Facilitator: Adam Gravit

Note Taker: Dan Williams

**Elementary Focus Group NOTES**

**Instagram and texting aside, could you give me your impression of how proficient your students are at using technology? (goal here is to hear about “proficiency in basic technology skills...words from the indicator)**

Majority are pretty proficient…have it at home use it at home…minority doesn’t have computers or computers are 10 years old at home. Mainly have a good basic sense but experience is more for games. Don’t know that they are using it in a more directed focused way. Mostly for entertainment

Yes, I agree

2nd grade—don’t think they know how to use Word, other programs. Struggle with finding keys, numbers. But they know what google is, say can I use google… know they can get information from it

when introduced and shown how to use things, they are pretty quick to learn. My 5 year old learns quicker than my mom. My 5 year old can make powerpoints now… mindset is accustomed to using technology. High frequency words activity kids say “oh just take a picture with your iphone”… part of their norm

typing is an issue… home row doesn’t exist. Want to use touch screen for everything…hunt and peck on the keyboard

most part, kids are comfortable using the technology.

Typing is the hardest part

**Please describe the relationship – as you see it - between technology and your curriculum.  For example, what role does technology play in your students’ mastery of core curriculum objectives?**

Speech therapist – I’ve been using tech ipad a lot for nonverbal kids for communication—critical for those students to learn how to communicate, also use language building apps less frequently as it can sometimes be a distraction

I think I use tech as a supplement to add to basic curriculum – maps and globes, go on a website and build world map like a puzzle. Sometimes acts as a hook

Create a lot of (had a smartboard before coming here) … use easiteach now. Have created many smartboard lessons with links and interactivity. Many units start with watching and interacting with content similar to a book at this age… it’s a have to have for most lessons

I think I use it for everything

Polyvision with the pen that doesn’t work very well. Smart was better because they could use their fingers

Amount of things already made that I could adapt was nice to have so many things to use and adapt… making things and learning now as I go. Powerpoint not the same

Use it daily for everything I teach

**Through what activities do your students develop the 4Cs (don’t prompt them for each C, but let them describe) with, or without, technology?**

[needed 4 c’s identified]

I think collaboration is when one kids stuck on the computer and another kid helps… they have to work together and help each other out. Help each other, support each other

A lot of the curriculum up on an interactive board.. easier to have them discuss the same topic, turn and talk, communicate about answer a big question. Nice to link it to have other perspectives…trying to think about thinking creatively trying to think about immediately having the information you want if you see a kid going somewhere you hadn’t seen coming you can find info pertinent to it. Tech presentation gives us a common kicking off point. Shows them how they can find information as well… insect they hadn’t been introduced to… instruct kids to use google (with permission) to find information the teacher doesn’t have. “oh I can do that” you don’t have to go to the library like us old folk. They’re so lucky…they have a wealth of information. They should be the smartest group of people

But also stress just because you read it on the internet doesn’t mean its reliable information.. have to check sources

**Describe, in your own words, what you think are the district expectations (and vision?) regarding the use of technology for teaching and learning. (Teacher group)**

Use it because they’re spending so much money on it, but also if you read other literature tech is not eh be all end all…still important to use primary sources but I use tech with those primary sources…hover cam is great for that… looking together at picture, having conversations… expect us to use it but balance

Expected as enhancement of good teaching, not a replacement

To be knowledgeable on different programs… whatever they hand us, I guess

Wonderful resource showing mlk giving a speech, being exposed to the real mlk makes it come alive even for 2nd graders. Great questions – why is it black and white?

**How can the district convey its vision and expectations for technology’s role in teaching and learning? (prompt for ways to convey to teachers, parents, etc.)**

Spell it out!

They seem to let us know pretty clearly everything else

There were a lot of offerings coming here new, Darlene offers many things and lots of help, very available shows that …

If there was a glitch you’d google it and fix it yourself

Push for data being put in a certain way… that’s definitely clear

Some movement for that

Professional development offerings (had done elem sped training with ipads…new thing…hadn’t been done before)

Have Darlene offer more trainings around specific initiatives district is targeting. If there’s a training around it its clearly important

T=constantly changing

More capabilities with each new update. Need pd for training

Not savvy—need a lot of support

Wish we had more available people.. if Darlene isn’t there when I have student computer lab time

When you have 10 little kids and the computers not working… frustrating…im lost how can I help these kids? If it was easier to have more people available when teachers are in the lab that would be helpful

For me to implement what the district wants me to do id need more support

We have clear standards and expectations for everything else, not tech

We do have a curric for tech for 2nd graders

When we got curric for science we got pd on that

No one walked us through new curric for kids, you want us to teach this but im not computer savvy…some of its simple but I cannot do it all

Agreed we need instruction and training about what is expected

New this year too and pretty savvy, ipad was just given to me…gonna sit in a drawer

That’s what happens

Woman I worked with last year didn’t use the thing…just take it off the wall and give it to someone whose going to use it

Set it up as a professional goal, get supported that way

I’m surprised there’s no special computer teacher

There used to be dedicated to each building… but now Darlene is spread thing

**To what extent have your PD opportunities supported your ability to provide relevant, real-world, learning experiences that incorporate digital tools and resources? (prompt for most effective PD delivery models? see if the PD format has any impact on the degree to which the PD “supports” their ability)**

Can I comment on what hasn’t helped? The last PD day… the data thing… (Pearson Inform)…not enough data in the system to try the things we’re boing told to do. Presenter not prepared with an example… waster of time

Too many people, too big a room

No one had a clue…no one could take what they had on their screen and try it out

Maybe they need to be more prepared on PD

And that was data driven…not how can I use this in my classroom with our kids

But that’s something we’re expected to create and use and no one has a clue

Pd as a whole needs to be more effective

Just-in-time was really helpful… rose would teach you a powerpoint, around a topic (PPT, prezi, wiki)

I remember doing a webquest

That kind of stuff that would be helpful for students to do… once you learn how its done and see you can type over something that’s there

Real-life examples you can “borrow”…technology pinterest

Stuff like that is useful because others who have done in the past can share how they used it personally I find learning from colleagues is very helpful personally… end of training last 15 min everybody get together and do something, make one yourself etc… helps you learn

Personally I think teachers are receptive to helping out… me, I would do it if I had the knowledge and skills but I don’t know generally how people feel about it

Years ago, it was more staff-driven

In the last few years more mandated trainings by state/district…cant be staff giving them

Good to talk to colleagues so you know what needs are

People are open to it if they’re given the time to get their stuff together.. .have heard reading staff told here it is weds and Friday they have to help with pd… that’s not welcomed…want to feel that you volunteered not you’re told to do it

**To what extent do you feel that Foxborough provides the technology/technical support necessary for teachers to accomplish their curricular goals?**

Technical if I’m out of ink, doing helpdesk is good, they’re there pretty quickly…impressed with that.. not always like that.. helpdesk ticket I put it in…like a fairly godmother…

Need more support like Darlene and keri…worked closely with her because tech was my goal, Darlenes schedule doesn’t seem to mesh with mine

Getting easiteach at home was a big process…having to have what you need in the comfort of your own home so you can work over the weekend was helpful but it did happen though it took time

Better than at my old school—too bad so sad. Impressed with FPS but I would like more

**Is there anything else that you would like to mention that has not come up in our discussion? (if not, then thanks!)**

From special ed perspective, knowing what types of assistive tech are available in the district is important. Not sure what is available in the district. How to make them more accessible to students what other techs we can acquire for students with dift learning needs

I dont now what’s available besides what’s on my computer and the hover cam… other software programs the district has bought into that would help me

Have an updated list of what’s available

Ex/response clickers… there are some and I haven’t seen them… very hard to share.. there are some in the building… how can I get more. Write a grant

Look at more PARCC…kids are gonna have to type. At least at the burrel our lab is very small.. need more tech at their fingertips… my kids school has laptop carts, they have ipads, we need to look ahead… we need a typing curriculum.. if theyr’e going to have a writing essay we need to teach them to type and need more computers

Our building lab not conducive to PARCC test… too hot, kids need to focus to take a critical exam. Need to look ahead to that, sooner than later

And if we did all that, I would need training

Everybody has their own different backgrounds

Nice if teachers had their own laptops

[asked any specific programs etc you’ve heard of? What is YOUR vision of perfect classroom with tech?]

would like to see interactive board ripped off my wall, a real board where two students can work on something at the same time. And a big wealth of programs to pull from with what you want. What we have is not helpful. Powerpoint is dated

they took the cheap route

pens not reliable…not working… you’re being observed

wish I had a touch board would be easier

its only me in the room, cant be bouncing from group to group. Computer stuff has to be independent…

or make one kid the av kid

wifi throughout all school… only one hotspot at burrell…same at igo

balance between reading books and on a screen…going back and forth between print and digital reading…my daughter was able to write a paper on her iphone, took it home, printed and edited… im like oh my god, im trying to text and my fingers…its just what they do

PD is important, plan comes first but then you need plan for getting there

New curriculum every single year is a challenge,…new science, new math, elem teachers we teach it all…tech sometimes goes to the back burner… what’s more important for a 2nd grader… to read and write or use MS Word…. etc