how to prepare and get an idea of what they will be trained on.

Comments about the document's clarity:

I like how this document was organized, it lets us know the "before" and what will be "after" clearly. The goals and implementation and as well as evaluation plan make sense and are good organized in my opinion. But, it just needs to be more specific as well as letting us know the roles and duties of the persons involved which are not that clear in this school's technology plan. Other than that, it could be understood by the teacher, parents, etc.

Comments about the document's practicality:

The Technology Plan proposed looks like it can be achieved given the time and resources that will be used. It does look realistic in my opinion. The school hopes to be funded by the California State grant and LAUSD or some other private sources which can be a good or a bad thing. It is good that the state can be generous but it can be bad at the same time, because, funding could be cut or expire overtime, it actually depends on State's budget cuts, recession time, etc. Funding through private sources is a good idea because it can be continuous and generous in my opinion. Actually they also stated the funding sources section at the last page of the plan and they stated that the three of them are "Ongoing" which is good because those are indicated with the Technology Coordinator and two full-time Educational Resource Aides for instructional and technical support for the computer labs.

Revision Action Plan:

I am pleased with this school's technology plan proposal not only because at the middle school level the school's administrators realize the importance of technology and how is necessary to teach at an earlier age. They also realize the importance of having computer skills and being marketable in the real world experience and not only will the students get training, but the staff and the teachers which will make Thomas Starr King Middle School a more elite school in the California State and Los Angeles Unified School District. Technology education should be a mandatory class in every school district after this date.

I feel that the plan is well organized and to the point, but I would change it to little bit more detailed version, especially with having some timelines in details with exact dates, etc. I do expect the goals to be realistic and I really liked how they prioritized the task in the "Use of Computers" section. They want to make sure that they will keep the priorities in line with State and District standards, with the ideals of middle schools, with the long-range goals of the Technology Committee. And they want to provide as much equal access as possible for all grade levels, subjects and programs and teachers.

I am confident that they will be making the necessary changes to realize their goals with this plan. This plan is just a start and I believe that, it will continue to grow and improve in time with the school needs.