**Shanda Thornell**

**Leadership Action Plan**

**Part 1: Effective Leadership**

**What leadership skills will help to promote technology integration in your school?**

During class we discussed many different skills that a leader should have. In my school I think that the most important ones are going to be a strong knowledge base of the different technologies, a determination to help their fellow teachers, a willingness to be forward and discuss new ideas, and a lot of hard work. Learning a new technology and ways to integrate it is never an easy thing, as we have all learned the past year during this class. In order to teach others who may not be as open to new things, you have to have a strong knowledge base, or at least know where to find the answers.

There are many other issues that are being discussed and dealt with in our school at this time. Most of the focus is on instruction and data. It would take a a lot of diligence to find the time to teach teachers the new skills they would need for technology.

**What are your strengths/weaknesses as a leader?**

I believe that my biggest strengths as a leader are empathy, vision, and willingness to listen to new ideas. I think that I am able to see different situations from a variety of people’s points of view. This is something that I have worked towards throughout my whole life. I feel that this is a strength in leadership because people need to feel like their leaders are working for them and their feelings, and how can a leader work in behalf of the feelings of others if they don’t attempt to understand those feelings. I also believe that I have a sense of vision. I can see the long range goals and how things could progress and be better in the future. I also think I can see the stepping stones that are required to get there. A leader who doesn’t have vision will end up just leading people in circles, rather than forward. I also have a willingness to learn new things and explore new ideas. We live in a world that is always changing, and our leaders need to be willing to be flexible and change with the technologies that are around them.

I am also well aware of my weaknesses as a leader. The first being that I am naturally an introverted and shy person. It is very difficult for me to be able to put my opinions and thoughts forward. Because of this I have a great lack of desire to become a leader. I lack confidence in my abilities to persuade people or effectively put across my vision. And I believe that without that confidence I am unable to become an effective leader.

**What challenges do you foresee?**

I will reiterate my previous opinions on my weaknesses as a leader. The biggest challenge that I forsee is my own desire and confidence as a leader. I also think that I will face challenges at my school because the teachers there are mainly older and more set in their ways. They have a difficult time accepting new technologies, and being willing to use them. It is also more of a challenge for them to learn *how* to use technology. I think that our school also already has some good leadership when it comes to technology, and 4 other teachers that are in our endorsement class. Again knowing my tendency to listen, observe, and just soak in will make it more difficult for me to come forward when I see others who are already doing so very well.

**Who are the stakeholders that need to be involved?**

The biggest stakeholder hear is me. I need to be convinced and ready to take on a challenge that I wouldn’t normally take on. I also think that the school principal, co-workers, and parents will need to be involved and willing to learn and try new things. I think we all need to remember that the reason for what we do is to try and most effectively teach the students that are placed in our care.

**What information is needed to understand about the school/district culture?**

I think that I need to understand that while our school and district do place a high value on technology, they place a higher value on academic instruction and data. These things always come first, and if you want to fit in other things, you have to be very creative and willing to work for it. They are very willing to support technology and it’s integration, but given a time limit and having to choose one over the other, it seems like they would choose Reading Street. I believe that this is important to understand because it dictates how you would have to go about integrating the technology. Especially for me in Kindergarten, and other lower grades, we don’t have a minute of our day to spare. So a lot of the fun activities that we have learned in our classes we are unable to do at school simply because there just isn’t enough time. So we have to get very creative in applying the technologies available to the curriculum and requirements that are already in place. This takes time, and I don’t believe that our district is aware and willing to compensate for that time. I definitely see this as a big challenge to becoming a technology leader.