

Renton Technology Coordinating Council (RTCC)

Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2023

ATTENDING

Dr. Ellen Dorr, Alex Castro-Wilson, Dr. Bob Ettinger, Jennifer Farmer, Kristine Farwell, Barbara Folmer, Amy Frey, Cathleen Gonzales, Jay Gray, Emrie Hollander, Kelly Jones, Keith Peck, Woody Sobey, Kerrie Thornton, and Carlito Umali
Special Guest: Vincent Luc

AGENDA

- [Welcome and Introductions](#)
- [Project Updates](#)
- [Technology Levy Annual Update](#)
- [RTCC Priorities](#)
- [Celebrations](#)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ellen welcomed the council and invited Keith to introduce the student guest.

- Vincent Luc, student at Hazen High School and Robotics leadership team member.

Afterward, Ellen introduced the new RTCC members.

- Alex Castro-Wilson, 5th Grade Teacher at Benson Hill Elementary and Building Technology Assistant
- Kristine Farwell, Director of Customer Service
- Jennifer Farmer, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations

Ellen shared a more in-depth description of RTCC for the new people in the room. She stated: the council comes together about five times a year with the purpose of assisting in the development and review of the technology plan. She clarified that the technology plan is defined by the projects we do and how they support the [Strategic Framework and District Core Values](#). This group helps to guide the work of Technology Services (TS) through consideration, review, and recommendation of policies and procedures related to technology use; serving as a forum to review technology decisions and ensure they maximize student performance and achievement.

She thanked the council for their participation in this effort and then went over the agenda. For a connector, she asked everyone to introduce themselves by sharing their name, role, and something exciting about learning and technology they have experienced recently. She emphasized the importance of us connecting as a group, especially at the start of our work together.

See [Addendum – Item I](#) for individual responses.

Minutes Review

Ellen gave the council time to review the [October 10, 2023 minutes](#), and asked for questions, corrections, clarifications, or additions. There were none.

Ellen commented that she hopes the minutes give the people who were unable to attend the last meeting a good sense of the conversations we had, since we will continue with that discussion tonight. Ellen shared her appreciation for

having these records and noted how other districts use our minutes as a reference for how tech advisory committees can work together.

Core Values and Strategic Framework

Ellen grounded the meeting with a reminder that our work is in service of students: to ensure they have the resources they need for learning. She emphasized the importance of receiving feedback about what is happening in classrooms and how technology is impacting student learning, and keeping that at the forefront of our discussions.

She noted that all departments in the district are working in alignment with the [District Core Values and Strategic Framework](#) and outlined how that alignment looks for TS.

- **Service:** providing a strong foundation
- **Excellence:** improving systems and support
- **Equity:** right support for each and every learner

PROJECT UPDATES

- **Gym/Commons AV Modernization:** We finalized the pilot at Maplewood Heights Elementary (MHE) with successful results and have moved into Phase 1 of districtwide implementation, starting with elementary schools and Meadow Crest. Phase 2 will occur during the 24-25 school year at secondary schools.
- **Front Office Digital Signage:** This project is in progress. We are currently working around vestibule work, which is causing some delay. The goal of this project is to put a panel inside of the school to let people know what is happening. For elementary schools, the panel display is more for families to know what is going on, and in secondary it is for students and families.
- **Classroom Audio:** This year, we will begin a research and design project for the classroom audio. The goal of this project is to improve the audio experience in the classroom; to ensure all students and teachers can be heard.

Questions/Discussion

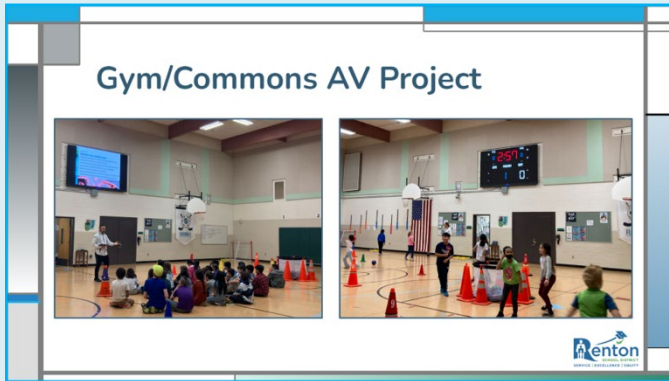
- **Alex:** When you say: “design phase”, is that a collaboration of a future project the district is doing?
- **Ellen:** Yes. We would do something similar to what we did for the Gym/Commons project. We will bring stakeholders together to gather information such as what the needs are, what limitations we have, and then determine the best solution and vendor for the project. Once we complete the research and design phase, we will do a pilot to see how well the solution works and if any adjustments need to be made before broader implementation.

TECHNOLOGY LEVY ANNUAL UPDATE

Ellen shared a couple slides from the Technology Plan Annual Update.

Slide

Description/Discussion



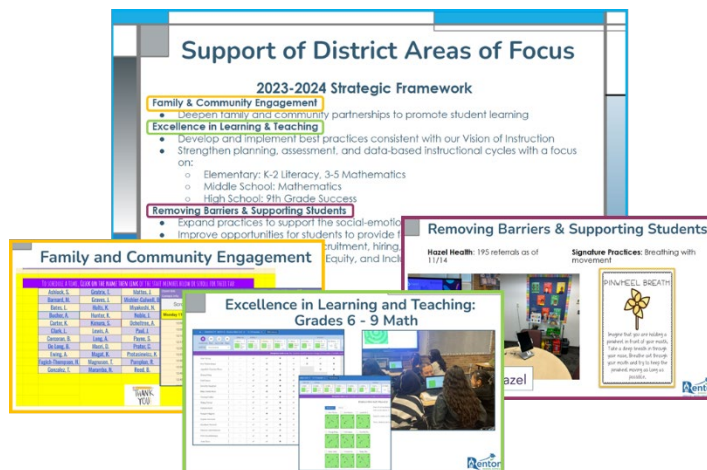
We finalized the pilot at MHE with successful results. We were able to meet the needs identified by staff during the planning phase of the project, such as:

- being able to show a video on the panel,
- being able to show a clear PowerPoint presentation,
- being able to use it as a score board, and
- clear audio.

Ellen shared two images of the MHE Physical Education (PE) teacher seamlessly moving between a presentation displayed on the panel with a warm-up video and learning targets, to a score board used for the actual activity.

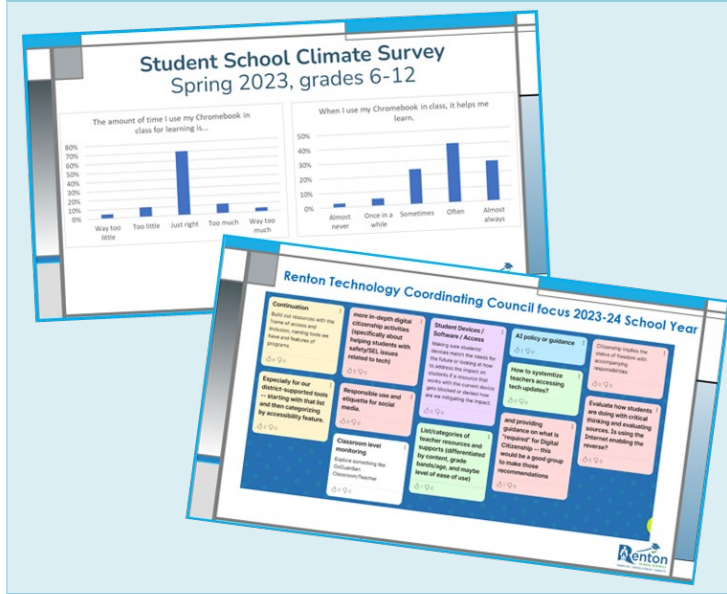
She noted that the screen can be used for both the gym and commons together when the divider is down, but that there is a projector in the commons for when the two spaces are separated.

Ellen also shared how the announcer for the Kraken will be coming to MHE to do announcements at their hockey practice. The announcer reached out about the sound system, and the PE teacher was confident that the audio would be excellent for that purpose.



The goal of the Technology Plan Update is to demonstrate to the School Board how the work of the TS department is in support of the Strategic Framework and District Core Values. Some examples of this are:

- **Family and Community Engagement:** Nelsen Middle School having a Zoom option for the student/family conferences, creating more access for families.
- **Excellence in Learning & Teaching:** The Desmos curriculum being implemented for grades 6-9, which has received positive response from classrooms (see comments in addendum from Bob Ettinger and Amy Frey).
- **Removing Barriers and Supporting Students:** The Social Emotional Learning work through Hazel Health.



Ellen also shared an image of the Student School Climate Survey that showed the results from two survey prompts. The results indicated that for the majority of students that took the survey, their devices are useful tools for learning.

She also shared the RTCC Focus Slide for the 2023-24 school year, to discuss some of the work the council will be doing to support our learning community in the district.

Ellen opened the floor for questions. She noted that the presentation will be posted in [Board Docs](#) and a copy will also be on the [Technology Plan](#) page of the district website.

RTCC PRIORITIES

Ellen reminded the council that during the 2022-2023 school year, RTCC focused primarily on access and inclusion, with a specific lens of supporting Multilingual Learners (ML).

- One group did empathy interviews with ML students to get their perspective on what works, what tools are helpful, and what challenges they face.
- The other group worked on a collection of resources for both ML students/families and teachers/staff to help meet the needs identified.

At the last meeting, the council members contributed to a Padlet, identifying their areas of interest for the 2023-2024 school year. To help solidify what the RTCC priorities will be, Ellen invited the council to review the Padlet and identify the top three things they think will be most valuable to focus on. She noted two topics that will be addressed and therefore do not need to be included in people’s top three:

- **Classroom Monitoring:** There have been many questions about this, so we will want to take some time to dig into this topic.
- **Software and Internet Filtering Settings:** We will look into this as part of our regular review cycle.

The council split into breakout rooms for review and discussion. When they returned, each group shared their thoughts (see [Addendum – Item II](#) for group comments). Ellen printed out the Padlet, and as people shared, she added a check mark to the interest area that was referenced. Based on the discussion, Ellen identified the following common themes.

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidance:** Part of what we discussed regarding AI, is referring to our Responsible Use Policy, our Electronic Resources Policy, and Digital Citizenship as guiding principles for the use of AI. However, we may want to consider creating a philosophy statement like the Peninsula School District. We do have some schools digging into this topic (like Risdon Middle School) and some of Bob’s team members are also doing work in this area. We may want to invite some of these folks to meet with us and share their learning to help us

determine our next steps. Also, thank you Keith for adding into the chat the Puget Sound Education Service District (PSESD) is also collecting information about AI, which we could dig into.

- **Student Device Access:** We have resources that were put together by two CTE students with their assessment and review of the current tools and outstanding need. I think we could expand that data set to include more feedback, and secure more accurate pricing for budget considerations. This would be something we could review as a technology department and bring back to RTCC.
- **Access to Resources:** How do we put resources together in a way that make sense to people, that is easy to find, and easy to use? For example, Kerrie created the [Zoom Phone Information](#) tile that includes excellent resources that people find really helpful once they orient to it. However, sometimes it takes conversation and discussion to get people to the resource page, and to use it effectively. Sometimes, it is a matter of the resource only being helpful when people are ready for it. So, this is an ongoing question that we can work on.

With the highest points of interest identified, Ellen suggested the possibility of sending a form to narrow down where people would be willing to do sub-committee work. Ellen noted that there were likely four or five things to dig into, and with good facilitation we may be able to address all of them in the remaining three meetings.

- **Kristine:** a form sounds great.

Ellen opened the floor for additional thoughts.

- **Vincent:** Yes, I would like to add something. The HHS Robotics team does mentorship with other schools at different levels. I know from personal experience that there isn't as much support for these teams. So, we are looking to see what we could do about that.
 - **Ellen:** Vincent, can you say a little more about the support they need that they are not getting?
 - **Vincent:** Maybe Mr. Peck could chime in, but the issue is primarily about the advisors and how they are compensated for the time they spend advising teams and the time they spend after school.
 - **Keith:** Yes, advisors are mainly funded through grants. So, whether or not we get a grant does have an effect. However, the other thing is getting access to the devices and programs required to run the robots during after-school hours. This is something we are working on with TS. I think it may be more challenging for elementary schools. Some schools have more issues than others.
 - **Ellen:** Our team can help with the devices and programs, if the advisors submit help desk tickets. However, we cannot do much about the grants. Thank you for bringing that up, Vincent!

Ellen will work on a summary email and include a form so that we can determine specific project areas. She will also be putting together the topics for the February meeting. Ellen extended her appreciation for the thoughtful approach the council takes to this work, and for the diverse perspective it affords.

CELEBRATIONS

Before closing the meeting, Ellen opened the floor to celebrations and appreciations. She started with a huge thank you to Cathy for 29 years of service to the school district!

- **Cathy:** I really appreciate everybody. I have been so fortunate to work for the school district. I started out as a playground teacher, and here I am working as a manager of TS. It is a good example of how Renton School District gives you opportunities to move forward. I am really going to miss it.
 - **Ellen:** We appreciate you and the wealth of knowledge you are sharing with Kristine. We hope you have a smooth adjustment into retirement and that it gives you many opportunities to spend time with your family, work on your art, and do the things you like to do.

- **Ellen:** I really appreciate school folks making time for these meetings with so many competing priorities. It is so valuable to have your perspective.
- **Jay:** I want to give a big shoutout to Vincent. I haven't seen a student on this forum. Vincent, thank you for showing up and providing input. It was very refreshing.
- **Emrie:** I want to give a "thank you" from the parent perspective to Kelly Jones. My daughter may have an ACL injury and Kelly has been a huge support with that. Thank you, Kelly!
- **Amy:** I don't know exactly who this goes to, but according to our math teachers, the additional iPad for Demos is going to make a big difference. They are thrilled for the opportunity.
- **Bob:** Thank you to Woody, Alex, and Keith as current and former Technology Integration Specialists. Being a part of that program is one of the ways this team connects to classrooms. Thank you for your work and leadership.
- **Alex:** A big shoutout to Stephanie Gibson for her support in our school and for trying to fix our printer even though it was well past its expiration. Everything Stephanie does is beyond compare. She goes above and beyond to make sure our students have everything they need.

Gratitude from the Chat:

- **Keith Peck:** Props to Kerrie for always having positivity!
- **Keith Peck:** Shout out to Kristine for hitting the ground running with a new role!
- **Barbara Folmer:** I appreciate you all.

MEETING ADJOURNED

5:45pm

ADDENDUM

Item I: Connector Responses

Dr. Ellen Dorr, *Chief of Technology & Strategic Initiatives*

One exciting thing I have seen recently is the voicemail forwarding feature in the Zoom App (the phone option available on the computer). Kerrie has been leading Zoom Phone trainings, and there are a lot of great features available.

Dr. Bob Ettinger, *Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment*

I got to go to McKnight with Amy and see students doing amazing things with our Desmos instructional materials. I witnessed how they could try things out and find out why they were right and wrong. It was very cool.

Jennifer Farmer, *Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations*

I am a new to the district and have been getting to know all the people and the things, but I am going to echo Ellen on the "Zoomtastic" phones. I haven't used anything like this before, so I am enjoying learning the different features, such as stopping all my phones ringing at once. It is always good to be continually learning.

Kristine Farwell, *Customer Service Director*

I just started my second month and the most exciting things I have seen in learning and technology have been through going out in schools and observing how teachers/students are using the technology. One example to highlight is the AV Gym Modernization pilot at Maplewood; it was really awesome to see that in action.

Barbara Folmer, *District Website Coordinator*

I am excited by the excitement of other people. I have been helping a new webmaster, Erica Sugita, at Hazelwood. She has just been so excited about the work she is doing on the website, and finding out how capable she is.

Amy Frey, *Principal, McKnight Middle School*

Desmos has been really great! I have seen kids do really cool things with that. My favorite thing is when the kids make different shapes and then the teacher overlays it on the board. In one of my other classes, I watched a teacher create a rubric using an AI Chatbot! You can just put in the criteria, and it makes a rubric.

Cathleen Gonzales, *Customer Service Manager*

I am having a hard time thinking of new things. The Zoom Phone project was interesting, but since I am retiring soon, I have just been focused on keeping my head together and getting Kristine the information she needs as she transitions into her new role.

Jay Gray, *Infrastructure Director*

In terms of technology, I am looking forward to the electronic fax method that we will be implementing in the district sometime this year. We are in the process of reviewing and identifying which solution to use and how to best implement it. So, though I don't have any exciting experiences from the learning side, I can say there is more technology coming your way!

Emrie Hollander, *Assistant Principal, Honey Dew Elementary*

I was thinking about how teachers are still learners, especially with new technology, and little things can make a big impact in their well-being and feeling good in the operation of their day. For example, we successfully figured out how to change our own defaults on our Canon Copier and reduced the number of accidental color copies or large batches of copies, which has alleviated a lot of stress for teachers.

Kelly Jones, *Assistant Principal, Hazen High School*

We have been working with Ellen in GoGuardian to explore a feature that allows us to block certain apps from student use. We have partnered with a couple of families where their student use of apps is getting in the way of their learning, and have been able to add those students to a "no You-Tube" group. Since we have done that, we have received positive feedback from those families. So, that is exciting for us.

Keith Peck, *Computer Science Facilitator and Computer Science Teacher, Hazen High School*

There is a lot going on between my positions at RSD and my Administrator Internship. One exciting thing has been looking at Tableau data to review how we are grading and whether or not it is equitable, then using that data to inform our conversations and consider interventions we might try.

Woody Sobey, *CTE STEM Facilitator*

Recently, I have been looking at Artificial Intelligence (AI) use in schools and reviewing policies around it. I have been learning about all the different tools that folks are using, such as ChatGPT, Magic School, and Speaker Coach.

Kerrie Thornton, *Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Technology & Strategic Initiatives*

I have been doing a lot of work on the Zoom Phone trainings, and one of the exciting things I learned is how to do is control your desk phone using the Zoom App on your computer. I am not sure of the use case for this, but it does mean that you can use the intuitive call handling tools in the app to complete actions on the physical desk phone, such as transferring a call or forwarding a voicemail.

Ellen: Thank you, Kerrie. Also, if your school has not taken advantage of these trainings, Kerrie and a small team from our department have been going out to schools to provide site-specific support including ensuring the phones are set up the way people would like and answering questions about the use of their phones. So, please let us know if your school could benefit from something like that.

Carlito Umali, *Assistant Principal, Talley High School*

We run the virtual program in the district (Edgenuity). We met with a family who told us that their student was spending 2000 minutes in the virtual program. We showed them how to view activity hours using a feature in Edgenuity, which lets them see how much their student is actively engaging with the virtual program platform. What we found was about

1099 of those minutes were not actually student work in the Edgenuity program, but on some other screen or program. Teaching families the importance of monitoring their students has been really important in the virtual program.

Alex Castro, *5th Grade Teacher, Benson Hill Elementary & Building Technology Assistant*

One thing our school has been working on is how we support communication needs for our students in Special Education. With the help of our PTA, we purchased communication software that typically is used for students who have augmented devices to communicate. I have a student in my classroom who uses an iPad to communicate and now, with this software, is able to communicate better - giving him a voice when he didn't have one. It is really powerful how the students have engaged with the iPad: using it to talk with him and make him laugh. It has been a heart-warming process.

Vincent Luc, *Student Leadership, Hazen High School Robotics Club*

The most exciting thing I have seen in Technology (not just this year, but over the last couple of years) is our school's Computer Networking Program. I took the class my freshman year, and it wasn't as developed as it is today. That growth is thanks to the work Mr. Peck and the other teachers have put in to develop the program.

Item II – RTCC Priorities Group Discussion

- **Group 1:** Our group considered what RTCC would be most effective in working on. One of the places we landed, was creating workplace efficiency tools for staff, because not every teacher is very comfortable with technology. So, providing tools in this area would be helpful.
- **Groups 2:** We focused on two topics.
 - Where are the resources that we created last year and how do we share them with a broader audience? Is there a way to roll out resources in a uniform way?
 - We talked about AI as well: establishing what our district policy/procedure is on it, our beliefs and vision around the use of AI, and how we will educate families about it.
- **Group 3:** Our group focused on two things:
 - The first topic was student access to devices and software and considering ways we can adapt and work together to assist with building student accessibility tools (such as leveraging CTE classes).
 - The second topic was about higher-level digital citizenship, especially at the high school level. How can we better integrate that learning into advisory and other avenues? I think that can go hand-in-hand with what Emory was saying about teacher workload: how do we support people to use tech appropriately and efficiently so that it enhances their work.
- **Group 4:** Our group discussed the following:
 - The first topic was AI guidance, and our discussion echoed what we have already heard during this discussion, especially with the potential benefits of these tools and because it is at the forefront for many people right now.
 - The second topic we discussed was digital citizenship and potentially including media literacy as a part of that.
 - The third topic was split into two categories. The first was around evaluating the devices/software and if they are meeting student needs (in response to the student requests we have received for that evaluation). The second, was about continuing to build out resources with a frame of access and inclusion.