**1.2 Strategic Planning**

Candidates facilitate the design, development, implementation, communication, and evaluation of technology-infused strategic plans.

Reflection

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis was completed to evaluate the status of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Essential Conditions for successful technology programs in my school. I was asked to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the building where I worked, and to notice areas of opportunities for improvement and potential threats within our building. The SWOT Analysis demonstrates ISTE’s Essential Condition of Implementation Planning- “a systematic plan aligned with a shared vision for school effectiveness and student learning through the infusion of technology and digital learning resources (Williamson and Redish, 2009, p.12). I completed the analysis independently by addressing the questions embedded in the SWOT template designed to guide my analysis systematically through all eight essential conditions.

Standard 1.2, Strategic Planning outlines the elements needed in the design, development, implementation, communication, and evaluation of technology-infused strategic plans. This artifact demonstrates my competence to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the school where I worked. The results are necessary for developing, implementing, and for communicating those findings to design a new technology-infused strategic plan, or to create a new technology-infused strategic plan altogether. My analysis was completed independently, during a summer semester with the goal of sharing documented findings with the building administrators and Media Specialist. I would like to have implemented the plan the following school year, but unfortunately, there was an unexpected and dramatic change in leadership. The building where I worked lost two experienced administrators, and they were replaced with two novice administrators. Implementing a technology-infused strategic plan was probably not high on their list of priorities as evidenced by some of the changes that occurred building-wide during their inaugural year in charge of running a school. In small groups and individual conversations, I shared some of the information from the SWOT analysis especially as it related to our common goal of teaching students, increasing student achievement, and increasing our College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRI) at that time. We discussed how we could capitalize on our building strengths to close the gap and decrease our weaknesses. As teachers, we could teach one another how to use various digital tools for teaching students and for communicating with parents. We even entertained the idea of asking administrators to implement days where students could bring their own devices to school, but the opportunity of theft and the threat of having to replace damaged or stolen devices that belonged to individual students kept us from the further development of that plan. At the time of this SWOT analysis, technology was still scarce in many areas of South Fulton County schools. Some North County schools were beginning to implement “bring your own device” days, but in South Fulton, some schools were still receiving mounted interactive whiteboards or Panaboards for the first time. Needless-to-say, placing technology in the hands of every student was almost a foreign concept in some South Fulton County Schools, like mine for example. The Media Specialist had recently acquired between two and four iPads for the school and the one she was using was reissued to another staff member when the new administrators arrived. This is an example of the limitations or weaknesses of the technology in our building and how administrators miss an opportunity for the Media Specialist to use her iPad to demonstrate technology in action and to train others using the iPad that she was originally issued as the technology support person in our building. Although the plan that resulted from my SWOT analysis was not implemented the following school term, I shared information learned from the analysis and started to implement the plan one teacher at a time by challenging each teacher to teach another teacher on her/ his team how to use digital resources or a digital device.

I learned that although my school had a lot of weaknesses related to the design, development, implementation, communication, and evaluation of a technology-infused strategic plan, there were also authentic strengths and opportunities for improvement. What I would do differently is to self-promote change for the betterment of the building in which I work. For example, under ISTE Essential Condition One: Effective Use of Technology Embedded Student-Centered Learning, many teachers lack sufficient training in this area, but our Media Specialist/ Technology Support Staff could design mini trainings during grade level collaborative planning meetings once a week or twice per month. Doing so, also addresses Condition Five: Ongoing Professional Learning. For ISTE Essential Condition Four: Equitable Access, SWD and ESOL students need targeted applications or digital resources to address their specific areas of need- language and vocabulary, comprehension, reading below grade level, or magnification for examples. Give these students access to the computer lab by implementing targeted and specific training once a week in a homogeneous group to help strengthen their areas of weaknesses by interacting with technology in specific ways. Doing so, could lead to increased confidence and increased technology application skills for those groups of students. For ISTE Essential Condition Five: Skilled personnel, until a technology specialist or technology coach is hired, provide a platform for teachers to showcase what they know during faculty meetings or collaborative meetings by developing mini lessons. This will also address ISTE Essential Condition Five Ongoing Professional Learning and possibly, Condition Seven: Technical Support. Communicating a school’s weaknesses is not helpful unless, their strengths are communicated to stakeholders as well. When the evaluation lends itself to the development of a plan formulated to act responsibility based on current opportunities found within the building can decrease or eliminate many building threats. I learned that I am a strength to any building where I work because of the skills and knowledge I have acquired. I am also an opportunity waiting to happen because I am eager to share the information that I receive with others in the school with the goal of full implementation of the design, and development of a comprehensive technology-infused strategic plan that communicates to all stakeholders how we will evaluate and improve said technology-infused strategic plan annually.

Creating the SWOT Analysis made me a more informed teacher, which lead me to take more risks involving technology integration. I asked for help, resources, and I asked colleagues to allow me to collaborate by pushing into their classes with my students for targeted instruction where they used digital resources that I did not have access to in my classroom setting. Teachers on my team learned about what I was learning, and some reported trying some of the strategies that I shared in our collaborative planning meetings. A formal assessment was not designed or developed to evaluate the impact on school improvement or student achievement. The only feedback came from individual teachers who took the time to reflect how something I shared made a difference in something they implemented in their individual classrooms. I was encouraged, because if each of those teachers share with another teacher what I shared with them, the impact could eventually reach the entire school. “Every school has t*railblazers*: teachers and staff who willingly venture into the unknown, such as the implementation of technology” (Creighton, 2003, p. 59). If I do not blaze a trail, I would, at least, like to spark a flame for quality technology implementation in the building where I work.