



## RENTON TECHNOLOGY COORDINATING COUNCIL (RTCC)

April 18, 2018 – Minutes of Meeting

KEC Board Room, 4:00pm - 6:00pm

**Members in attendance:** Dr. Seymour Hanfling, Rahman Abdul, Thomas Caudle, Alisa Louie, Barbara Folmer, Ellen Dorr, Emrie Hollander, Jason Franklin, Jerry Sidwell, Joy Mattingly, Kalisa Amparo, Kevin Smith, Ricardo Garmendia, Shari Mann, Nathan Sun-Kleinberger, Stewart Schusterman and Tom Howley.

**Members not in attendance:** Kristina Bellamy, Randy Matheson, Ron Hansen, Dr. Shannon Harvey, Susan James and Susan Smith Leland, Alexey Kuznetsov and Dr. Karen Soine.

### Welcome and Introductions

Seymour began the meeting by welcoming everyone and mentioned that there is no need to approve the January minutes since there was nothing that needs approval from the discussion. Members were asked to review the one-page summary from our January discussion and comment on what stood out to them.

### Critical ideas from our January Discussion

Shari shared that in the past we were only looking at what was good teaching, but now we are looking at what is good teaching and learning using technology, not as a side piece but as an integrated piece to teaching.

Thomas shared that we all come with our own perspective in education. When looking at the bigger picture, we can't address one thing that will fix everything. There are teaching and student learning practices that need to be adjusted to a 1:1 world. Curriculum needs to fit into the technology integration world that we are transitioning into. It's a systematic the push that we need to do all at the same time. We can't push in one arena and think we will have sustained success.

Seymour shared that in thinking about the speed of technology trends, one struggle is that people say there is too much out there and we need to standardize certain things. And then there are people also saying that they want the flexibility to make the decision in the classroom or in the building on what technology they want to use. There is conflict between the two. There is no good answer on how we keep from being overwhelmed as devices and tools change quickly.

Barbara shared that it is frustrating to change products on people. While we have a variety of tools to offer teachers to communicate with families, none of them are perfect. We don't want to tell people to use a specific tool and then take it away later. Families want to communicate differently, too. If you pick one style of communication, some people will be missed. Some want communication via email, some phone, and some pushed announcements.

Kalisa shared that it would be helpful to have some freedom and time to try new things in the classroom and if it doesn't work, that's ok. Sometimes teachers feel pressure in trying something new because if it doesn't work, they have to make up that time and teach it a different way. People want to be supported and recognized for the work they are doing, and they respond well when they can bounce ideas off someone or for someone to be excited with them.

Shari shared two things that she thinks are important about professional development. 1) PD that works best with her staff is something they can take back right away and use - it's not just theory based. 2) PD that gives you the time to try and practice it rather than just hear about it so you can figure it out before you are in classroom.

Thomas shared that staff have the most success with professional development when they continue to use it, especially with the collaborative nature of technology available. One of Hazen's three Green Day rotations is centered around technology. Staff are rotated on who gets to be in front of their peers to talk about what they are doing in the classroom and to share their successes and failures in trying new things with students. Teachers get work time around Canvas

(communication, grading, practice quizzes). While there is a lot of doing, there has not been a lot of translation into the classroom yet. However, people are gaining confidence, which is a big step.

Ellen commented that the idea around professional development is that it makes sense and is practical, applicable and something that fits into everything else. Hazen is working to infuse technology PD into their other PD, which makes it powerful. Rather than learn how to click through something, teachers learn something that supports student learning.

Shari shared that one of the difficulties with PD is that there are so many different groups (math, reading) that need time for it. Also, it would be nice if PD had some follow up afterwards where we could come back after trying it and talk about how it worked for us rather than just be theory based. Tech is not often integrated into district-directed PD.

Kalisa shared that at the beginning of the year her staff started a staff OneNote. People had to learn how to use it if they want to receive building communication. Also, technology is specifically mentioned in two places in the building's SIP plan (analyzing data with Dreambox and communication with parents). This helps keep technology at the forefront.

Shari shared that it feels like the different departments are very disconnected. If the administration at the district level would come together and plan for how they want to integrate things, it would be easier to implement in the schools. It's not just about technology either, it's about how we grade and how we do different things. There are different expectations coming from different places. It would be easier for teachers to understand if there were clear expectations. We want authentic technology integration into curriculums, but it needs to be more guided by department heads who are communicating and are on the same page.

Emrie shared that authentic learning must be aligned at a district level. An example of this is the celebrations that are built into the writing Units of Study. While a virtual field trip is great, it needs to be tied to another area of expectation. A digital gallery where families could read student writing would create an authentic audience and give students a reason to write.

Nathan mentioned that he is trying to make sure his library collection represents what students are learning in the classroom and that it's not just text-based but digital-based as well. Being clear about how the library can supplement classrooms is essential, especially in providing details on what Librarians have access to, such as the Focus of Studies.

Ricardo asked how can we determine or assess the success of technology in student achievement?

Thomas responded that when utilizing technology in the classroom, a measure of success would be an increase in student engagement. When we provide the same technology that students are using at home, we can pull them in educationally. As the years' progress, and we have curriculum that has more online characteristics, we have access to do things that align with industries that are making transitions in technologies and we can mirror them. We could have access to certificates that students can earn at middle and high school. Our measuring stick moves over the years.

Nathan shared that that he took his students to the King County Library in Bellevue to visit their ideaX Makerspace. Talking with the librarians there, he found that they don't have a clear vision for how they are going to use the space in the future. It's not about what technology we have, but how it's being used. We must front load our thinking with how we plan to use technology.

Kalisa shared that she taught her daughter PowerPoint when she was in third grade. When she got to middle school, she already knew how to use computer programs, so it was an easy A for her. She could have taken her knowledge further in middle school instead of waiting and spinning her wheels. How can we keep pushing students who are ready to take off and how can we help students that don't have access at a young age?

Barbara shared that her kids were advanced computer users for their age. They loved their keyboarding teacher. While they learned Word and other advanced things, her kids liked that they could do homework in class. They were using the program to meet a need.

Emrie commented that when moving to 1:1 in Kent, on day one of students finding out they had email, one student emailed every staff member in the district asking what their job was. Students are starving for things to do. A tangible thing to measure, especially with 1:1 implementation, is student attendance. Attendance does not necessarily mean seat time. In Kent SD, students who stayed home because of sickness or lack of transportation could participate virtually because they wanted to be at school. When they had a laptop and access at home, they were attending school. Some students would submit assignments in the middle of the night, which shows that students care about their education.

Jason commented that while he's not in the instructional part of the school district, he's hearing that the curriculum could drive the experience of student learning as well as drive the technology associated with it. He wonders if we need to look at the curriculum to tell us what our technology needs should be.

Nathan commented that technology should supplement curriculum. For example, a program called Lightbox, which is a supplement to a paper textbook, provides an interactive element online. It would make sense to purchase something like Lightbox to supplement a curriculum we are using, but it wouldn't make sense to purchase just to have a copy of it if it's not related to something we are using.

Seymour shared that if students aren't using in schools what they are using in the rest of their life, it seemed irrelevant to them, even if they are learning things that are relevant. A lot of our students use technology for communication and they aren't using it in ways to increase learning or to go deeper in their learning and that is one of the things we are responsible for doing.

### **Budget Review**

Seymour asked members to review the 2018-19 budget. As we move to 1:1 in secondary schools, there are large chunks of money in instructional computers. Also, the presentation stations were delayed this year due to staffing and other things. Flat panel screens will be tested at Dimmitt to determine if they will work for secondary schools. Additionally, we will also do a pilot in elementary schools to determine if we stay with mounting projectors or move to flat panels - the majority of elementary teachers do not want to lose their whiteboard space. We may get some of the projector work done over the summer. Unsure if the 1.5 million will be spent this year. If not, it will be spent the following year.

One of the goals of the district is to try to move some of the salaries into General Fund. We can do what we want to do with technology for now, but long term there will need to be some other capacity created on the General Fund side. Right now, we are in good shape to move forward with the vision in the Technology Plan.

Jerry asked how it was decided on what technology was going to be in new schools that are being built?

Seymour commented that we begin the process by looking at the architectural plans for new buildings and think about where things will be in when the new school is built. One of the things that Facilities asks for is putting things you think may happen in the initial plans rather than adding it later, especially when it came to Sartori since it was on a short timeframe to open. Also, we don't purchase items until we are close to the school opening in case technology changes so we make sure to get the latest technology.

Ricardo commented that we want to get most out of the warranty on purchases. We can negotiate with the vendor for warranties not to start until the items are received, not when ordered. Also, we check with other districts who have new schools to find out what is best technology to implement.

### **Computer Access Program (CAP) – Distributing surplus technology to families**

Seymour reported on a new program that we are implementing called the Computer Access Program. Over several years, there have been requests from teachers wondering if we could give our old computers to students that do not have a computer at home. We have been restricted from doing this due to the staff time that it would take. The Kent School District already has a similar program in place, which we have learned from and has helped us in the initial stages of implementing the CAP. To help with the staff time it would take for this program, we are working with students at

Talley High School to take old laptops that we have, refurbish them, and set them up with an open source operating system, applications, a browser and internet access. Access to the internet is provided by the Sprint 1Million project, which gave a hot spot to high school students without broadband access. To determine which students were without broadband access at home, we asked students to fill out a survey and in that survey, they were also asked if they had access to a computer at home. Based on the survey results, there are approximately 3-6% of students across the district who don't have computers at home. To start the CAP, we will contact families whose students have already told us that they don't have a computer at home. Our goal next year is to open this up across a wider span of the district to find families that don't have a computer at home and provide them with one.

Tom suggested that we add a checkbox asking if the student has internet service at home since the general information mentions hot spots and wifi access but the form itself does not ask about the lack of internet access.

Tom also wondered about the rules around free and reduced lunch and if we can access a student's free and reduced lunch status. Seymour mentioned that families will sign off on the form allowing for us to check their student's free and reduced lunch status. Tom commented that free and reduced lunch info is tightly controlled in Skyward but will not be tightly controlled on the form since others will have access to them, especially if the form is being used to help with the disbursement process. Seymour commented that if we are saying that students must be on free and reduced lunch to be eligible, then anyone who receives a refurbished laptop is seen as being on free and reduced lunch. We can't ask Nutrition Services for free and reduced lunch status unless the form is signed. However, if the CAP is only opened to free and reduced lunch students, is there a problem with them being identified? Barbara expressed that she would believe that a family is needy if they don't have a computer at home and doesn't think we need to ask about free and reduced status. Ricardo commented that in Kent School District, Nutrition Services was given the forms and helped determine who was on free and reduced lunch. Students on free and reduced lunch were given priority in their program. Jason suggested that since Nutrition Services already knows who is on free and reduced lunch, instead of making families submit an application, grandfather them in the program. Seymour commented that right now we are starting with families who we know don't have a computer at home. Kent School District had a lottery because they had more applicants than they had computers for. Our fear going forward is that we might run into a similar issue, so we had to decide what the criteria would be for eligibility. We need to talk about eliminating the part about being on free and reduced lunch since the assumption is that if you don't have a computer at home, you need one. Jason asked if the laptop needed to be returned and Seymour said that no, the device does not need to be returned. Also, the RCW is very specific and allows for us to surplus equipment and distribute to indigent K-12 students. Being on free and reduced lunch could be a definition of what indigent is. In this day of age, if someone doesn't have a computer at home, that could be a proxy for being indigent. Emrie commented that it might be an unintentional barrier if a family has to admit they are on free and reduced lunch. There are those that could use free and reduced lunch but don't fill out the application because of the stigma, label or lack of privacy around that information.

Alisa suggested that we need to be consistent with the language in the form in regards to having a computer at home or not. The general information says that eligible students don't have a computer at home but the applications says that having a computer at home doesn't prevent you from receiving a refurbished laptop. Seymour commented that the reason the application states that having a computer at home doesn't prevent you from receiving a refurbished laptop is because some families have multiple children but only one computer.

Nathan found a grammatical error. Under the Software section on the second page of the application, "place open source software" should read "placed open source software."

### Internet filtering requests

Seymour shared that four years ago an Internet Filtering Committee was implemented to help determine which websites to allow and which ones to block. The committee was disbanded in its third year due to minimal filtering complaints and it was decided that major requests would go through RTCC.

Tom commented that one of the final acts of the Internet Filtering Committee was to give high school students the same access that district staff did. The decision was made because students were being blocked from websites that teachers were using as resources in the classroom. Additionally, based on the Responsible Use Policy, it was determined that high school students could handle the same level of access to the internet that staff have.

Tom shared that we recently received two filtering requests that are opposed to each other. The first request came from a secondary school to block the game site, Roblox, since it is considered a first-person shooter game. Also, Roblox's Terms of Service only allowed access to those who were 18 or had parental consent. After we blocked Roblox, another request from a different school requesting that it be unblocked. Our policy is to block a website without question when we receive a filtering request regardless who requests it. Requests to unblock must come through the principal – they determine if it is an appropriate use of technology. If needed, the filtering request is brought to RTCC to discuss if a certain website should remain blocked and if there is a need to block an entire filtering category. Games as a category can be blocked or unblocked. The current filter doesn't distinguish between types or ratings of games to be blocked; however, we can block game websites on an individual basis.

Ricardo wondered at what point does this become a classroom management issue. The use of technology in the classroom should be more about digital citizenship and students need to be worked with to self-correct behavior.

Thomas commented that in high school there could be abuse on the use of games in the classroom. Also, it comes down to the expectations for students to use school technology the right way. If students are told not to be on Roblox during class time and they continue to use it, it becomes more about the insubordination that they are demonstrating that should be followed up with a one-to-one conference to reinforce expectations or a call home to parents if it continues.

Shari commented that if we block all games, we must consider what we are taking away as resources. We have a personal responsibility with students and the point is to make them good digital citizens and making good choices.

Nathan said there was a program called Dino that gave teacher the ability to watch what students are doing. It was helpful to him because he could put a proxy on an individual student, if needed. It allowed him to take a screenshot with a click. He asked if there was a way for teachers to monitor what the students are doing on their computers.

Ricardo commented there are some labs that have a program called Vision, which provides two things. 1) Teachers can list which websites that students can access on a given day and those are the only sites students can visit. 2) Teachers can monitor which websites students are visiting.

The decision was made to leave games as a category unblocked for middle and high school students; however, Roblox will remain blocked due to the Terms of Service only allowing access if you are at least 18 years old or have parental consent.

Good of the Order

Seymour announced that Ellen Dorr will replace him as Chief Technology Officer in July.

The next meeting will be on May 16 and the focus will be on team updates and the 5-year budget.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45pm.