

Summer 2015 1:1 Pilot Formative Memo – Executive Summary

The Friday Institute for Educational Innovation provided feedback on the second year of Hamilton County's 1:1 technology pilot program. Major findings were drawn from surveys, focus groups, interviews, and classroom observations. Reports from principals, teachers, and students suggest that participation in the pilot program has improved students' confidence in learning and technology skills in addition to the sustained improvement in student interest and engagement. The [full six-page memorandum](#) is available online.

Student Impact

Students, teachers, and principals agree that **students' confidence in learning and ability to work independently has increased**, and most teachers agree that students are better able to collaborate and engage in project-based learning. As in previous reflections, **72% of students report increased interest in school** and nearly two-thirds of teachers report **student engagement has improved**. More than three-quarters of **staff, students, and parents agree that students are better at locating useful information and using technology**. Students reported that the quality of their work has improved, but teachers are reluctant to agree students have achieved greater academic success.

Teacher Impact

The **majority of teachers are using devices daily or weekly to support instruction**, albeit in varying stages of comfort. Nearly 80% state their **teaching practices place greater emphasis on communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills**. In general, teachers are **shifting towards student-centered learning** through research assignment and group projects. Some note an increased efficiency due to implementing project-based learning, freeing up more time to engage with students. However, not all teachers are engaged in PBL, with some under the impression that the program's purpose was to provide devices, not create a PBL environment.

Strategies & Supports

Professional development and instructional technology coaches were cited as critical supports for the initiative. Teachers stated the need for additional, full-time coaches to help troubleshoot and share ideas. **Administrative support for classroom observation, time to work with coaches, and planning time is very important to the success of technology implementation** according to teachers. **Peer support and collaboration** to share resources and strategies were also critical.

Challenges & Recommendations

Home access to the Internet continues to be a barrier to the success of the 1:1 initiative. Educators concerns about misuse, coupled with limited access at home, leads to lack of homework assignments. Additional resources, including reliable and sufficient technology infrastructure, technology coaches, and devices themselves, are needed as the initiative expands. Student responsibility and misuse, primarily at middle and high schools, continues to be an issue; when students leave devices at home or lose them for disciplinary reasons, learning is disrupted.