Before being admitted to the unit’s teacher preparation programs, candidates take EDU 214, Preparing Teachers to Use Technology. EDU 214 is a web-based course that also has a 22 hour field experience in an after school program where candidates assist with small and whole group activities, using various technologies. In EDEL 453, Teaching Elementary Social Studies, candidates enhance their whole group lessons by incorporating and demonstrating appropriate use of multi-media and interactive boards. For field experiences in EDES 300 (Language Arts and Literature) and EDRL 443 (Literacy Instruction), candidates use a variety of assessment tools and software to assess students’ current levels of performance and monitor their progress. During a whole group lesson for the EDSC 404P (Practicum in High School), a candidate had high school students use their cell phones to research a topic for an in-class project. The unit recognizes there are differences in candidate’s technology skills, their comfort in using a variety of technologies, and expectations in field experiences. In 2014-2015 school year, the unit plans to involve local lead teachers and candidates in a technology needs’ survey with the anticipation of revamping EDU 214 (preparing teachers to use technology) and scaffolding technology skills and expectations during field experiences through internship.

The unit’s Learning and Resource Center (LRC) provides individual and group technology training and support. A variety to technologies are available for candidates, interns and unit faculty such as: Toshiba notebook class set, Ipad class set, DVD-DVD and DVD-VHS transfer stations, poster printers, laptops, scanners, webcams, digital video cameras, video editing equipment and various software. In addition, the institution’s Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center combines traditional library resources with new digital and multimedia technologies, provides assistance with computing and technology needs, offers trainings for a variety of technologies, has A/V equipment available for check-out, and much more.

Interns respond to a computer efficacy survey at the end of internship. Based on spring 2013 computer efficacy survey results, video presentations were reconfigured to 15 minutes or less and video accessing issues were resolved by contracting with an outside company. Different technologies and strategies were used in these seminars for two reasons: to enhance the presentations of course but also to serve as examples that may be transferrable to the intern’s own classroom. For example, one seminar uses a graphic organizer for note taking while watching the video. After this particular seminar, a fall English intern used this strategy for a movie she showed students. Two seminars are learning modules that present an ethical dilemma, a poll question about what happened next, the actual outcome, and the legal discussion. Talk outs were used on video clips for emphasis. The webcampus seminars serve as multimedia models for interns to consider in their own lessons.

An out of area intern must obtain parent permission for skyping with their university supervisor. They must have wireless internet service, a lap top computer and they are issued a webcam with directional mic and 12’ usb cord.

The following criteria from the internship evaluation rubric are used to evaluate the intern’s use of technology as an instructional tool: effectively uses educational technology to support the teaching and learning process; plans appropriately challenging instruction that enhances learning through the use of a wide variety of resources (e.g. computers, audio-visual technologies, videotapes and discs, local experts, primary documents and artifacts, texts, reference books, literature, and other print resources); uses multiple teaching and learning strategies, including the use of educational technology, to provide opportunities for all students to become active learners; and evaluates how to meet student needs (e.g. developmental stages, prior knowledge, learning styles, and interests) and achieve learning goals using multiple teaching and learning strategies, technology, materials, and experiences. Interns must collect and analyze data to inform their instructional decisions and monitor students’ performance.