

## Education Market Personas

Developed by Clarity Innovations Fall 2020 At Clarity Innovations, we're taking this moment to look at education through the lens of "these unprecedented times" and ask questions, including:

- What does it mean to educate within remote, online, and/or hybrid settings?
- What are educators looking for now, and what specific challenges do they face?
- How can technology best support teaching, leading, and learning?

These personas will help you explore the experiences and challenges of educating in school year 2020-21 and beyond. We believe personas are one of the key elements of the user experience design process; working with personas frequently uncovers aspects of a proposed product or service that may not have been defined until much later during development. Use them to put yourself into the shoes of your staff, customers, users, or colleagues.

We hope these perspectives will spark ideas and conversations about how we can all better support students, educators, schools, and districts through innovative approaches to designing and building the future of education.

Personas are fictional characters that edtech providers often employ to represent their typical users. At Clarity Innovations, we create personas as part of our design and discovery process to help flesh out educator and learner needs, behaviors, and goals.



Natasha Westlund
Early Elementary Educator

#### Education

Master of Arts in Elementary and Early Childhood Education

**Career Stage** 

**EARLY** 

LATE

Tech Fluency

LOW

HIGH

"I've been in the classroom for fifteen years, but I feel like a first-year teacher all over again with this move to virtual learning."

Natasha has taken on the role of lead mentor teacher for her grade, providing professional support for her colleagues and modeling methods of online instruction.

While she doesn't claim to have it all figured out, Natasha is very reflective in her practice and her teammates benefit from her insight and constant willingness to improve.



- Plans and delivers online instruction that is hands-on, developmentally appropriate, and meets individual student needs
- Creates and maintains a Bitmoji classroom (virtual learning hub with fun avatars) that provides pre-reader learning supports
- Collaborates with instructional coaches and specialists
- Coordinates student supports and services with special education teachers



## Natasha Westlund Early Elementary Educator

## Natasha's Influence

Natasha regularly consults with her peers and principal, gives input and recommendations about math and literacy products, and helps her peers implement strategies as part of the school's multi-tier system of supports.



## **PRIORITIES**

- Ensuring that students are ready and able to learn using technology
- Attending to the social-emotional well-being of her students through trauma-informed practices
- Safely distributing hands-on learning materials and supplies
- Providing technical support and at-home learning resources for students' families



- Limited number of online tools that offer sufficient audio and visual support for pre-readers
- Inconsistent and varied at-home support
- Wide range of student instructional levels and learning styles





## Russell Dibben Middle School Math Educator

## Education

Master of Arts in Teaching Mathematics

**Career Stage** 

**EARLY** 

LATE

HIGH

Tech Fluency

LOW

"I believe technology can enhance the ways we teach and learn like nothing before."

Russell is new to the classroom relative to his colleagues, but what he lacks in experience he makes up for in enthusiasm. He believes technology can enhance his teaching, and he desires to use non-conventional methods to teach math in a more hands-on, visual way. He's eager to share his ideas with a wider network of math teachers.



- Plans and delivers instruction remotely, both synchronous and asynchronous, using Google Classroom and other online tools
- Meets 1:1 with students to assess their progress, including diagnostic assessments
- Collaborates with instructional support coaches and specialists on student learning progression plans
- Updates the curriculum while loading it into the school's online learning management system



## Russell Dibben

Middle School Math Educator

## Russell's Influence

Russell often collaborates with his gradelevel peers on cross-curricular projects, gives his department chair recommendations about free and paid software, and co-chairs his school improvement committee.

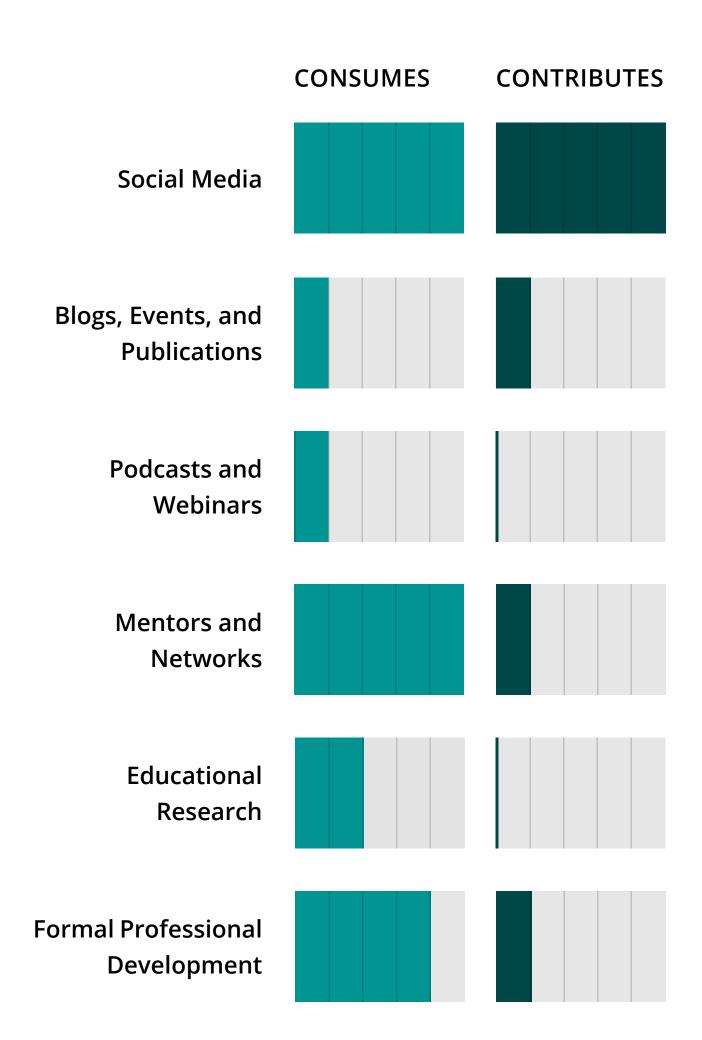


## **PRIORITIES**

- Using technology to ensure that all students feel "seen" and supported as their math skills grow
- Helping students learn methods to advocate for their own needs when physically distanced
- Getting support to help improve his students' tech skills: computer navigation, keyboarding, and using Google Classroom
- Accessing a consistent professional learning community of teachers delivering instruction remotely



- Mandated physical distancing for students and teachers
- Insufficient student technical fluency
- Lack of support resources for students requiring basic technology skills





## **Traci Williams**Middle School Media Specialist

## **Education**

Master of Science in Library and Information Studies

## **Career Stage**

EARLY

LATE

**Tech Fluency** 

LOW

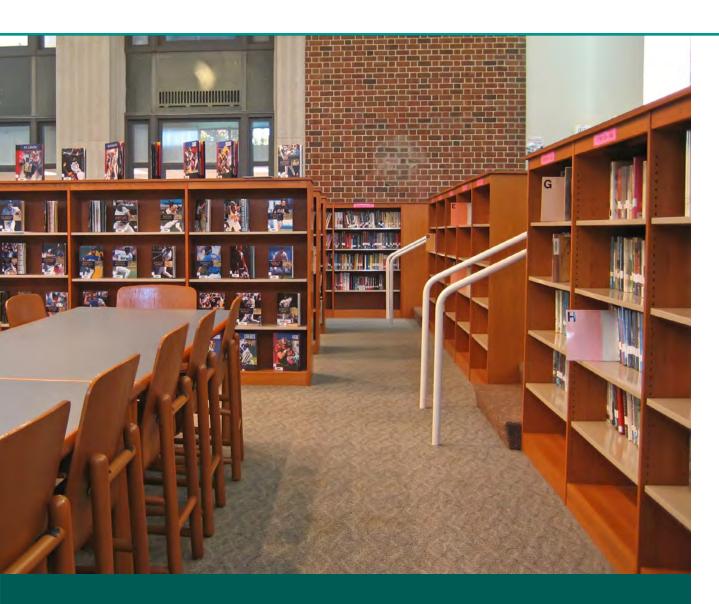
HIGH

"Each day I hope to support educators to help them design innovative learning experiences for our kids."

Last year Traci received a grant to add more titles from BIPOC voices to the school's library and was featured in a blog on diversifying the collection. The post highlighted her efforts to create a more welcoming and student-centered space by genrefying to help students access engaging books more easily.



- Maintains and adapts check-out programs
- Acts as the instructional technology liaison for her school
- Curates resources and provides
   professional learning experiences
   for educators on media literacy and
   integrating technology into instruction
- Provides technology support for virtual learning
- Creates virtual makerspaces for students and teachers



## **Traci Williams**Middle School Media Specialist

## Traci's Influence

Traci frequently helps educators in her building make instructional decisions to enhance learning. She is often asked by her administrators to weigh in on the school's instructional goals and technology plan. Traci also contributes to professional learning experiences for educators across the district.

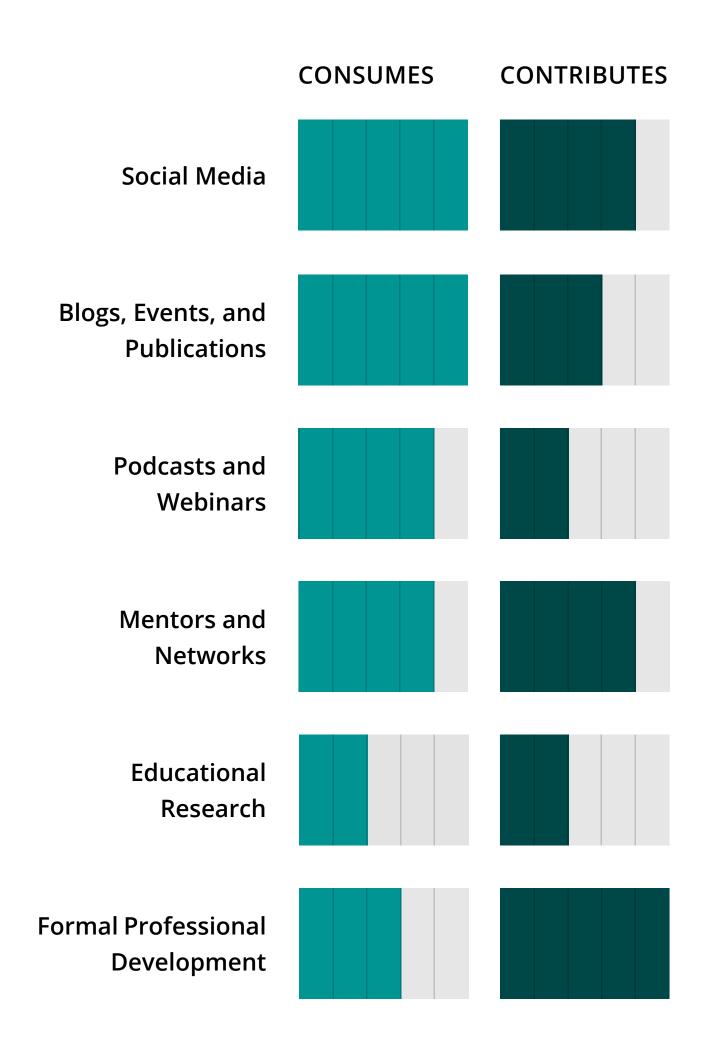


## **PRIORITIES**

- Supporting teachers with best practices in technology integration for daily teaching and learning
- Securing funding and creating a diverse reading collection that is easily accessible for students and teachers
- Finding time, money, and flexibility for collaborating with teachers and her own professional learning



- Lack of access to reliable transportation and/or connectivity in the school's community
- Limited district-approved digital tools, resources, and software
- Varied levels of technology fluency among educators





## Marta Vasquez Assistant High School Principal

## **Education**

Master of Science in Educational Administration, Bachelor of Science in Special Education

**Career Stage** 

EARLY

Tech Fluency

LOW

LATE

HIGH

"I got into education because I love kids' energy and inquisitiveness. Virtual and hybrid learning has been a challenge—I still get to interact with students, but it's not the same."

Marta worked closely with her faculty to develop and institute a teacher motivation initiative as a response to the "COVID-19 slump" many educators were facing.

Marta has also coordinated with special education case managers on successful implementation of remote programming.



- Supports her principal's management of the day-to-day operations of her school
- Documents school performance to demonstrate how the school meets federal and state guidelines
- Ensures the safety of students
   and applies disciplinary measures
   when required
- Supports the budget planning process for the building, staff, and operations
- Serves as a liaison between students, teachers, parents, and other administrators



## Marta Vasquez Assistant High School Principal

#### Marta's Influence

Marta collaborates closely with her principal, keeps educators informed of the latest research, helps coordinate family and community engagement through the school's parent teacher organization, and supports her team of counselors doing scheduling and registration each semester.

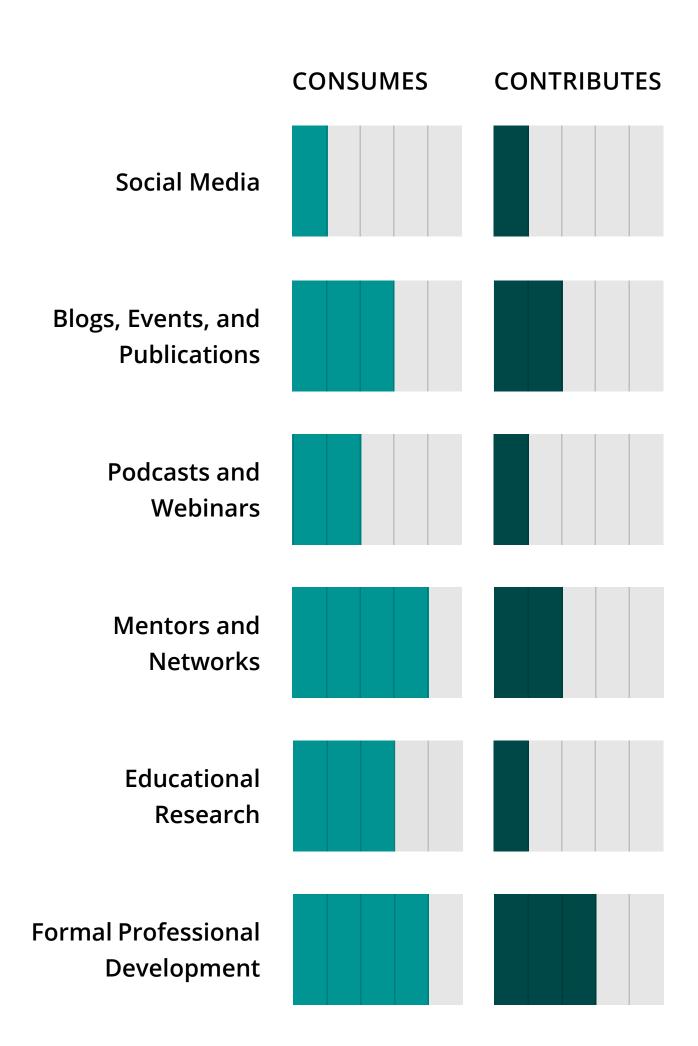


## **PRIORITIES**

- Designing and testing effective methods for tracking attendance in both virtual and hybrid settings
- Meeting with parents virtually to discuss student learning difficulties
- Evaluating wide-ranging data to determine areas where the master schedule can better support student success
- Developing, budgeting for, and implementing school safety procedures for reopening



- Unknown timeline for students' return to full-time, in-person instruction
- Lack of consistent school or district policies and guidelines for virtual learning
- Need for additional funding to ensure student safety and provide equitable support





## Elijah Jones Elementary School Principal

## **Education**

Master of Arts in Teaching,
Master of Education in Educational Leadership

## **Career Stage**

**EARLY** 

LATE

**Tech Fluency** 

LOW

HIGH

"I am here to serve and support these children, first and foremost."

As someone who lives in his school's community, Elijah understands the needs of his student population and their families. He serves as an advocate for his neighborhood and often attends meetings with local organizations and government to secure resources and engage the community.



- Shapes and implements a shared school vision
- Creates and nurtures the school climate and instructional programming
- Manages people, data, and processes to produce a safe and effective learning environment
- Collaborates with staff, families, and the community
- Interacts within the wider political, social, legal, and cultural contexts of schooling



## Elijah Jones

Elementary School Principal

## Elijah's Influence

Elijah actively coaches his faculty and staff, has the ear of the district's assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, and is a key stakeholder on district-level technology decisions about equitable student access.

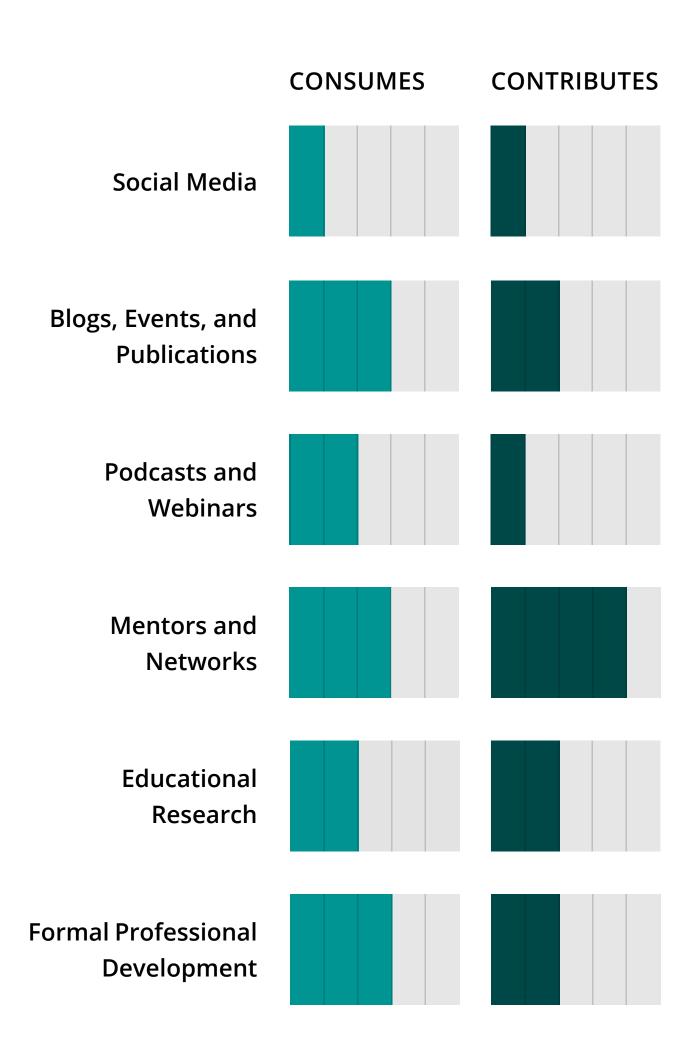


## **PRIORITIES**

- Helping to ensure families have devices, connectivity, and supplies for distance learning
- Supporting teachers so they can provide a quality education to a population of traditionally underserved children
- Bringing an increased focus on equity to the hiring process so that the staff represents the student population
- Getting school-provided meals to struggling families during the pandemic
- Creating a plan to ensure the school thrives after his upcoming retirement



- Lack of resources for teacher training with online learning tools
- Limited technology budget
- Too many tasks and demands on his schedule





# Shana Bell District Instructional Technology Coach

#### Education

Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, Instructional Technology Certification

## **Career Stage**

**EARLY** 

LATE

Tech Fluency
Low

HIGH

"I strive for equity, making sure educators and students have the tools and information they need to be successful."

As a Google Certified Educator, Shana has been instrumental in helping her district's 15 schools adopt and implement Google Workspace for Education and Google Classroom as the K-12 learning management system. Using district-wide data, Shana created a catalog of just-intime, interactive professional learning experiences to help educators build their technology confidence and their capacity for integrating technology into teaching and learning.



- Provides professional learning experiences for educators on integrating technology into instruction
- Co-creates student learning experiences with teachers across the district
- Oversees and supports schools' technology distribution programs
- Offers instructional technology support for virtual learning
- Creates district-level curriculum resources for media literacy and digital citizenship



## Shana Bell

District Instructional Technology Coach

## Shana's Influence

Educators, administrators, and other coaches frequently seek out Shana's instructional advice and rely on her for guidance about technology decisions. When not working in buildings, Shana informs and supports district-level technology initiatives and creates professional learning opportunities for educators.

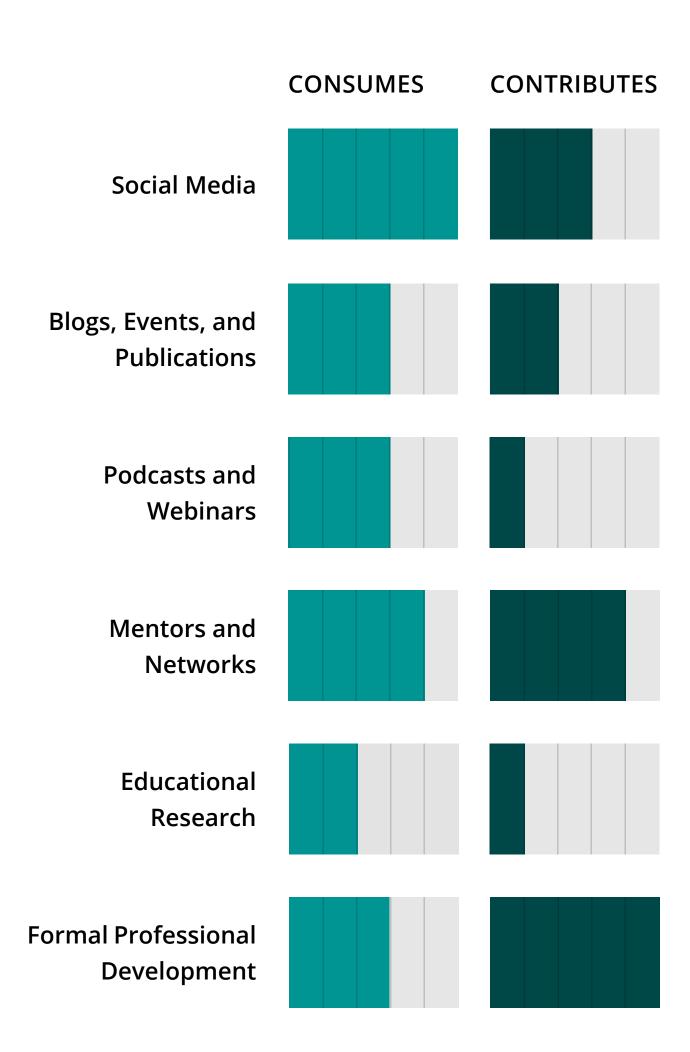


## **PRIORITIES**

- Supporting teachers with effective technology integration in their daily instruction
- Creating resources and materials to support students and families with virtual learning
- Promoting the importance of media literacy and digital citizenship across grade levels



- Safety and transportation constraints for distributing technology to each school community
- Limited or intermittent connectivity for students and families throughout the district
- Wide spectrum of technology knowledge and comfort levels of educators





# Alex Marrero Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction

## **Education**

Ed.D of Educational Leadership,
Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction,
Administrator Endorsement, ESL Endorsement

LATE

## **Career Stage**

EARLY

**Tech Fluency** 

LOW HIGH

"During this time, the way we teach and learn changes every day.

Even with all of the pivots, there's one constant-it's always about the kids."

Alex is a trailblazer and featured speaker in School Superintendents Association (AASA) webinars. He is spearheading program development for many district initiatives, including offering computer science courses as a part of career and technical education in secondary schools. Alex also oversees a new two-year mentorship program for beginning teachers and is reinventing the district's professional development catalog offerings to focus on culturally responsive pedagogy.



- Leads and manages all district-level instructional coaching staff
- Develops, implements, coordinates, and evaluates instructional programs at all grade levels
- Maintains and evaluates the district's professional development catalog
- Oversees beginning teacher mentorship and induction programs
- Leads district assessment programs



## Alex Marrero

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction

#### Alex's Influence

Alex sets the priorities for his team of district-level instructional and technology coaches, counsels other superintendents in his AASA network regarding organizational change, and leads decision-making for adopting district-wide curriculum and instructional programs.

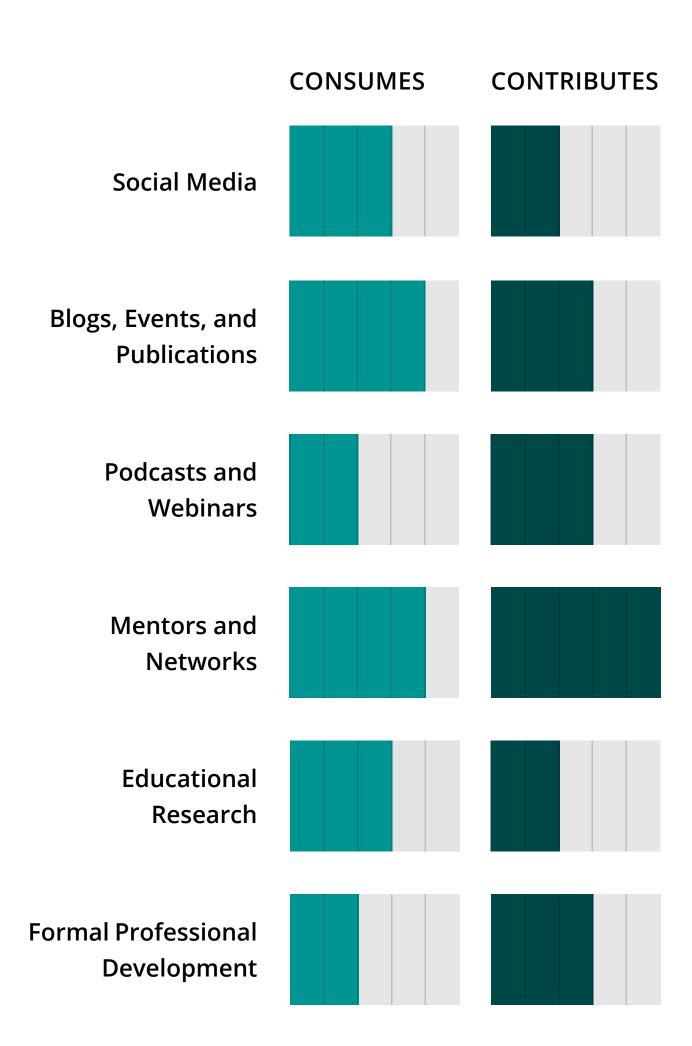


## **PRIORITIES**

- Supporting the changing requirements of hybrid and virtual learning programs
- Creating an easily accessible professional development catalog for educators with a focus on equity, technology integration, and innovative pedagogical practices
- Developing and supporting computer science as a part of career and technical education opportunities for students
- Exploring information and resources for research-based best practices in supporting and mentoring beginning educators



- Rapidly changing instructional needs of educators across the district
- State mandates on formal assessments
- Lack of adequate funding for instructional programs





## Juliette Meads Director of Technology

## Education

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Bachelor of Arts in Middle Grades Education, Administrator Endorsement

## **Career Stage**

**EARLY** 

LATE

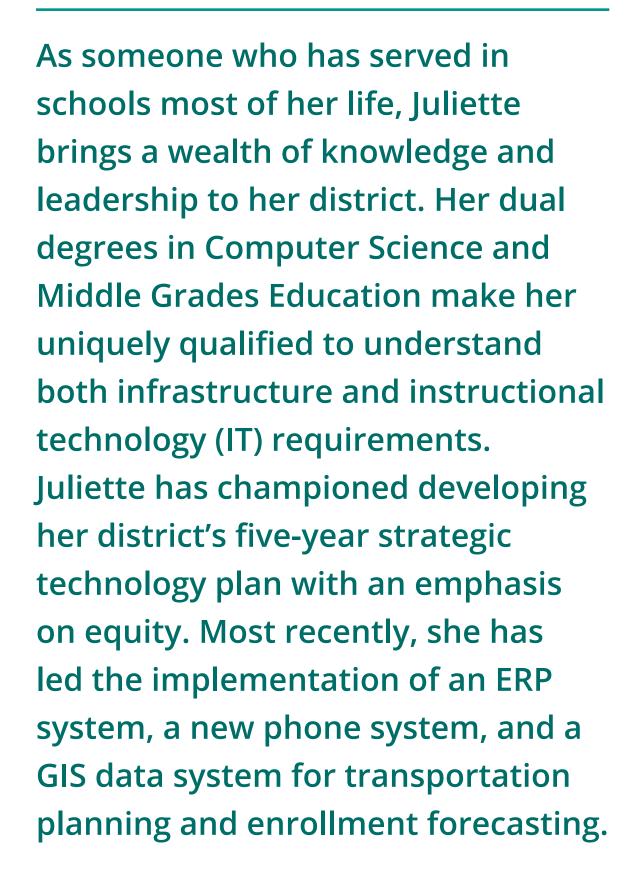
Tech Fluency

LOW

HIGH

"We're not seeing a technology equity gap—it's actually more like a canyon.

And we're facing it head-on, one day at a time, one family at a time, to build the bridge to equitable learning."





- Provides technological services and support to schools and families
- Leads and implements the district's technology strategic plan and E-Rate program
- Oversees and monitors security measures with network operations and IT staff
- Develops the technology budget and negotiates pricing and implementation of vendor contracts



## Juliette Meads Director of Technology

## Juliette's Influence

If it runs on a device, it's under Juliette's sphere of influence. She has a direct role in overseeing and deciding about the district's phone and messaging, student information, scheduling, network, device, document management, security, and third-party systems. She informs board policy about data privacy and security and oversees disaster planning and recovery.

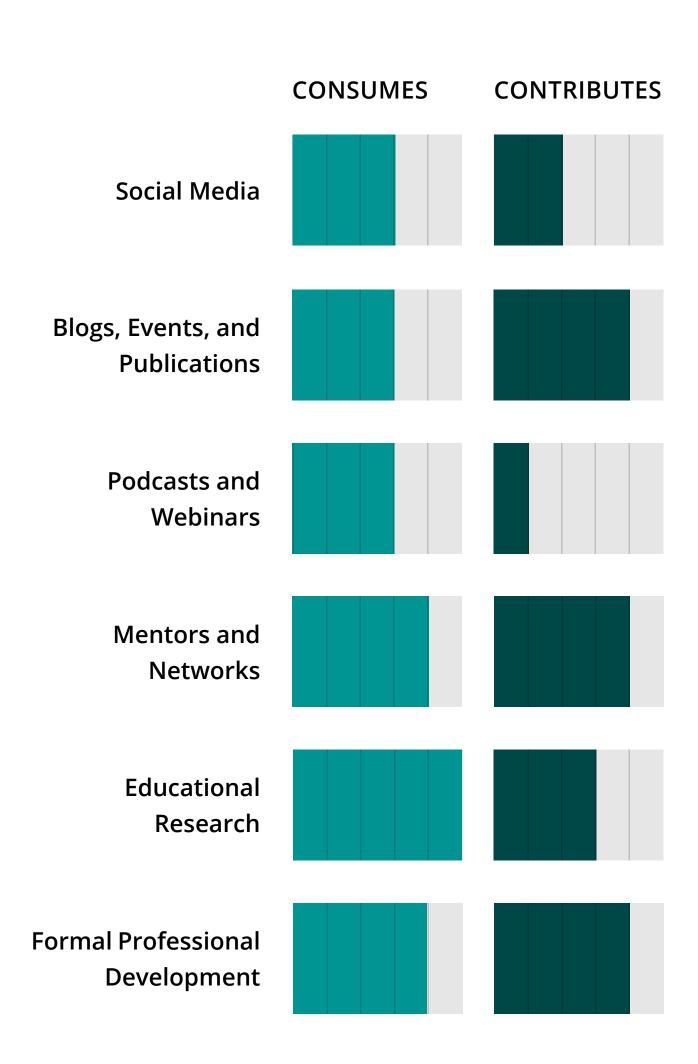


## **PRIORITIES**

- Providing devices and securing reliable online connectivity for all students and staff
- Securing networks and services to protect student data privacy and educating district staff about cybersecurity
- Coordinating all district technology operations (including IT support) and staff
- Migrating the district's file sharing, management, and collaboration tools to the cloud



- Aging network infrastructure and on-premise data center
- Scarcity of reliable funding to create equitable district-wide technology programs
- Varied levels of school board member commitment to increase technology staffing





## Melodi Vincent Preschool Educator

## **Education**

Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education, Infant and Child Development Certification

## **Career Stage**

EARLY LATE

**Tech Fluency** 

LOW HIGH

"Right now it's all about the parents. I'm giving them the tools they need to provide rich, play-based learning at home."

Melodi understands the impact of social-emotional learning and creating an environment where children feel safe and happy. Even as her school has shifted to a hybrid model in response to the COVID pandemic, Melodi still makes it a priority to check in with each of her students every day. She has become a leading advocate for educating parents about how they can introduce play-based, language-rich learning opportunities into everyday moments at home.



- Provides engaging, developmentally appropriate tools and resources for children to explore during learning and play activities
- Develops and maintains positive relationships with children and parents
- Provides basic needs for children
- Adapts teaching methods and materials to meet the interests and learning styles of children



## Melodi Vincent

**Preschool Educator** 

## Melodi's Influence

Melodi regularly communicates with parents through a weekly newsletter that provides at-home learning ideas and resources. As a contributing member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), she regularly advises her teaching team with fresh ideas and current research on child development.

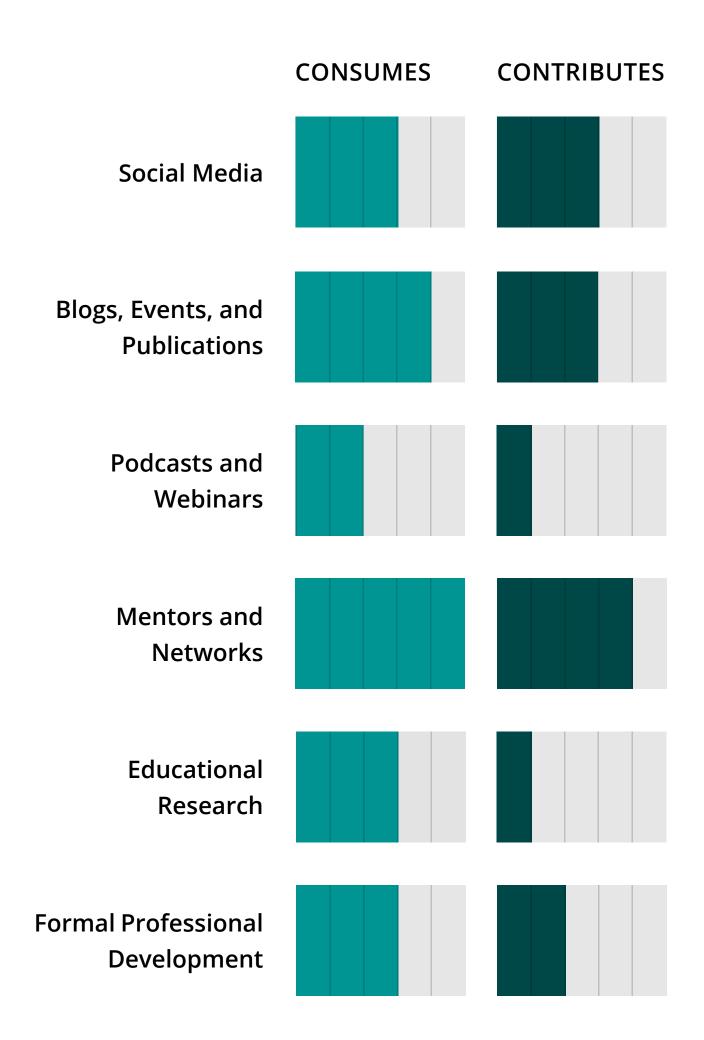


## **PRIORITIES**

- Meeting students' social-emotional needs while teaching in a hybrid model
- Supporting parents with at-home learning ideas
- Maintaining a safe and clean learning environment for young children



- Local government regulations about in-person student attendance during the pandemic
- Wide range of support that parents are able to provide at home
- Strict cleaning protocols that limit the availability of classroom learning materials





## Franchesca Wong Middle School Principal

## Education

Master of Arts in Education Leadership, Teaching Credentials in Math and Science, English Language Development Certification

## **Career Stage**

EARLY

LATE

**Tech Fluency** 

LOW

HIGH

"My goal is to support our students as they become future-ready learners."

Franchesca works in a rural area with a student population largely composed of migrant families, many of whom are highly mobile and non-native English speakers. As a second-language learner herself, Franchesca understands the barriers and challenges that are faced by her school population.



- Advocates for resources for her school
- Supports a diverse and high-mobility population
- Provides culturally-sensitive leadership for teachers
- Offers professional development opportunities for teachers



## Franchesca Wong Middle School Principal

## Franchesca's Influence

Franchesca is well-regarded in the community and has demonstrated a commitment to the needs of her students. To that end, she often attends school board meetings and meets with the superintendent to advocate for her school. Recently, her school was provided with materials for a makerspace due to her advocacy.

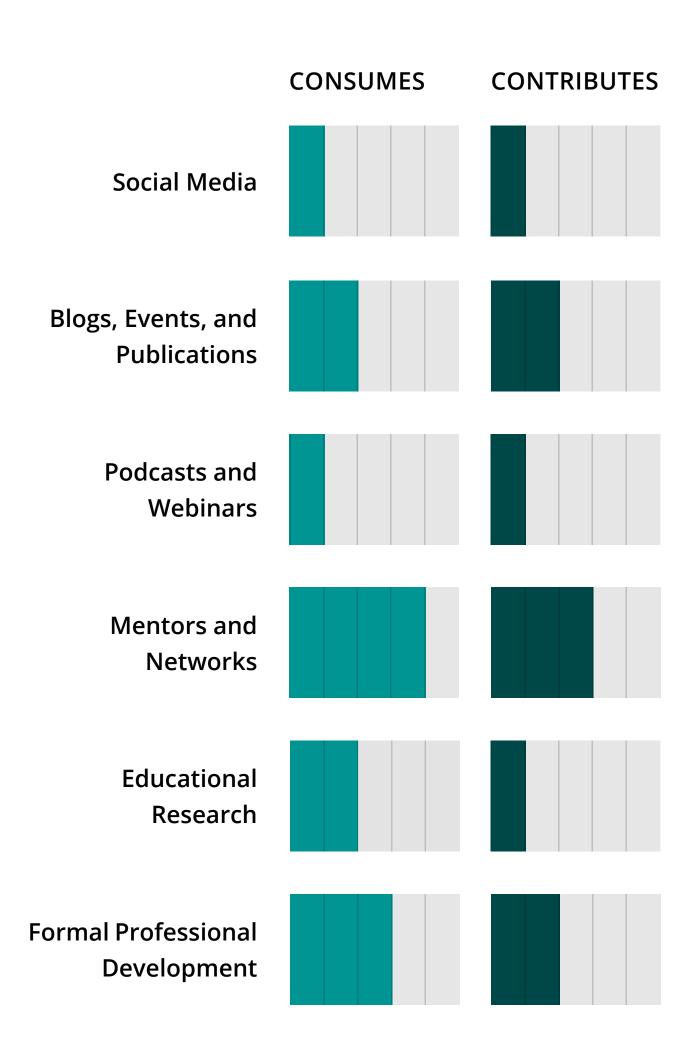


## **PRIORITIES**

- Ensuring that all children have access to nutrition during the pandemic
- Providing information to families in different languages and through different channels such as email, web, text, and print
- Encouraging and providing opportunities for underrepresented populations to have STEM-focused learning experiences
- Establishing a makerspace at her school for both formal and informal use



- A limited annual budget that has resulted in staff reductions
- Fluctuating student populations throughout each year and year-over-year
- Lack of technology access or connectivity at students' homes





## George Smith Superintendent

## Education

Master of Arts in Teaching Social Studies,
Doctor of Education in Education Administration

## **Career Stage**

**EARLY** 

LATE

Tech Fluency

LOW

HIGH

"Our students are the future. Together, we can equip them for a world that may not look like it does today."

Prior to becoming a superintendent, George was a principal at a suburban high school; before that, he was a vice principal at a middle school. His teaching years were spent in international schools around the world. George firmly believes that schools need to do a better job of preparing students for the future. He is well regarded by teachers, parents, and the school board, and can often be seen visiting schools and engaging with parents at community functions.



- Leads a cabinet of senior district administrators
- Analyzes data for school improvement
- Ensures that schools are abiding by district policies and regulations
- Agendizes, leads, and/or attends district, board, special education, community, and committee meetings
- Advocates for funding from local, state, and regional entities



## **George Smith**

Superintendent

## George's Influence

George possesses decision-making responsibilities across the district. He listens to principals and district leaders and brings issues to the school board. He also meets regularly with all of the principals in the district to address their concerns and monitor their programs. George listens to input from district administrators to make budgetary decisions.

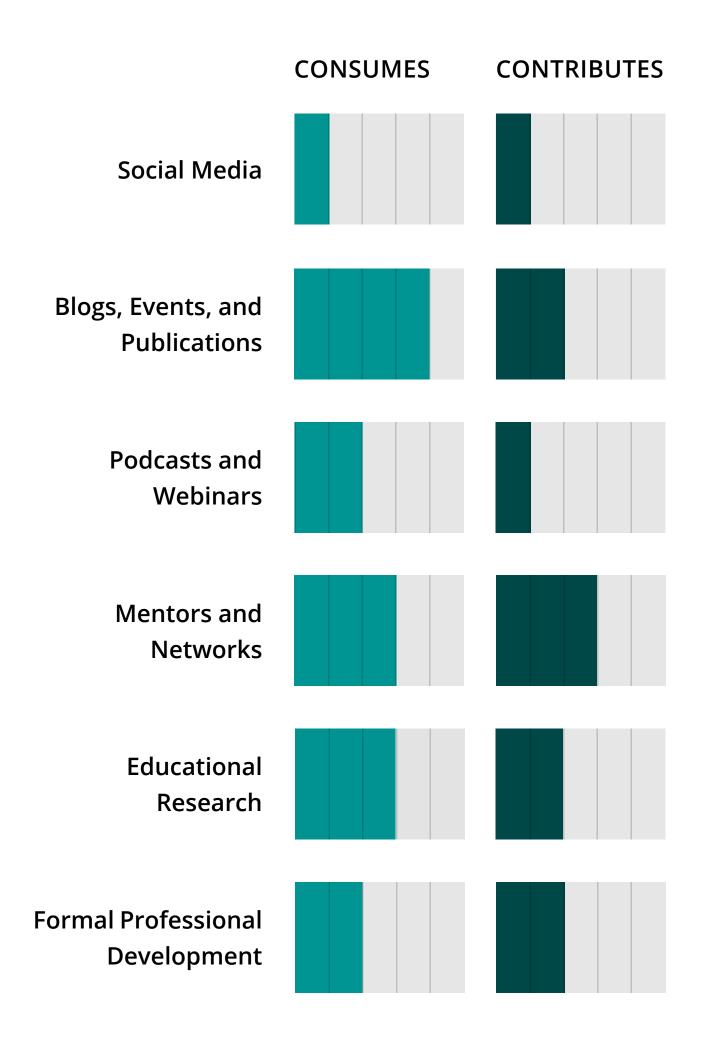


## **PRIORITIES**

- Providing equitable resourcing for district schools
- Addressing issues of hybrid and online distance learning
- Monitoring underperforming schools and providing support to those programs
- Influencing legislation related to new charter schools that open in the district



- Budget allocations to each school and program
- State-mandated virtual schooling
- Lack of funding for programs requested by constituents





# James Clifton High School Computer Science Educator

## **Education**

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Teaching Certification in 9-12 CTE

## Career Stage

EARLY

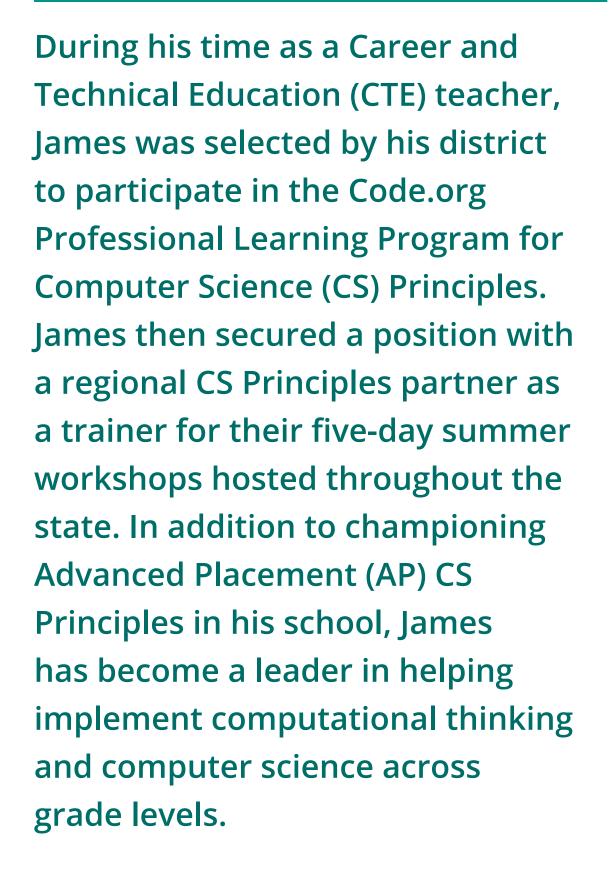
LATE

Tech Fluency

LOW HIGH

"Whether I'm teaching computer science or principles of business, I teach students first.

I want them to feel heard, seen, and cared for. Then learning can happen."





- Designs and delivers virtual instruction both synchronously and asynchronously using district-approved tools
- Meets 1:1 with students weekly to offer instructional support and assess student well-being and progress
- Prepares students for successful completion of the AP performance tasks
- Works with colleagues and digital technology coaches to expand the district's computer science course offerings



## James Clifton

High School Computer Science Educator

## James's Influence

James is instrumental in getting more computer science opportunities into the district's CTE course catalog. Many elementary school teachers rely heavily on him for simple ways that they can support computational thinking in their classrooms. James also influences teachers in his region who are new to teaching AP CS Principles.

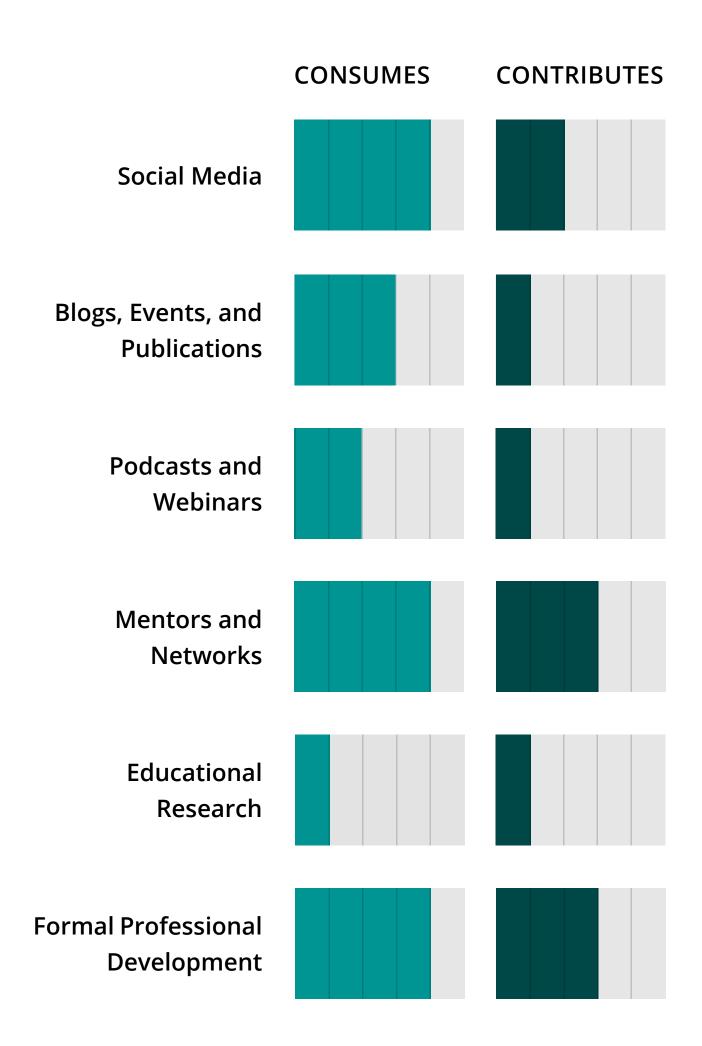


## **PRIORITIES**

- Adapting and redesigning current curriculum for both synchronous and asynchronous learning
- Using synchronous meeting time with students to foster connection and deliver instruction
- Providing equitable assessments and real-time feedback to students
- Researching strategies for including computational thinking and computer science in elementary school classrooms



- Inconsistent online connectivity for all of his students
- Lack of collaborative planning time to adapt and redesign curriculum
- Limited availability to assist individual students synchronously when they need it





Amira Saad Middle School Reading Specialist

## **Education**

Master of Arts in Elementary Education, Reading Specialist Endorsement

**Career Stage** 

EARLY

LATE

Tech Fluency

LOW HIGH

"Reaching each student is tougher than ever now that we're doing virtual learning.

I'm stretching myself and finding new ways to connect with students online to

support them in real-time."

As a reading specialist serving four of her district's eight elementary schools, Amira works closely with classroom educators to help support student literacy success. She serves on the district's multitiered systems of support (MTSS) team, representing her elementary schools in designing intervention strategies and programs. Amira was twice named her district's teacher specialist of the year and is an enthusiastic advocate for building passion and interest in reading.



- Assists in identifying students with reading difficulties and collaborates with educators on instructional strategies
- Utilizes district-approved reading intervention methodology and instruction for elementary students
- Works with district-level reading and literacy specialists on curriculum decisions
- Works alongside educators to evaluate and monitor student reading progress
- Assists with district and state-level reading assessments



## Amira Saad Middle School Reading Specialist

## Amira's Influence

Amira works closely with school administrators to ensure that reading curriculum and instructional strategies are being implemented effectively across each grade level. Educators in her district depend on Amira to demonstrate and model strategies they can use in their classroom reading instruction. Amira also helps to drive district decision-making for curriculum and textbook adoption for elementary schools.

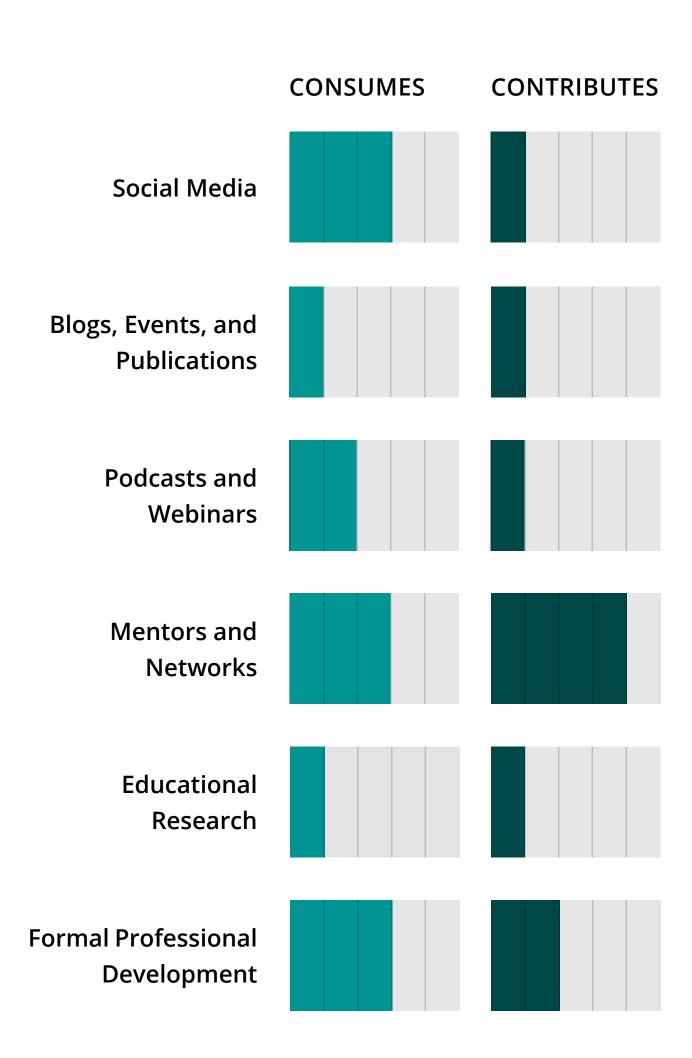


## **PRIORITIES**

- Connecting with developing readers using online conferencing tools
- Supporting educators with implementing teaching strategies that build students' reading strengths and address their weaknesses
- Exploring best practices in assessment and monitoring student progress during virtual learning



- Lack of consistent online connectivity for students
- Limited professional learning time to become more comfortable with using technology for reading intervention
- Shortage of digital resources offered by the district's adopted reading intervention program





## Sarah Stephens High School Guidance Counselor

## **Education**

Bachelor of Arts in Education, Master of Arts in School Counseling

## Career Stage

EARLY

HIGH

## Tech Fluency

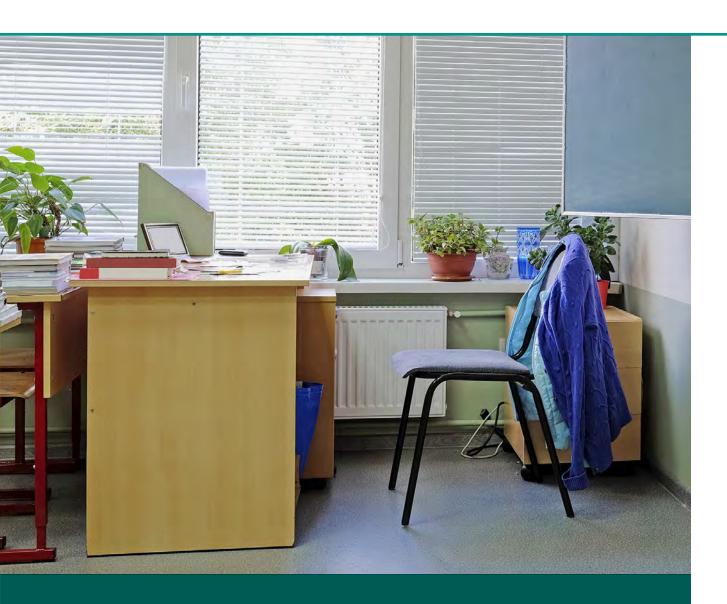
LOW

"I want to help students overcome challenges and learn how to set themselves up for success."

Sarah believes mental health is always critical, and even more so during the pandemic. The transition to virtual and hybrid learning has posed challenges—from psychological to financial—for many students at her school, and Sarah goes out of her way to assist those who are struggling. With a heavy caseload, she works hard to assist students in making post-secondary academic and career plans while overcoming barriers to success.



- Assists students with academic and emotional challenges
- Consults with students on aptitudes and college and career planning
- Works with colleagues on the student support team to aggregate student data
- Plans professional learning opportunities for the school community on traumainformed instruction, wellness, and mental health



## Sarah Stephens

High School Guidance Counselor

## Natasha's Influence

As one of the more senior counselors, Sarah provides guidance to administrators on counseling programs and opportunities. She serves on a district committee focused on equity issues and brings ideas back to her school. Students seek out Sarah for advice and mentorship, particularly those in the LBGTQ+ club and Black Student Union, as Sarah is known to be an ally to students in these organizations.



## **PRIORITIES**

- Ensuring that all students have equitable opportunities at school
- Providing support to those students most in need, especially her Black, Latinx, and indigenous American students
- Using restorative justice strategies to address concerns of students, parents, and staff as they arise



- Not enough time to handle the caseload of needy students
- Resistance from other counselors to train in restorative justice practices
- Lack of engagement from some families/guardians to strengthen their child's success





## Diana Beales Technical Support Specialist

Education

Associate of Arts in Early Childhood Education

**Career Stage** 

EARLY LATE

Tech Fluency Low

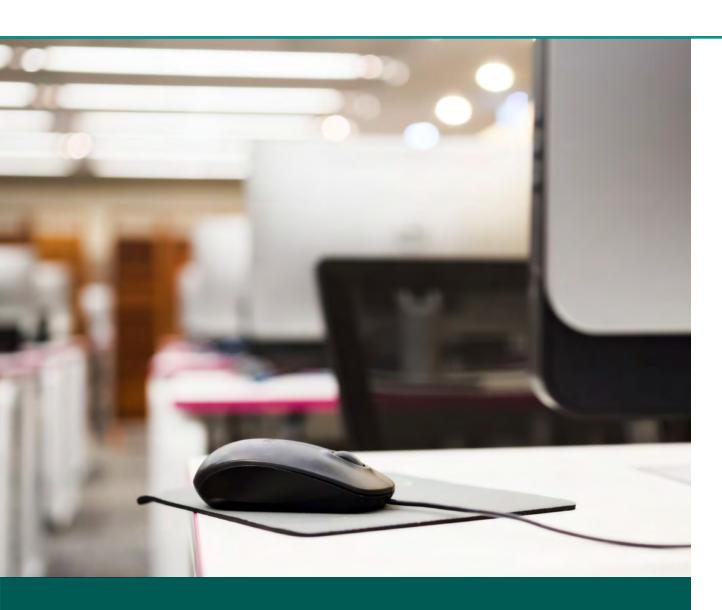
HIGH

"It's all hands on deck, and my goal is to make sure that anyone contacting the help desk feels heard and has a solution in place."

Diana worked as a teaching assistant before moving into the district's technology department. During a district reorganization, she was asked to run the help desk due to her reputation for hands-on technology support when serving in classrooms. Diana has embraced her new role and has begun creating basic tutorial videos to assist educators and families during virtual learning.



- Provides real-time phone and virtual help desk assistance to staff, students, and families
- Provides end-user technical support for technology, hardware, connectivity, and user account information
- Supports schools with device rollout procedures
- Creates technical documents and conducts basic trainings for end-users
- Assists the technology department in short- and long-range planning



## Diana Beales

Technical Support Specialist

## Diana's Influence

Diana's fellow IT staff and her peers in her paraprofessional learning community value her classroom experience and look to her for guidance on being more supportive to educators and students. She has also revamped documentation of the district's help desk operating procedures.

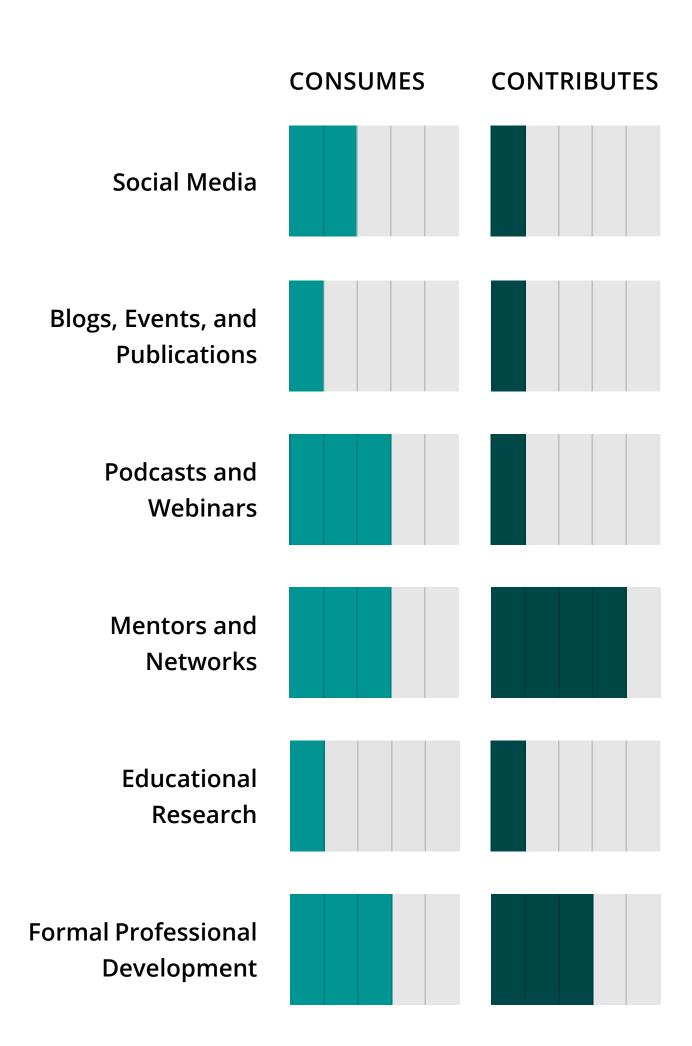


## **PRIORITIES**

- Providing real-time help desk support and follow-up to staff, students, and families
- Ensuring that all technology-hardware and software-is updated and running smoothly for staff, students, and families
- Supporting educators and students with basic end-user training on the district's learning management system, conferencing tools, and G Suite for Education
- Participating in training on new technology that is implemented throughout the district



- Limited time to offer technology support both virtually and in-person
- Less than reliable connectivity across the district
- District technology tools and software being implemented too rapidly





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