

File Name: NavScreensProfessional17Transcript2018

Interviewee: school district administrator and instructional technology specialist

Interviewer: First, tell us a little bit about yourself and your role.

Interviewee: I've been an educator for schools in [location removed] for 25 years. I started out as middle school teacher one year, math and science, and then I taught second grade for many, many years.

Interviewer: I like second graders.

Interviewee: They're my favorite grade. My favorite grade.

Interviewer: Yeah, I love them.

Interviewee: I taught them for around 8 or 9 years, and then I really started getting into the technology. Actually, I was always into technology, but I just found myself doing more and more with my building, with my peers, with my leadership team. We had a computer science teacher who was very good, but she was retiring and so I took on her responsibilities, left the classroom. I was able to teach in a computer science classroom for-

Interviewer: That was second grade still?

Interviewee: No, this. So my first year out, well we also had, I had a very proactive principle in technology and he was very innovative. So he bought our school one of the very first mobile labs in the district. So I started teaching with laptops and I had taken ... well, in [location removed], you take an exam and you show your certification

and then you go through an interview process and then you get placed on a list for any type of teacher or instructional position to be hired.

I had gotten myself on that list and said, well, I really liked the work I was doing with computers and I may, if there's an opening that opens up for computer systems was before my computer teacher retired that I would consider moving.

My principal came to me and said, "Listen, I'm thinking about buying this lab.

There's some money, there's some grant funding money, if we bought it, would you stay? I said, I'll stay if I can do it for grades K-4, because at that time I only knew second graders and my one year experience in middle school was like, "I don't know about that."

So he wrote me in, got me there for K-4, and of course the next year he said,

"Now I want you to do all grades." Ends up that I loved it.

Interviewer: K-12?

Interviewee: No, K-8. We were only a K-8 school. So at that point, I enjoyed what I was doing.

I was like, "All right, I'll go up to eighth grade." I did have good rapport with our kids, so it wasn't that big of a deal. So that's where I started. And then she retired, and that's when I just kinda took over the whole building with all the technology stuff. And then I did that for so many years and then I was like, "You know what? I want a little more." Then I came down here and I started working as a technology coach, which was really nice because that put me into the schools on it every single day basis.

Interviewer: Does that mean you coach the teachers?

Interviewee: Yes, I coach the teachers in how to use the technology. And really we all still do that now. But my responsibilities, I have more responsibilities here in doing ... that's district wide training for more of ... Right now or we have a couple of really big system projects going on that are new. We have a brand new student information system. That's what I was training for today. We have a brand new professional development and an educator evaluation system onboarding. I'm training on that, so I'm doing more of like the higher level type of system trainings as opposed to just working directly with teachers and students. Then of course, lots of other projects like the curriculum work and angel work and so on and so forth. But I'm here all year round so it gives me the opportunity as a coach in the classroom, I was only 10 months. I had same teacher's schedule. Now there's, I with four other of my colleagues, we work basically all year round. We do whatever is needed. So for us, curriculum is a huge thing from now through the fall, we always revise it, we revamp it. That's when we had the time in the summer to really take a look at what we're offering and make changes.

Interviewer: Is it the technology curriculum?

Interviewee: It is a digital literacy curriculum.

Interviewer: Oh, for what grades is that?

Interviewee: Grades K-8?

Interviewer: Oh, that was still K-8?

Interviewee: Yeah. So in [location removed], this office doesn't mandate like a computer science curriculum or digital media for high schools because it's considered a CTE

program, a lot of them are CTE program, career and technical education, career and technical education. We now PSTV and I know that PSTV and [name removed] does a lot of work, the director of that program, she does a lot of work and outreach to schools to teach kids about digital media literacy and that's on a high school level, I do think she has something in middle school as well, but our main focus in this office has always been the K-8 curriculum.

Interviewer: To what extent are you guys in charge of setting curriculum? To what extent would the State Department of Education mandate?

Interviewee: Good question. We basically wrote our own curriculum using these state and national standards as guidelines. So we recognize is SE standards, however, SE standards are not standards that you might see ... there are basically seven overarching, I don't remember what they're called. Standard components maybe or guidelines. Now I'm really on the spot. Global communication would be one, instruct innovative design would be another one. They're really overarching principles of how we want to prepare students for a career in college readiness. Right.

Interviewer: Is D?

Interviewee: It's the International Society for Technology Education. I want to give you the right terminology.

Interviewer: It's interesting. That's one thing I don't understand since I'm not in this level of education is to what extent, each school district gets to decide the curriculum.

Interviewee: So those are the national recognized standards. Yeah. I'm trying to find the right terminology for it, but they're still actually calling it standards on their websites. This is their website, right? So these are the national standards. So it's like digital citizenship, knowledge constructor, innovative design, computational thinking, creative communication and global collaboration. But in their eyes, so digital literacy should not be taught in isolation. These are standards that really can be emerged throughout all of the curriculum.

That's their idea. So we take those, we look at those. We also then look at the state has a certification in business, computer information, and technology.

Those standards are written more similar to a math or science, however, they're not mandated, if you will. There is no testing for it. There's no specific curriculum to follow and there's nothing that's written to that to those standards unless you develop it yourself.

Interviewer: Interesting.

Interviewee: So basically what I had done and my team has worked on, is we look at the AC standards, we look at the state PCICT standards and also with the BCIT standards, it's where should kids be at end of second grade, what should they know at the end of fifth grade, what should they know at the end of eighth grade. I've also incorporated into our curriculum STEM standards, science technology and education and math because now, especially with robotics and coding in a more engineering and engineering, those standards come into play as well with what we do at our digital literacy labs And then I also incorporate as

much as I can into our activities that we provide for teachers, the core content standards, so math, English, science, social studies.

So it's basically, I have looked at other like New Jersey I found has a curriculum on New Jersey. I found a curriculum that somebody in Massachusetts put together. Think I found one from California. I've just pulled all these resources and try to figure out, okay, what do we want our kids to know, what do we feel like we can accomplish at the different grade levels?

Interviewer: Okay. Let's see. So we're really particularly interested in any advice that is provided to parents. Do you guys work with-

Interviewee: Okay. So, one of the things that we do, which is a huge, is because we are federally funded or funded, it's mandated that every school has to teach an internet safety and digital citizenship.

Interviewer: At every grade?

Interviewee: Every school year it has to be taught. So every child, every grade has to get some form of this. So we have in the past partnered or we've had licensing with some big companies that offer a digital citizenship and internet safety curriculum, a more formalized program. One of them was [inaudible 00:10:55] org, however we found with that curriculum, people weren't using it. We were spending a lot of money and people weren't using it because there's a lot of free resources out there. It was complicated. So one of our challenges is just not being able to train some, get our technology teachers down here and pulled out of the classroom to train them enough, that's a challenge across the board.

Most recently we have been working with two major software companies, one is NetSmart and the other one is Common Sense Media. They both offer resources for the classroom to teach Internet safety that anybody can do. Some of our schools don't have a digital literacy teacher, NetSmart has on their website, and they have several presentations for different grade levels. So we recommend, if you don't have a digital literacy teacher that can teach us, we recommend that you do like an assembly type of presentation and this.

What our office offers is we have 11 field technology integration specialists or coaches that will go out to the school. So if the principals get an email in the beginning of the year explaining that you have to present this information, our Chief Information Officer requires that they submit a form of identifying how they're going to present their information and what was their plan to do so. And if they need assistance or they don't have somebody in their building, they can teach it, then they can request one of our field people come out and do it in their school.

Interviewer: Do a lot of them request that? That seems like a really good offer.

Interviewee: Yeah, I think there's ones that have relationship do. I don't really have the real statistics, but I do know that people on our staff has the [inaudible 00:13:01].

Interviewer: So do you have any ideas about what devices the kids are frequently using?

Interviewee: In the classroom, in their schools?

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Interviewee: Well, [name removed] would be able to speak to this. I want to say there's about 30,000 Chromebooks right now in the district.

Interviewer: Good gracious.

Interviewee: Yeah. I just talked to her teachers the other day. Oh, they have a school in South Philadelphia. They're completely 100% one-to-one Chromebooks. That is in most popular because it's the most affordable device.

Interviewer: Interesting. And do kids bring their own devices to school?

Interviewee: Mm-mmm (negative).

Interviewer: No? They're not allowed to?

Interviewee: That's not a policy that on the district level we recommend or encourage. I do believe that there are some schools. I don't want to speak to that. But that's not encouraged at a district level.

Interviewer: Any ideas about needs in parents for how to deal with kids and using technology?

Interviewee: I can speak to what my school did when I was in the schools. We had a community liaison. I've worked with our building and every month she would have parent workshops and one of our parent workshops was a technology workshop for them. That's exactly what they would do. I would actually host the workshop and be able to do turn around training for the parents and take them onto places like NetSmart and other places that we have on our websites to give them the tools that they would need to teach their kids about technology and

also know we've put together some presentations here at district level that we've taken out as when requested to do parent workshops.

We have another office Family and Community Engagement, right.

Interviewer: FACE.

Interviewee: Right, the FACE office who they work with parents more directly and at their request we've also done some trainings with them that they can also then turn around to their parents.

Interviewer: And are they funded by the Philadelphia schools?

Interviewee: The FACE office is a district office. Yeah, it's a district office.

Interviewer: That's pretty good.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Let's see, are there any resources that you refer parents to?

Interviewee: So on our website we have instructional resources. We have instructional resources. Now I have to say that I wish I knew how often parents were reading this research, but for parents resources we really focus on internet safety, and there's one for students, and there's one for teachers and families.

Interviewer: Yeah, it's interesting. I don't know how we could figure out how often parents look at them.

Interviewee: Yeah. Unfortunately I don't have the Google analytics, but it is something that when we get requests, that's a link that we will send out to people to say, here you go. Right. So that's our one way to ensure that folks are driven to our website. We do that with a lot, and also it helps too because if we get those

requests and, although our website is pretty extensive and I haven't had to update much, but it's a great way to remind folks, hey, we have this website here in these resources here. So I'm just trying to take it there.

I should have brought my [inaudible 00:17:42]. So under teaching and learning we have blended learning, instructional resources, Internet safety, and here is the link for families.

Interviewer: Oh, that's fantastic.

Interviewee: And then that takes them right to the Internet safety library, Internet tips. This is the presentation I talked about, PowerPoint presentation. This is on NetSmart. So if schools want it they can go in here and download the presenter's guide in, download the presentation right from the NetSmart link, and why it's not working, I don't know.

Here's the parent presentation guide. Also, we give this information. In our schools, in the position that I held, it's actually, it's called a technology teacher leader, TTL. We do have trainings, our office does have trainings with them a few times a year. One of the things I'm responsible is training them on the digital literacy curriculum and on resources like this. So in the beginning of the year when we see them, we will remind them, hey, you have this resource here for your families and you know, if you are doing throughout the year, parent workshop, please point them to this website.

Interviewer: Interesting. Thinking about the role of public libraries, which is certainly not your area, but can you think of any suggestions or ideas for how public libraries could complement the education that the schools are doing related to media use?

Interviewee: I'm trying to think how could they do that? Okay. So there are a couple times of year that isn't very, because there is weeks like the computer science week is in December, one of the things that public libraries can do during that computer science week is as I'm trying to think of like my experience of walking into my library and what I see when I walk in, but so they will have their themes going on and it will have 10 books pool to draw people's attention to that particular theme. And I think that will help to raise awareness of the issues that the kids are facing.

I don't think there's a specific Internet safety week, but it is a good idea too, even if there's not a formal national week of that, it is I think a good idea for libraries, especially in the beginning of the school year when computer usage ramps up and kids are online more, is to draw awareness to this, and to have those community programs using websites like that NetSmart to show a presentation, to make awareness. There's actually a great video that we use in many of our presentations about the digital footprint and how important it is. It's actually a TED Talk video and it's a great video because the speaker, and I can't think of his name off the top of my head, but the speaker talks about tattoos and how your tattoos tell a story and how to tattoos, once you get a tattoo, you can't can't get it off.

He makes that metaphor with the digital footprint is in the same way. It's a great video. Every time I show people, they're like, oh my goodness. I mean, you could say, I'm just looking in here too. There's so many good resources like Common Sense Media has a lot of like posters and stuff like that to show what a good digital citizenship is and that's another great thing that libraries can do, especially around their computer station, is to have those posters and maybe to have that conversation with their kids about what good digital citizenship is, because as much as we would like for all of our schools be able to teach our curriculum, it's not necessarily happening because the core curriculum of math, science, ELA is so jam packed that there isn't a computer teacher or a digital literacy teacher, then that goes by the wayside. That instruction goes by the wayside.

Interviewer: Is that the principal's decision whether or not to hire?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: It is?

Interviewee: Yeah. For example, the one school that I worked with, they're one to one, so they have the technology in their classroom. So they're spending their money on having a music and an art teacher because every teacher, every classroom already has the technology. But this is why our Chief Information Officer finds it really important to make sure that we'll give you suggestions on how you can teach Internet safety in whatever situation, whether you have a digital literacy teacher or you don't. And now you have to provide an assembly or we'll send

somebody out to your school to assist you, but you must teach it at some level.

Maybe your teachers are going to do in it in a safety day and each person in their classroom can do their own thing. We'll give you the materials, but it must be taught.

Interviewer: Interesting. So you told us already how you got into this area. Did you receive any formal training in media or was it on the job?

Interviewee: A lot of it was on the job, but I did improve my own personal skills with a lot of different workshops and stuff like that. And then also for us, it's been a while, but when we purchased a license for isafe.org for their Internet safety digital citizenship curriculum, at that time we had the ability to provide professional development for our digital literacy teachers to teach that curriculum. Any time when we have a new initiative, we try to do our due diligence to arrive at the professional development for our teachers. And like I said, even with this, even though this is, most of the resources out there today are free, I mean you have a missing and exploited children and putting out stuff, you have Common Sense Media.

You've got lots of Scholastic, you've got lots of big publishers putting out a lot of really good stuff and resources and our teachers will find many of it on their own as well. Especially when they're teaching the same stuff year after year and they're like, okay, I need something new because I mean they have the same kids year after year after year. You have to get creative with it. Right. And we do have it built into our curriculum, digital literacy, and we have one of the modules of

our curriculum is competing in society. So it encompasses the digital citizenship and cyber bullying and internet safety, copyright, all that stuff is right.

Interviewer: I'm glad you're teaching copyright.

Interviewee: Yeah. I mean that's all the-

Interviewer: Because [inaudible 00:26:00] by the time they get to college they still don't.

Interviewee: It's going to be a never ending battle. I teach at Temple too and it's like yeah. So I teach my pre-service teachers about it too. But yeah, it's a never ending battle.

Interviewer: So you mentioned digital citizenship, copyright. See cyber bullying and internet safety. And then you said "the issues that children are facing." Are these the major issues? Are there others that are in this area that we should look at.

Interviewee: I think today, obviously social media is huge, right? And, and I mean that's part of digital citizenship. It's part of Internet safety and it's also part of cyber bullying, right? So it's really because all of those things encompass how children should be using and copyright to it as well. How social media that really affects her life. Like that's huge today. I just feel like we see it all the time, like it's just at the forefront of everything our kids do and it's right.

I see people out there on social media, kids especially they putting out personal information that you've seen it where, obviously we know unfortunately with cyberbullying, that's the platform for cyber bullying. That's all part of everything and that's huge. And I think too that's a message that we really need to send to parents. That's number one.

Interviewer: What's the message that ...

Interviewee: Well, I think that we need to make parents more aware of how they should be talking to their children about social media and social media use and making them understand what can happen to students if they are using social media and inappropriately or in a way that's going to affect their future. I have college students at this moment and I'm on my daughters all the time that you can't put anything on social media that your future employers are going to look at and that's going to give them a false perception of your character or give them a perception of your character that it may not be the type of person that they want working for them.

That's a huge message, that I think our parents need to start teaching their own children from a young age because it's not said enough even in the classroom, but we need to send it in the classroom, but we need to, as teachers also be able to set an example for our students and how we use social media. At the high school level, I think that's important too because there's so many educational learning platforms out there that are social media like that we can really use those platforms in a responsible way to teach kids about how to respond and communicate via social media.

Interviewer: Are even the little ones using social media, the under 13s?

Interviewee: On their own. And that's why it's so important to teach parents. It's not necessarily something that in a school ... Well, so we are a Google education school district, so we have embraced a Google domain. We have Google

Classroom, all of our kids now have district email that they can use to communicate with teachers through Google Classroom.

It depends on how well the district has certain filters that they are permissions that they allow or don't allow for the students and teachers to use. Like whether or not students can communicate on there, but one of the things, so Google classroom and other products that we endorse bring a more of a social collaboration philosophy to education, right? Kids work together, you learn more, which is great and that's something that needs to be taught. But so that sort of we can teach that in the classroom, we can use those tools in the classroom then when children are working on their own outside, they might be more successful, but I also feel that it does open up an opportunity to teach kids about citizenship and what they should be saying not to do and how they can be open to other people's opinions without being judgmental and critical and mean, to put it bluntly.

As far as like a spot as the younger grades, I think that these types of curriculums like NetSmart really helps to address that at the younger levels because I can tell you there are so many platforms, like Disney had a, I forget what it's called. Disney had like a virtual environment set up for younger kids. I remember it was called Penguin something.

Interviewer: Oh, Club Penguin?

Interviewee: Club Penguin. So that was a big one. And like kids could get on and they would say, Oh yes, I have their parents' permission. Well, they really didn't. So they'd

be setting up these accounts so parents didn't know that they were setting up the accounts, or they would give them a false address. We have a web app review team, so we review applications to see if they are compliant with COPA laws, which are the Children Online Protection Act, compliant with FERPA, which is school data privacy basically.

Do they protect student data privacy? But I mean basically that's it. Like are they protecting student data privacy, are the protecting of Children Online Protection Act. So there's a couple of other things. We have a rubric that we have to follow. That team, which I'm not a part of, but I'm aware of it meets on a regular basis to look at applications that teachers may ask to use in the classroom to determine if it's appropriate to use in the classroom and that it meets our requirements for that.

But again, those are some of the things that we need to raise awareness to parents when their children are on an application like Club Penguin, are they aware that they're on that website, are they being asked to give personal information? I think that, that right there is huge. I think that we need to do more of that truthfully because I don't think parents are aware. I know parents aren't aware. My parents aren't aware of it. Some of them don't know enough about it, especially in [location removed] and we have such a multilingual population.

Parents who are coming over from other countries who are new to this country where there's a language barrier, how do you get to those people?

Interviewer: That's tough. Yeah.

Interviewee: Yeah. Then of course there's products that don't have the means to have the technology to really get to these applications, but yet you can be on their phone and download Facebook or you could be in front of and download Twitter, but you're not getting to these applications that are going to help you to teach your kids and to understand that.

Interviewer: That's a challenge. How do you reach the parents?

Interviewee: So going back to your library, I think it's really important for libraries to have those classes and workshops on a regular basis where they are able to provide that information to parents because many of our parents are more likely to walk into a library than a school.

Interviewer: Less intimidated?

Interviewee: Well, and also if they're a working parent.

Interviewer: Oh, the hours.

Interviewee: Libraries can do it after hours where schools could not many times. Sometimes they do. Parent nights, I know that they will sometimes if they can get it in.

Interviewer: That makes sense. Yeah. So can you think of anything else that you should tell us or anything else that we should know or can you think of any questions? I'm really interested in how much autonomy the [location removed] School Department has over [location removed] educational curricula. I didn't realize. I thought it was more state governed exactly what you were teaching.

Interviewee: Yeah. No, not for digital literacy, there's really no curriculum for the state. We do our own.

Interviewer: Interesting. I'm so glad we asked.

Interviewee: We do our own, but I think we do really good. We do really good due diligence of making sure that we keep up with what other states are doing and what districts are doing. There's so much information out there and it's just a matter of pulling it into what we want our kids shown, as with any textbook development or you have different standards and different ideas. Look at the core standards, we adopted some of them in [location removed], but not everything else.

Interviewer: Is it working?

Interviewee: Yeah. I can't really speak to that because I'm not really curriculum. I don't know what the data it really looks like for whether or not it's working. I mean, I hear our message from our leader [name removed] that our scores are improving. So something's working. Right? So that's a good thing.

Interviewer: Interesting. But that's a topic for another day. Can you think of questions? Can you think of anything else we need to know as we continue to explore?

Interviewee: No, other than what I've said to you, to see what more specific the FACE offices doing more specifically.

Interviewer: Yeah, this is hugely helpful though. I know I learned a lot.

Interviewee: Just because they have more direct line with their parents.

Interviewer: I'll never forget their acronym.

Interviewee: I know, right? It's great.

Interviewer: As soon as you said that I saw this huge head. FACE.

Interviewee: I felt like when I first came down here out of the classroom on here. It's unbelievable how many acronyms they have for everything. I'm like, wait. Even today, I heard an acronym of during your training and I heard, oh, we're PBIF. I'm like what is PBIF? Three people said it to me like I should know what that is. I didn't get a chance to ask the person who said it, who would be able to tell me what it means. But I was like, what is this one now? This is something brand new.

Interviewer: How long have you been in the district office?

Interviewee: Since 2008.

Interviewer: Oh, a long time. A whole decade, wow. Do you miss the little ones?

Interviewee: I do sometimes, but I do like what I'm doing now, I do like the interaction with adults.

Interviewer: I was a children's librarian 25 years ago and for the first couple of years it was so hard being away from the kids, I still miss them sometimes.

Interviewee: It's interesting because for me in my life, I've grown in teaching with my children. When my children were born, then I was teaching in elementary school. So it took a little while for them to catch up to my kids. But actually, when I came out of the second grade classroom, one was on their way to, to fourth grade and one was in like second grade. So it's really kind of cool to walk through their development as I'm teaching kids at the same age.

Interviewer: Are they both daughters?

Interviewee: Yeah, two daughters. When I moved into the 4-8, then I could experience their experience in middle school and as a parent and as a teacher, I was experiencing it at the same time. Then high school is when I started coaching, so I got to see what went on in high school. So that was interesting. Probably some information I didn't want to know. And then when I started teaching at Temple, my older one started college. So it was interesting, my progression through education has been ...