Consider This

So you have a great plan for how technology could be improved at your school or in your classroom? You're on your way to proposing a change! Have you considered all the issues and obstacles you might face? This list includes a handful of common issues that you need to consider when proposing a change at your school. You'll probably come up with some of your own!

ISSUE	WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
School Spending	You probably already know that your school has a budget that describes how money will be spent for everything from teacher salaries to instructional materials and building maintenance. Some of the money is usually set aside to spend on technology. Because the budget is often limited, decisions on spending need to be justified with research and matched to the objectives of the school. In public schools the school board controls the budget at the district level, directing funds that come from state and federal programs. The school board receives input from school site councils, budget advisory committees, school principals, and the general public as they make their budget decisions. Principals and school site councils usually have control of budgeting at the school level. If you want to suggest purchasing new equipment, adding new classes, or starting new programs at your school, you will need to help your school find the money. Ask at your school or district office to find out more about your school's spending budget and how it is decided.
Liability	Schools are responsible for following federal, state, and local laws and rules. Some protect your right to a quality education and some protect your privacy and your safety. If you are proposing a change at your school, you will want to be aware of the school's responsibility to follow these rules. Some examples might be: • A school rule that students cannot be in the computer lab without at least one adult present • A state law that says all school computers must have Internet filters installed • A district mandate that all students complete certain core classes before they graduate • A national privacy act that does not allow students to share certain personal information over the Internet

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ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Support Staff and Maintenance	Any new school program or equipment comes with additional costs besides just purchasing the equipment. Make sure to consider costs such as: • Technical support: Who can help students and teachers with technical problems? Who will keep the equipment up-to-date? • Maintenance: Who will look after this project next year and the year after that? • Custodial: Who will provide the staff and supplies to keep the computer lab and equipment clean?
Teacher Training	It is likely that there might be some really good ways to integrate your ideas into how teachers teach and students learn. In your plan, consider who and how to get this information to the teachers for the most beneficial results.

Can you think of any other considerations related to your technology suggestion? Jot it down; it will be useful when you work on your proposal.

Help out the Student Voices Resource Center community by emailing your considerations to SVRCStaff@NetDay.org. Favorite examples will be posted on S.V.R.C. so that others can benefit from your expertise!