



How K-12 Leaders Can Turn Technology Procurement into a Strategic Advantage

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Digital tools are an integral part of the learning experience, but with tighter budgets and increased demand for fiscal accountability, K-12 schools must generate greater return from their technology investments.

Moving beyond traditional vendor relationships and forging strategic partnerships can help schools use technology procurement to better support long-term district goals.

“Forward-thinking providers operate under a core organizational ethos rooted in the belief that we should work together for the common good,” says Mark Sinanian, vice president of marketing, sales training and enablement at Canon.



A Different Procurement Model

Traditional vendors often focus on filling orders, creating an environment where school leaders equate the lowest price with the best value. However, strategic partners view five-year contracts as the beginning of a long-term relationship where they are invested in the overall health and success of the district.

“A partner looks ahead to help that institution be its very best, because they’re a partner and not merely a supplier,” Sinanian says.

The Value of a Strategic Partner

Strategic partners serve as an extension of the district team, providing the expertise, guidance and support needed to address today’s challenges while preparing for tomorrow’s opportunities.

They provide experience from previous implementations to help schools more effectively deploy their technology resources. They may have K-12 advisory boards they can consult to surface timely industry best practices and apply them to help K-12 clients.

Learning outcomes

A strategic partner helps districts select, deploy and support technology that reflects their priorities. Rather than implementing tools for

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technology’s sake, partners align investments with instructional goals, helping educators create more engaging, personalized and accessible learning experiences.

Operational efficiency

District technology teams are often stretched thin. Strategic partners can help with device management, procurement, support services and infrastructure planning, allowing IT staff to focus on strategic initiatives.

Equity and access

A strong partner understands that technology access remains a critical priority. From supporting one-to-one device programs to improving connectivity, partners help districts ensure all students have the tools they need to succeed.

Future-ready planning

Technology decisions made today affect district operations for years to come. Strategic partners help districts develop long-term roadmaps that account for enrollment shifts, emerging technologies, facility upgrades and evolving instructional



needs. They also provide training, change management and ongoing support that help educators and administrators confidently adopt new tools and maximize their impact.

Community engagement

Districts are accountable to families, school boards and taxpayers. Strategic partners can support initiatives that strengthen community trust through transparent communication, digital engagement and programs that demonstrate measurable value to stakeholders.

5 Key Considerations

Choosing a technology partner involves more than evaluating products and pricing. The right partner can help leaders navigate evolving technology needs while keeping student success at the center of every decision.

1. K-12 expertise

Education technology presents unique challenges, from supporting diverse learning environments to protecting student data. Districts need partners with deep K-12 experience and a proven understanding of the operational, instructional and compliance requirements schools face.

2. A long-term vision

Technology decisions have lasting implications for budgets, infrastructure and classroom outcomes. Strategic partners should be able to provide

clear multi-year roadmaps that align technology investments with district priorities.

3. Service and support

Reliable support is essential for maintaining instructional continuity. Districts should evaluate a partner's service model, response times and technical expertise to ensure issues can be resolved quickly and effectively. The best partners take a proactive approach, helping prevent problems before they disrupt learning.

4. Cybersecurity awareness

Districts need partners that prioritize security at every stage of the technology lifecycle. This includes expertise in device management, network security, data protection, compliance and incident response planning.

5. Transparency and accountability

Districts should look for partners that provide clear communication, measurable performance metrics and regular business reviews to ensure technology investments continue to support district goals and deliver expected results.

Better Together

Technology procurement is an opportunity to strengthen instruction, protect student data and build a more resilient district. By choosing partners who understand K-12 priorities, school leaders can make every dollar work harder for their communities.

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