International Society for Technology in Education

ISTE SEAL OF ALIGNMENT REVIEW FINDINGS REPORT

Learners Edge Inc.

Learners Edge

June 2021

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ABOUT

ABOUT ISTE

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) is the premier nonprofit membership organization serving educators and education leaders. ISTE is committed to empowering connected learners in a connected world and serves more than 100,000 education stakeholders throughout the world.

As the creator and steward of the definitive education technology standards, our mission is to empower learners to nourish in a connected world by cultivating a passionate professional learning community, linking educators and partners, leveraging knowledge and expertise, advocating for strategic policies, and continually improving learning and teaching.

ISTE SEAL OF ALIGNMENT

Resources and products designed with the ISTE Standards in mind are choosing to demonstrate their commitment to support critical digital age learning skills and knowledge. Regardless of a solution's intended grade level, purpose or content area, by addressing the ISTE Standards and earning a Seal of Alignment, a solution is shown to consciously, purposefully and meaningfully support best practices for digital age teaching and learning.

ISTE considers a solution aligned to the ISTE Standards only after an extensive review conducted by trained ISTE Seal of Alignment reviewers, and it has been determined to meet all critical elements of a particular standard indicator in accordance with specific review criteria.

By earning a Seal of Alignment, ISTE verifies that this product:

- Promotes critical technology skills
- Supports the use of technology in appropriate ways
- Contributes to the pedagogically robust use of technology for teaching and learning
- Aligns to the ISTE Standards in specific ways as described in the review finding report

RESOURCE DESCRIPTION

WHAT IS LEARNERS EDGE?

Learners Edge is an online resource providing professional development and Masters-level courses for Educators. Courses are all self-paced and completed independently. An 18-course subset of the Learners Edge offerings was reviewed:

1. One Stop Shop: Online Docs, Spreadsheets, Slides and Forms for your Classroom
2. Digital Citizenship in The Classroom
3. Digital Tools in the Connected Classroom
4. Teaching with Video to Support Digital Classroom Success
5. Integrating Innovative Classroom Technology
6. Making the Shift to Blended Learning in Your Classroom
7. Docs, Slides, and Forms in the Classroom: Your Next Level Google Guide
8. Create and Captivate: Using Online Presentations to Teach
9. Teaching Online with Equity in Mind
10. Enhancing Formative Assessment Practices with Technology
11. The Keys to a Connected Google Classroom
12. Technology on the Move, Best Practices for Balancing Movement and Technology
13. Exploring the Impact of Social Media on Students, Wellness, and Society
14. Google Tools to Up Your Classroom Game
15. Teaching Media Literacy in a Fake News World
16. Project Based Learning for the Digital Age
17. Cultivating Digital Citizenship in Today's Classroom
18. Teaching with Immersive Technologies

Material covered in the eighteen courses ranges from introductions to online resources and applications, to theoretical frameworks for supporting instruction with technology, to development of lesson plans intended for deployment in participants' classrooms. The courses are designed with classroom teachers in mind, and assignments are flexible and appropriate for virtually any grade level.

HOW IS LEARNERS EDGE IMPLEMENTED?

Learners Edge courses follow a common design of individual modules that require about 15 hours each to complete. All courses reviewed consisted of either two or three modules. Module 1 typically consists of a set of readings and reflections. Module 2 generally focuses on application of knowledge, skills, and apps in a classroom environment. Module 3 requires participants to select, explore, and reflect upon the usefulness and application of various resources related to the theme of that course. There are no set timelines for assignment completion and no specific course milestones or deadlines, with two exceptions. There is (1) a fixed window during which a participant can enroll in the course and (2) a final date by which all assignments must be completed.

Each course is supported by a rich variety of readings, videos, and learning activities. The courses require that participants reflect throughout the course. This includes what they expect to learn, what they experience as they go through the course, and what they learned after completing projects and learning activities. Reflections are recorded in journals that are not collected or examined by course graders. Each module has components that are submitted to graders at the completion of the module. Submissions that fall below acceptable standards are returned to the participant for revision and resubmission.

ISTE SEAL OF ALIGNMENT REVIEW

Product: Learners Edge
Organization: Learners Edge Inc.
Date of Award: June 2021

REVIEW METHODOLOGY

ISTE Seal of Alignment reviews are conducted by a panel of education and instructional experts. Reviewers use data collected both separately and collectively to determine how a solution addresses specific elements described in each of the indicators of the ISTE Standards. Special instruments are used by reviewers to collect data on potential alignment across all resource materials. Alignment is determined based on the extent to which all or some of specific elements are addressed within the materials. Reviewers conduct regular calibrations to assure the validity and reliability of the results and final review findings are combined for an overall score for alignment on each individual indicator.

During the review process for Learners Edge, reviewers:

- Collected data on when and how each activity addressed specific skills and knowledge described in the ISTE Standards for Educators at either a foundational or applied level
- Compiled findings to determine overall alignment across all ISTE Educator standards and indicators.
- Used aggregate findings to form the basis of the overall alignment results.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The courses were reviewed for alignment against the ISTE Standards for Educators. Reviewers carefully examined all materials included in the 18-course subset. These materials included reading lists and course module content including background information, pedagogical frameworks presented, assignment descriptions, assignment options offered to participants, and a standardized assessment rubric. Some course components such as required readings and supplemental videos were sampled for content and quality but were not exhaustively examined.

REVIEW FINDINGS

The ISTE Standards can be aligned at the following levels:

- Foundational - Resources and activities aligned at the *foundational* level primarily focus on skills and knowledge that facilitate skill acquisition to eventually meet ISTE Standard indicators.
- Applied – Resources and activities aligned at the *applied* level primarily focus on practical, real-world, and/or relevant opportunities to practice the skills and knowledge learned in the curriculum.

Learners Edge was found to align to the ISTE Standards for Educators in the following areas:

ISTE STANDARDS FOR EDUCATORS

	Standard 1 **Learner**	Standard 2 **Leader**	Standard 3 **Citizen**	Standard 4 **Collaborator**	Standard 5 **Designer**	Standard 6 **Facilitator**	Standard 7 **Analyst**
Indicator A							
Indicator B							
Indicator C							
Indicator D							

Foundational resources and activities focus primarily on knowledge that facilitates skills acquisition to eventually meet ISTE Standards indicators.

Applied resources and activities focus primarily on practical, real-world and/or relevant opportunities to practice the skills and knowledge learned in the curriculum.

Learners Edge was found to address the ISTE Standards for Educators in the following ways:

ISTE STANDARD	FOUNDATIONAL FINDING STATEMENT	APPLIED FINDING STATEMENT
1. Learner		
1.a. Set professional learning goals to explore and apply pedagogical approaches made possible by technology and reflect on their effectiveness.		The courses routinely require participants to set personal course goals and to engage in substantive reflection about course content, its relevance in their own teaching situations, their developing understanding of the wider professional implications of course content, and their own personal experience in completing course assignments.
1.b. Pursue professional interests by creating and actively participating in local and global learning networks.	Foundational understanding of PLNs is developed, and some teachers engage in optional rudimentary PLN activities in each course's discussion forum. The stage is set for more formal, deeper exploration and utilization of both local and global learning networks.	
1.c. Stay current with research that supports improved student learning outcomes, including findings from the learning sciences.		Reading and viewing requirements for every course include a strong assortment of current, relevant, and well-chosen articles and videos that reflect current research and strategies for using technology to support student learning.

2. Leader		
2.a. Shape, advance and accelerate a shared vision for empowered learning with technology by engaging with education stakeholders.		Projects in various courses routinely include components wherein teachers take the position of advocate among their peers and colleagues, extolling the benefits of various technologies, better methods of assessment, the benefits of including movement within activities of digital learning, and the need for taking specific ethical positions such as ensuring equitable access to online resources. Participants develop and flesh out a vision for using blended learning in their schools and are encouraged to include stakeholder input. School leaders develop a presentation of a vision for blended learning to be shared with their schools.
2.b. Advocate for equitable access to educational technology, digital content and learning opportunities to meet the diverse needs of all students.	Participants learn about the reality of the current lack of equitable access, the problems it causes, and brainstorm possible solutions to it in their own professional contexts.They also learn about assistive technologies and some fundamentals of choosing and adaptive technologies to meet special needs.	In culminating projects, courses typically include options for participants to advocate for various technologies, pedagogical strategies, and solutions to problems. Participants who opt for the “School Leader” option in select assignments develop plans for advocating for equitable access with stakeholders in their schools and districts.

2.c. Model for colleagues the identification, exploration, evaluation, curation and adoption of new digital resources and tools for learning.	Participants identify, review, and journal about new digital resources.	Participants routinely channel what they learn about tools, resources, issues, and pedagogical strategies into innovative instructional units that will be implemented in their classrooms and modeled for other teachers.
3. Citizen		
3.a. Create experiences for learners to make positive, socially responsible contributions and exhibit empathetic behavior online that build relationships and community.	Participants read articles and watch videos about a wide range of issues related to digital citizenship.	The Digital Citizenship course makes the case for teaching children to positively affect society and to exhibit empathetic behavior, and other courses include these concepts as dimensions of curriculum units that teachers develop.
3.b. Establish a learning culture that promotes curiosity and critical examination of online resources and fosters digital literacy and media fluency.	Participants engage in continual critical examination and adoption of online resources, with the expectation of both using worthwhile resources and sharing them with others.	These courses excel in helping teachers plan and implement instructional activities to develop a learning culture that promotes creativity, curiosity, and individuality while using online resources wisely and capably.
3.c. Mentor students in safe, legal and ethical practices with digital tools and the protection of intellectual rights and property.		Participants develop a plan to collaborate with students in developing expectations and acceptable use standards for digital tools, resources, citizenship, and safety skills.
3.d. Model and promote management of personal data and digital identity and protect student data privacy.		In the Digital Citizenship course, teachers and students work together to create a tool to guide students in managing digital footprints. Teachers also incorporate a component within regular

		instruction wherein students are given opportunities to create a positive digital footprint, or to avoid digital footprint mistakes in their classroom.
4. Collaborator		
4.a. Dedicate planning time to collaborate with colleagues to create authentic learning experiences that leverage technology.	Collaboration with other teachers is encouraged in many projects. Participants are introduced to collaborative software and ideas for leveraging collaboration in student projects. A simple lesson plan is developed that involves students using collaborative software.	
4.b. Collaborate and co-learn with students to discover and use new digital resources and diagnose and troubleshoot technology issues.constraints and calculated risks.		
4.c. Use collaborative tools to expand students' authentic, real-world learning experiences by engaging virtually with experts, teams and students, locally and globally.	Collaborative tools are explored and used in many projects.	
4.d. Demonstrate cultural competency when communicating with students, parents and colleagues and interact with	Participants learn about platforms for communicating with outside audiences, along with basic design principles for using these platforms.	

them as co-collaborators in student learning.		
5. Designer		
5.a. Use technology to create, adapt and personalize learning experiences that foster independent learning and accommodate learner differences and needs.	Course readings have a strong emphasis on developing rich learning experiences that engage students effectively to foster independent learning among students while accommodating individual learner differences and needs. Participants explore and reflect on a variety of software and instructional design strategies that increase engagement and allow for individualization of instructional activities.	Coursework typically culminates in developing instructional plans that help students gain confidence in directing their own learning, while accommodating individual differences in needs, interests, and learning styles.
5.b. Design authentic learning activities that align with content area standards and use digital tools and resources to maximize active, deep learning.		Designing instructional units that are aligned with content area standards while using digital tools and resources to increase student engagement and deepen learning is part of the fabric of every course in this set.
5.c. Explore and apply instructional design principles to create innovative digital learning environments that engage and support learning.	Readings and foundation-laying videos integrated into these courses are rich in conveying and demonstrating a wide variety of examples of how effective instructional design principles and powerful digital technologies can combine to create engaging, stimulating, and supportive learning environments.	Throughout the courses, participants are given opportunities to apply innovative instructional design principles as they brainstorm, plan, design, and implement instructional units for use in their classrooms and in preparing professional development lessons to share with colleagues.

6. Facilitator		
6.a. Foster a culture where students take ownership of their learning goals and outcomes in both independent and group settings	Participants are introduced to the concept of individualization and increased student agency and explore what this might look like in practice. Formative assessment is used throughout these courses to help students take ownership of their learning.	
6.b. Manage the use of technology and student learning strategies in digital platforms, virtual environments, hands-on makerspaces or in the field.		These courses include projects and assignments that prepare participating teachers to use and manage a wide assortment of technologies and technology environments such as Google Classroom, Augmented and Virtual Reality environments, and social media. The development of a comprehensive blended learning plan includes different strategies for stretching limited digital resources so that all students are able to engage in the designed digital learning experiences.
6.c. Create learning opportunities that challenge students to use a design process and computational thinking to innovate and solve problems.		Participants create an assignment for students to follow a specified design process to create a final video project.
6.d. Model and nurture creativity and creative	Participants gain competence in using a variety of digital	Participants learn about and practice effective presentation

expression to communicate ideas, knowledge or connections.	tools that afford rich opportunities to demonstrate creative communication and prepare students to do the same in communicating ideas, knowledge, or connections.	design, principles for effective visual communication, and creative ways to enrich presentations with media content and interactivity.
7. Analyst		
7.a. Provide alternative ways for students to demonstrate competency and reflect on their learning using technology.	Participants study, explore, and experiment with numerous strategies for conducting effective formative assessment.	Participants develop plans for alternative ways for students to demonstrate competency through vehicles such as digital portfolios and collaborative projects.
7.b. Use technology to design and implement a variety of formative and summative assessments that accommodate learner needs, provide timely feedback to students and inform instruction.		Careful attention to understanding, identifying, and using a rich array of individually appropriate, practical, and research-based assessment strategies is woven throughout the Learners Edge courses.
7.c. Use assessment data to guide progress and communicate with students, parents and education stakeholders to build student self- direction.	Participants learn how to use data gathered from formative assessment to guide progress and to help students become more confident about becoming responsible for their own learning.	

CONCLUSION

Reviewers found the *Learners Edge* content to be sufficiently broad and deep to be interesting and valuable across a wide variety of settings, yet with enough course-to-course overlap to foster a sense of cohesiveness among the courses. The content is well laid out, timely, well-chosen, and full of a rich variety of resources, explanations, and real-world examples. The eighteen courses reviewed in the Learners Edge technology content strand cover a wide variety of topics that are current, relevant, and important for educators.

The courses have also been clearly designed with the ISTE Standards in mind. The readings, explorations, and course assignments will certainly strengthen every participant's knowledge, skill, and strategic preparedness to demonstrate proficiency in ISTE Standards-based competencies.

The course readings and other source materials are varied and well chosen, and participants have the opportunity to get up to speed quickly in areas that are central to leveraging technology to increase student learning. Supporting videos are drawn from existing online resources and effectively introduce or elaborate on target skills and concepts.

As a result of completing these courses, participants have an excellent opportunity to improve technology integration in their own classrooms or to participate in changing the technology culture of a school for the better. This curriculum is of tremendous value to educators who are motivated to transform their own classrooms or become agents of change in their schools.