

Best Practice Guide

Creating Your District's IT Asset Management Mission

Executive Summary

IT Asset Management (ITAM) initiatives regularly stagnate or fail at school districts before they get off the ground. This is most often due to two problems: a lack of understanding of the ITAM mission and goals; and a lack of buy-in from key stakeholders within the district. Many administrators cannot succinctly describe their ITAM mission statement, and may not even know that their district has an ITAM program. An initial focus on developing and implementing a value-oriented ITAM strategy lays a strong foundation for success at all levels.

What is IT Asset Management?

From a business perspective, IT Asset Management is the set of business practices that join financial, contractual and inventory functions to support life cycle management and strategic decision making for an IT environment.

What is an ITAM Mission Statement?

The ITAM mission statement defines the purpose of the effort within the district. An ITAM mission statement needs to clearly define and map out how ITAM supports the mission and goals of IT and aligns with broader district goals.

Typically in the corporate world ITAM supports profitability, but in school districts the end goal is cost reduction and student success. For instance, a successful ITAM program supports teachers and principals through management of 1:1 technology devices. ITAM also supports Purchasing through asset visibility and accountability by reducing unnecessary purchases. In short, ITAM is a critical component to a district technology plan.

To help you create and implement a solid ITAM program, we have identified the following steps that lead to success:



STEP 1 **Establish District Goals**

A clear understanding of your goals is the first step to any initiative. It pays to establish the ideal outcome of your ITAM system and then create a plan of action that gets you there. These goals can reflect the needs of different areas of your district. Talk to colleagues and ask your administration, including your superintendent, your CFO and your CTO, as they will provide insight into strategic goals.

Get to the bottom of the problems within your district; find pain points and address them. For instance, your district may be suffering large losses as a result of constantly replacing IT hardware due to a lack of accountability. Or perhaps your superintendent needs to know which digital learning devices perform the best in the classroom for future investments.

Whatever the case, asking key stakeholders for assistance in this step will ingratiate them to you when you deliver a clearly defined mission statement that addresses their most troubling problems.

2 STEP 2 Create a Goal-Driven Mission Statement

To derive the most value from your ITAM program you will need to align its foundational strategy with the goals of your district as a whole. Successfully tailoring your ITAM program requires understanding the mission, key drivers, and objectives of your district. The following is an example of an ITAM mission statement for school districts based off of example key drivers and initiative goals. Feel free to use this as a template and source of ideas when building your own.

Key Drivers

- Inability to monitor student success
- Support infrastructure for a 1:1 student or teacher device initiative
- Possible ineffective use of existing assets
- Uncertainty of IT asset inventory and location
- Ineffective management of IT hardware and service distribution
- Uncertainty of asset overhead and maintenance costs
- Government funding source regulatory risks

Initiative Goals

- Optimize the use of assets within the district
- Capture attributes and data related to delivering, and purchasing IT assets
- Obtain a holistic view of the IT asset portfolio
- Capture and reporting costs of IT assets and related services
- Link individual device use to student success
- Provide financial and operational insight of the IT asset portfolio within the district

Mission Statement: To provide a highly reliable, scalable, secure, and cost efficient IT asset management solution including technologies, processes, and policies to manage an asset's lifecycle within the district to assist in creating an engaging learning environment for both students and teachers.

3 STEP 3 Refine With Administration Input

Once you have identified key drivers and goals and crafted your ITAM initiative mission statement you should return to your administration for review. This provides you with the ability to obtain critical feedback, insight, and confirmation that your ITAM mission is not only aligned with the goals and objectives of your district, but also will work as a solution to key problems and a foundation for the ITAM initiative. In addition, it facilitates communication and visibility to highlight the importance of ITAM to the district as a whole.

At this stage you should be able to successfully build a case for an ITAM program by showing that the initiative aligns with the administrator's goals and aims to solve key problems that the district faces.

Communicating the “why” is just as important as communicating the “how” – ownership of the program is the responsibility of everybody within the district.

4 STEP 4 Publish and Communicate

It is important to publish the ITAM initiatives mission, drivers, and goals throughout your district as a point of reference. This will be the foundation of future ITAM activities. Regular communication is necessary due to ITAM's dependence on strict governance of policies and procedures. All district and campus personnel must understand how the initiative supports the overall district mission. This level of transparency increases data accuracy while decreasing audit response times and unforeseen issues. The governance that ITAM requires will also decrease financial and legal risk for the district as a whole.

Without basic understanding that technology assets are being accounted for and tracked, campus personnel may decide to disassemble and/or move key assets to different locations without updating the information in the ITAM asset management system. This leads to unnecessary labor and headaches when those items need to be located, as well as increase audit cycle times.

Conclusion

A robust ITAM strategy has the potential to provide even greater benefits for the field of education than it does for business.

Defining a mission statement that aligns district drivers and goals with your ITAM initiative, and a plan that defines what you do, how you do it, and who is involved sets expectations within your district that will likely serve as a catalyst for positive change. With the initial groundwork laid, infrastructure such as physical inventory automation and mobile device management software can be put in place with greater efficiency to support district initiatives for years to come.

Additional Resources

To learn more about how Hayes Software Systems can optimize your school district's inventory management practices, visit www.hayessoft.com or reach out to one of our experts at 1-800-749-5086 for a free discovery call. Our team can map out steps to improve your asset management infrastructure for long-term success.

About Hayes Software Systems

For over 23 years, Hayes Software Systems has sought to provide software solutions designed specifically to address the challenges of school administrators. By focusing on K-12 education, Hayes has developed specialized expertise, and can analyze the needs of district staff to provide solutions with software applications and consulting services.



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