Benefits of the JMU NETS▪T Certification Program

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Deployment of the JMU NETS▪T Certification promotes the following benefits:

- **Flexibility**. Users can pursue certification at their own pace, schedule, and location. Since there is no "seat time" associated with the program, users may complete their certification as quickly as their pre-existing skillset allows. Further, users may choose to develop their skills in whatever fashion (and budget) suits them best. The NETS▪T program itself is completely independent of the training leading to development of the pre-requisite NETS▪T skills. It can be used in conjunction with any existing professional development program, incorporating both formal and informal activities, including professional development activities localized by divisions for their personnel.

- **Efficiency**. Users engage in only the training they need in order to master NETS▪T pre-requisite skills. ITRTs/teachers possessing requisite skills progress to certification faster than do ITRTs/teachers who have yet to acquire the skills, and are then available sooner to assist other teachers in their own NETS▪T pursuit.

- **Impact on achievement.** Technology Coordinators and teachers report that the NETS▪T certification program has had a positive effect on student achievement, as measured by the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs). See the videos at http://coe.jmu.edu/netst/ - Improved Instruction, Improved Student Achievement, Positive School Impact.

- **Reinforcement of ITRT role**. The JMU Program supports ITRTs in the role of serving as Evaluators for the teachers with whom they work. As such, these ITRT-teacher certification teams may take advantage of existing relationships and professional development programs to identify the optimal path to certification.

- **Cost-effectiveness**. By uniquely blending the benefits noted above – flexibility, efficiency, utilization of ITRTs - the JMU Program can offer certification for a low cost per teacher/ITRT.. Support materials (e.g., *JMU NETS▪T Certification Program: Attaining Your NETS▪T Certification* (course); *JMU NETS▪T Certification Program: Assembling Your NETS▪T e-Portfolio* (workshop)) are made available to divisions at no charge so that the divisions may provide their own training in-house to further lower costs.

- **Retention**. Technology coordinators report that the development of the learning community promoted by NETS▪T adoption assists in retaining teachers who might otherwise leave the division.

- **Rejuvenation of veteran teachers.** Teachers of long-standing are often presumed to be at the back of the technology integration curve. The use of technology promoted by NETS▪T adoption helps them find new excitement in teaching and learning.

- **Increased teacher credibility, confidence, and competence**. Teachers who have attained their NETS▪T certification report that the process helps them feel more confident in their ability to use technology effectively.

- **High degree of adoption**. The JMU Program facilitates the development of supportive communities of practice among colleagues and this, along with the involvement of ITRTs, efficiency and program low cost, leads to relative high levels of adoption among teachers in a division. Currently, adoption rates are well over 20% among some divisions, with additional teachers in the NETS▪T pipeline. Some individual schools report adoption rates above 40% and still rising.

- **Sustainability**. Once adopted, the JMU Program is easily sustainable due to its low cost and reliance on local resources. So, the program may continue even if the funding used to establish the program is cut dramatically. Further, the program provides for collaboration within a supportive virtual community of peers that remains in place even after certification is achieved, thus supporting both established and new generations of tech-enabled teachers.

- **Culture of learning**. The high degree of adoption leads to the development of a critical mass of technology-accomplished teachers which, in turn, has the effect of promoting a culture of learning within the school, division, or consortium. This culture affects not only those who have attained their certification but those with whom they work as well. Within this culture, the certified teachers become models of learning and accomplishment.

- **Collaborative cohorts.** The Program places great emphasis on the development of virtual and non-virtual communities of practice, thus making it ideal for supporting cohorts of ITRTs/teachers in working collectively toward their certification. These cohorts may be similarly-skilled (e.g., consisting of veteran ITRTs), team-based (e.g., ITRT-teacher teams), and/or theme-based (e.g., early elementary teachers and their ITRT supports).

- **Training optimization**. The Program supports creation of highly targeted just-in-time-training based on an on-going embedded needs analysis performed by the Evaluator during review of teacher submissions. Current training may be revised or new training may be developed to address gaps or opportunities revealed via the evaluation process, such as those skills identified during the NETS▪T self-assessment.

- **Technology readiness.** The Program includes completion of the Essential Conditions survey as a prerequisite to beginning NETS▪T pursuit. Essential Conditions refer to those elements of a school environment that determine its technology readiness. Tracking these data may allow ITRTs or administrators to identify those areas in which the technology readiness of the school/division may be improved, such as through the procurement of needed hardware or software.

- **Evaluation by Technology Coordinators/Training Supervisors**. The Program supports evaluation by technology coordinators and training supervisors who are most likely to be aware of the complete range of professional development offerings within a division. As such, these Evaluators can guide ITRTs and teachers to those professional development activities best suited to individual needs.

- **Identification and dissemination of exemplary work products**. A natural outgrowth of the Program's evaluation process is the identification of exemplary artifacts (and reflections) submitted by ITRTs and teachers in support of their NETS▪T portfolios. Dissemination of this reusable digital content is supported by the JMU Virginia Content Repository (VCR), leading to rapid diffusion of excellence and innovative practice within and across divisions.

- **Individual Development Plan**. The Program supports the development of a NETS▪T-aligned Individual Development Plan to guide efforts to develop requisite skills.

NETS▪T ALIGNMENT:
Meets: I.A., I.B., II.A., II.B., II.C., II.D., II.E., III.A., III.B., III.C., III.D., IV.A., IV.B., IV.C., V.A., V.B., V.C., V.D., VI.A., VI.B., VI.C., VI.D., VI.E.