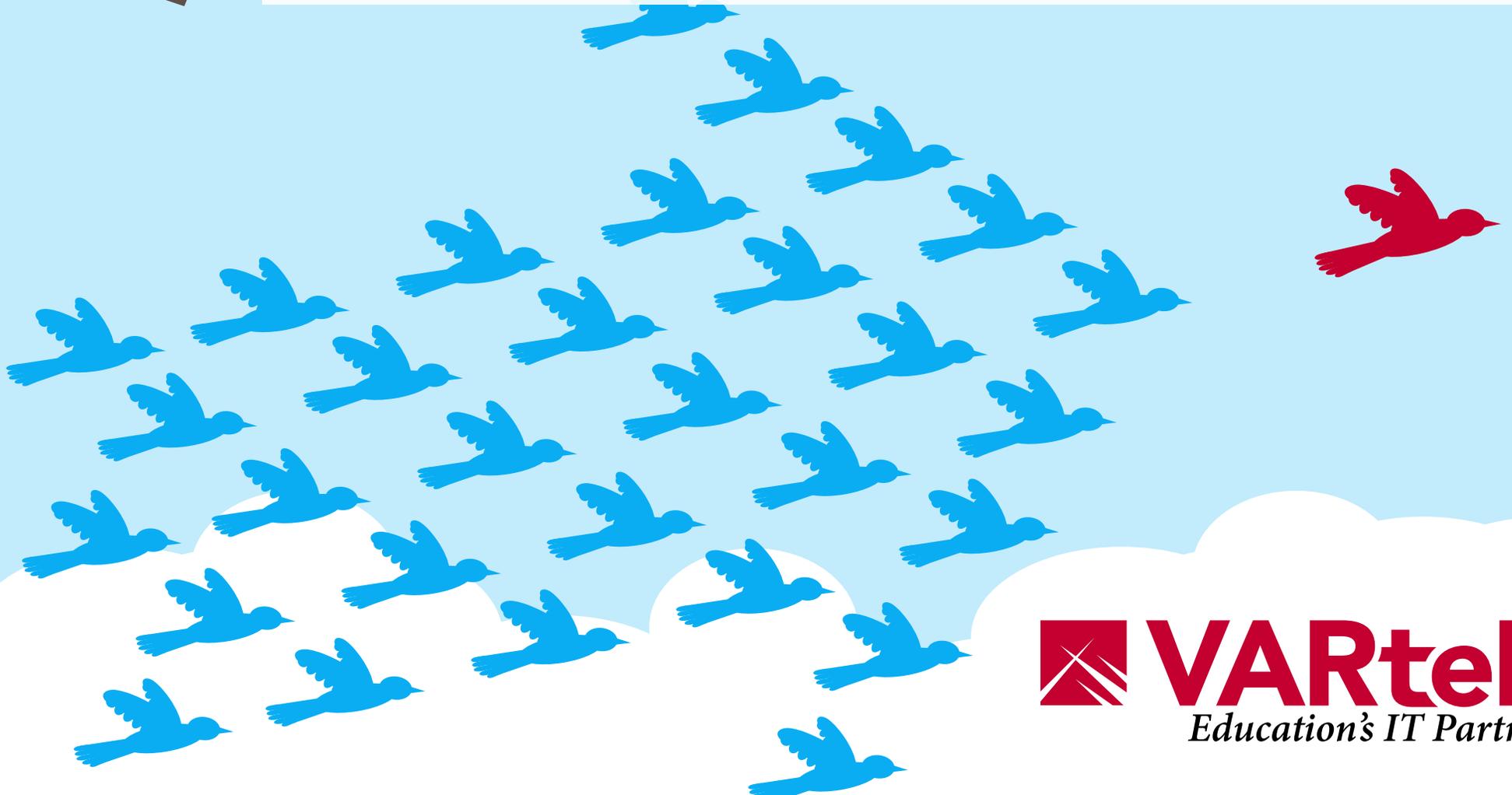


7 HABITS of HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TECH DIRECTORS

ATTRIBUTES OF THE BEST IT LEADERS IN EDUCATION



Excellent IT directors work wonders

A great IT leader can transform a school. From connecting students to effective learning tools, to enabling new educational experiences, to freeing teachers to focus on their students, their influence can be tremendous.

Here are 7 things the best tech directors do:

- 1 Put students first
- 2 Invest in the team
- 3 Communicate
- 4 Continuously learn
- 5 Push the status quo
- 6 Plan, budget, and manage
- 7 Collaborate

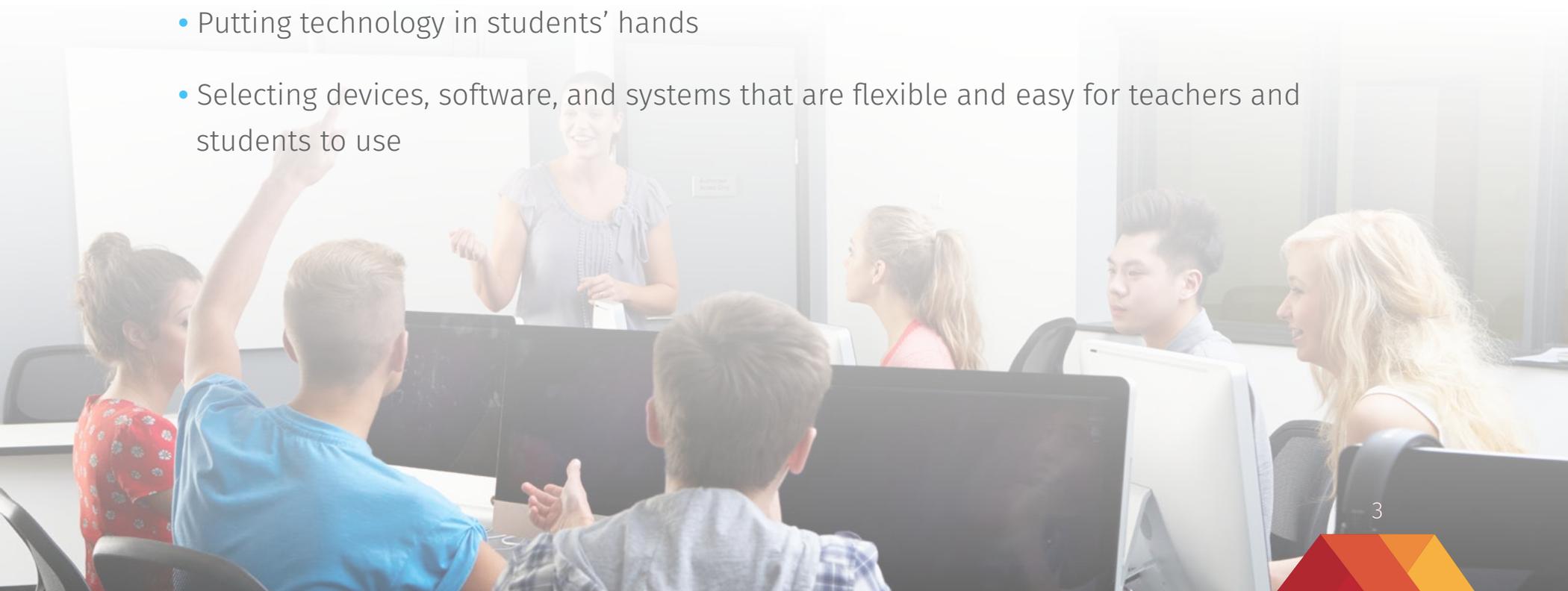


Put Students First

The best IT directors understand that students are the priority and that every technology initiative revolves around serving them.

Practically, putting students first means:

- Taking the time to learn what works for students and what doesn't
- Resisting the temptation to make decisions from a purely technical perspective
- Putting technology in students' hands
- Selecting devices, software, and systems that are flexible and easy for teachers and students to use



Invest in the Team

Some IT directors are tempted to spend most of their time troubleshooting. In fact, not long ago, keeping computer systems operating was the primary focus of a tech director.

As technology has evolved, so have the roles of technology professionals. Today, the best tech directors devote time and personal energy to their team members, demonstrating a commitment to the team's professional development—in turn, getting better performance from their people.

Strong IT directors who create and manage systems to hire, train, and support their team members create technology environments that prepare students to learn and achieve at higher levels.



“Continuous learning is one of VARtek’s core values. Our technology directors are always evaluating the talents of their team members, coaching them and leading them to opportunities that will build on those strengths.”

—Darlene Waite, VARtek President

Communicate

In many schools, the technology department and environment are opaque—individuals outside of the IT team don't have a clear understanding of the goals, status, or performance of the technology or support staff. Great IT leaders bring value by cultivating transparency. They:



1. Create and communicate **measurable goals**.



2. Design monitoring and reporting processes for **evaluating IT performance**.



3. **Share results and challenges** on a weekly, monthly, and quarterly basis in a format that works for superintendents and other school leaders.

Continuously Learn

Educational technology evolves at a dizzying pace. Each year brings new products, programs, and strategies for serving students and supporting teachers.

IT leaders must spend significant time learning—reviewing new options and evaluating their relevance for the school. The best tech directors consistently schedule time to learn new skills and become familiar with new technologies. With continuous investment in personal learning, IT leaders take their position at the head of a constantly improving team.



Push the Status Quo

Schools that avoid risks, remain stagnant, and accept the status quo will miss out on opportunities and advancements that improve student achievement. IT directors must develop a habit of constant discovery.

Scheduling weekly time to explore new technologies allows tech directors to advise school leaders on the benefits and potential risks of emerging tools and resources.

IT leaders understand that outdated systems and cutting-edge technology both have limitations, and they effectively communicate how all options fit into the larger picture.



Plan, Budget, and Manage

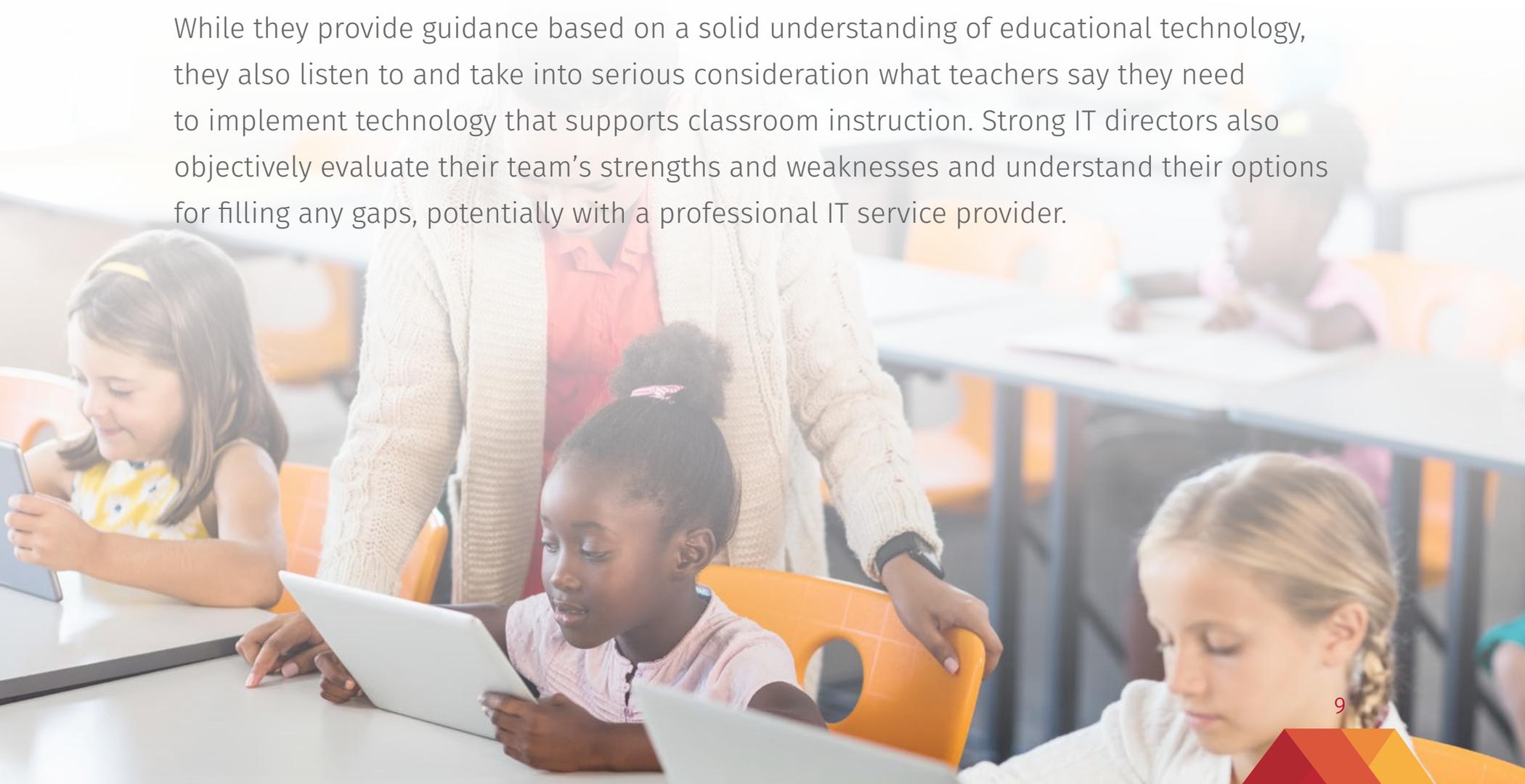


IT directors who create strategic technology plans that are aligned with industry standards are more likely to be good stewards of technology funds and equipment. They understand how to invest in devices, equipment, and staff at appropriate levels, and they effectively manage the asset refresh cycle to ensure that teachers and students always have access to technology that works.

Collaborate

Effective IT directors know what they don't know and are eager to cooperate with faculty and staff when building a school's technology environment.

While they provide guidance based on a solid understanding of educational technology, they also listen to and take into serious consideration what teachers say they need to implement technology that supports classroom instruction. Strong IT directors also objectively evaluate their team's strengths and weaknesses and understand their options for filling any gaps, potentially with a professional IT service provider.



Partner with Leaders

With our experience helping schools achieve their educational technology goals since 1989, VARtek has a deep understanding of IT leadership. You want to give students an education that prepares them for college, careers, and life. As your IT services partner, we provide the expertise, systems, and support you need to fulfill that vision. *Together, we make your educational technology work.*

To find out more about VARtek, visit our website at www.VARtek.com, or call us at **800-954-2524**.



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