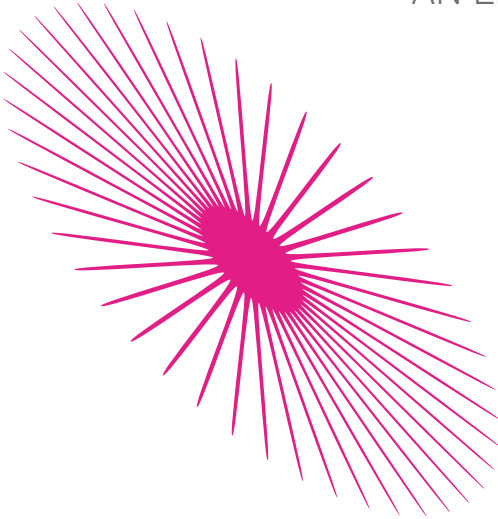# INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HIRING AN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY LEADER

When you are seeking to hire a Chief Technology Officer (CTO) or Technology Director for your school district, you want to ensure that this person has extensive technology experience and can apply these skills in an educational environment.

Your CTO will be working with Chief Academic Officers, Chief Financial Officers, Chief Operating Officers and others at the district level, as well as principals, teachers, parents and the School Board. This person needs to have the leadership skills necessary to effectively communicate with these various stakeholders.

CoSN has developed this set of interview questions that will help you gauge CTO candidates' knowledge and skill levels. These questions are based on the 10 skill areas of the CoSN *Framework of Essential Skills of the K–12 CTO.*

LEADERSHIP & VISION

Work closely with the executive team and stakeholders to develop a shared vision with long-term, big-picture perspectives on district goals to plan for meaningful and effective uses of technology, and to provide leadership when creating a vision of how technology will help meet district goals.

Interview Questions

1. Describe how you have created a plan to integrate education technology into the district's strategic and operational goals.

2. Which stakeholders did you need to include or consult with when formulating this plan?

3. How did you measure the cost-effectiveness of your strategic plan?

4. How did you measure its overall effectiveness?

5. How did you mitigate the risk of implementing your plan?

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Have a high-level view across the school system and work with instructional and technical teams to identify steps needed to transform the technology vision into a long-range plan, complete with specific goals, objectives and action plans.

Interview Questions

1. What do you see are the three most promising technologies on the horizon for today's educational environment?

2. Describe how you would build a coalition with district stakeholders to implement these technologies.

ETHICS & POLICIES

Manage the creation, implementation and enforcement of policies and educational programs relating to the social, legal and ethical issues of technology use throughout the district and modeling responsible decision-making.

Interview Questions

1. Describe the ways in which you have safeguarded students' safety and privacy as it relates to technology use.

2. What federal laws are we obligated to adhere to as they relate to children's online safety?

INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Budget, plan and coordinate ongoing, purposeful professional development for all staff using technologies; ensure a sufficient budget through the implementation and assessment process of emerging technologies.

Interview Questions

1. Describe how you have ensured that your staff stays current about the latest trends and technologies emerging in the education field.

2. How have you enhanced students' learning through the use of technology?

3. How have you kept other stakeholders (such as superintendents, faculty, etc.) informed on new technologies that can enhance learning?

TEAM BUILDING & STAFFING

Play an integral role in the district's strategic planning process; create and support cross-functional teams for decision-making, technology support, professional development and other aspects of the district's technology program.

Interview Questions

1. What is your philosophy on managing or collaborating with cross-functional teams?

2. How have you ensured that all participants are equally represented?

3. How have you handled conflicts that arise among cross-functional teams?

STAKEHOLDER FOCUS

Build relationships with all stakeholders, taking a close look at how the district determines requirements, expectations and preferences. Understand the key factors that lead to stakeholder satisfaction, focusing on how the district seeks knowledge, satisfaction and loyalty of students and other stakeholders.

Interview Questions

1. There are many stakeholders in the education environment. Besides the administration staff, teachers and students, name at least three other stakeholder groups you have worked with and how you determined their expectations and requirements.

2. How did you prioritize their conflicting expectations or needs?

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

Direct, coordinate and ensure implementation of all tasks related to technical, infrastructure, standards and integration of technology into every facet of district operations.

Interview Questions

1. What are your experiences using cloud computing? What were the advantages and disadvantages?

2. When does it make more sense to outsource? What are the advantages and disadvantages of outsourcing?

3. Describe how you have developed and implemented a disaster recovery and business continuity plan.

COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

Use technology to improve communication, directing and coordinating the use of email, district websites, web tools, voice mail systems and other forms of communication to facilitate decision-making and to enhance effective communication with key stakeholders.

Interview Questions

1. What techniques and technologies have you implemented to improve communication district-wide?

2. What were some of the challenges you encountered using district-wide communications tools?

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

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Manage the budget and serve as a strong business leader who guides purchasing decisions, determines the return on investment for all technology implementations and fosters good relationships with vendors, potential funders and other key groups.

Interview Questions

1. Describe your experiences in creating and managing a district-wide technology budget.

2. How did you make purchasing decisions? In making these decisions, how did you forecast the technology's total cost of ownership?

3. How did you measure the return on investments?
4. How did you decide whether to purchase or lease equipment?

DATA MANAGEMENT

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Manage the establishment and maintenance of systems and tools for gathering, mining, integrating and reporting data in usable and meaningful ways to produce an information culture in which data management is critical to strategic planning.

Interview Questions

1. How have you used actionable data to increase student success?
2. What technology systems have you used to collect, analyze and disseminate data that ultimately informs instruction?
3. How did you ensure the integrity and authenticity of the collected data?
4. How did you ensure the security of the collected data?