

Renton Technology Coordinating Council (RTCC)

Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2024

ATTENDING

Dr. Ellen Dorr, Pam Teal, Alex Castro-Wilson, Dr. Bob Ettinger, Kristine Farwell, Barbara Folmer, Amy Frey, Jay Gray, Emrie Hollander, Kelly Jones, Keith Peck, Kerrie Thornton, and Carlito Umali

AGENDA

- [Welcome and Introductions](#)
- [Project Updates](#)
- [RTCC Priorities](#)
- [Classroom Level Monitoring Review](#)
- [Celebrations](#)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ellen welcomed the council and thanked them for their attendance. She directed them to the meeting slides, noting the links they will find there that will be used in discussion tonight. Ellen reminded the council that the role of RTCC is to serve as a forum to review technology decisions and ensure they maximize student performance and achievement.

Ellen went over the agenda and asked everyone to introduce themselves by sharing their name, role, and something they feel good about or that is going well right now in their professional life. See [addendum](#) for individual responses.

Ellen thanked the council for sharing. She commented on how she loves to hear what people are working on, what is going well, and all the ways we are collaborating to ensure our students are successful. Ellen also emphasized her gratitude for everyone being in attendance and prepared to tackle the big projects we are working on this year.

Minutes Review

Ellen gave the council time to review the [December 12, 2023](#) minutes, and asked for questions, corrections, clarifications, or additions. There were none.

Ellen thanked Kerrie for generating these detailed minutes, which serve as a useful resource both in and outside the district.

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.

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 Technology Services (TS).

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

PROJECT UPDATES

- The MLK holiday weekend was a busy time for the district Capital and Facilities teams, due to the cold snap freezing things over, resulting in burst pipes and subsequent damage. We have been working on replacing technology at a couple of schools. The two schools that were impacted most were Sierra Heights and Meadow Crest. We also had a fiber break at Highlands Elementary over the same weekend, so we completed an emergency repair to ensure school could open the following Tuesday.
- Gym/Commons AV Project:** We are moving into the second phase of the elementary gym/commons AV project. We hope to be wrapping up around Spring Break. There are a few steps in this phase including getting the new technology moved in and powered up, programming it, and then removing the old technology. Secondary schools will be completed next year, so we are doing some of the project planning by re-visiting the spaces, considering what we have learned from the elementary school installations, and re-scoping for secondary schools.

Questions/Discussion

- Alex:** Is that the sound systems that are getting installed? We have some sound stuff set up but is not actually on.
 - Ellen:** Yes, it's in progress but not running yet. We should have put you on the emails about it. We typically update Office Managers, School Administrators, and PE Teachers, but I know you are really involved as the Building Technology Assistant (BTA).
 - Alex:** Oh okay. I was just curious because my principal asks me about that stuff.
 - Ellen:** We will provide clear instructions when the switchover happens, and your Field Technician will work with you (and appropriate team members) to show you how it works.

RTCC PRIORITIES

In the last meeting, the council talked about what to focus on for the year. We used a Padlet to gather ideas, and then reviewed the Padlet to determine the greatest areas of interest (indicated by a star below):

The Padlet board displays the following ideas:

- Continuation** (Yellow box, star): Build out resources with the frame of access and inclusion, naming tools we have and features of programs. (9 votes)
- more in-depth digital citizenship activities (specifically about helping students with safety/SEL issues related to tech)** (Pink box, star): (8 votes)
- Student Devices / Software / Access** (Purple box, star): Making sure students' devices match the needs for the future or looking at how to address the impact on students if a resource that works with the current device gets blocked or denied how are we mitigating the impact. (10 votes)
- AI policy or guidance** (Light blue box, star): (7 votes)
- Evaluate how students are doing with critical thinking and evaluating sources. Is using the Internet enabling the reverse?** (Light blue box): (0 votes)
- Citizenship implies the status of freedom with accompanying responsibilities** (Pink box): (0 votes)
- How to systemize teachers accessing tech updates?** (Light green box): (1 vote)
- Especially for our district-supported tools - starting with that list and then categorizing by accessibility feature.** (Yellow box): (3 votes)
- Responsible use and etiquette for social media.** (Pink box): (0 votes)
- Classroom level monitoring/control** (Light green box, star): Explore something like GoGuardian Classroom/Teacher and lockdown browsers. (2 votes)
- and providing guidance on what is "required" for Digital Citizenship -- this would be a good group to make those recommendations** (Pink box): (2 votes)
- List/categories of teacher resources and supports (differentiated by content, grade bands/age, and maybe level of ease of use)** (Light green box): (3 votes)
- Workplace efficiency tools for staff - how might we educate and/or provide skills for our teachers/staff that would have a positive impact on workload, overwhelm...things that could make their jobs easier that we already have.** (Light green box): (1 vote)

Ellen sent out a form to identify what things people would be willing to tackle. Some of the initial work will be done by small groups outside of RTCC, and then information will be brought back to the larger group for consideration. For example, Ellen will be meeting with Woody and Rena Clark (CTE Facilitator) to go over the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Artificial Intelligence guidance and Keith will be looking into student devices. They will then

bring back the information gathered to RTCC so that we can dig into it as a group. For tonight's meeting, building-based folks completed a feedback survey on Classroom Monitoring which will be the basis for discussion.

Since there are only a few more meetings, we will pair some of the topics together and approach them as follows:

Action Plan

October 10, 2023	Launch for the year
December 12, 2023	Refining focus
February 6, 2024	Classroom Monitoring Software review
March 26, 2024*	AI Guidance, Digital Citizenship
June 4, 2024	Student Devices, Internet Filter Categories

*This meeting has been rescheduled to April 3, 2024.

CLASSROOM LEVEL MONITORING

Before reviewing the classroom level monitoring feedback, Ellen reminded the council that RTCC is a recommending body, so our work will be to gather input which will then be reviewed by district instructional leadership, so they can have an informed conversation.

To get started, Ellen asked the council to review the feedback independently and then discuss it in table groups. She asked them to consider what things rise to the top for them. What stands out? She asked that each group use chart paper to create a plus/delta list to capture their thoughts. She invited the council to add any other considerations that weren't represented in the feedback.

After giving the council time to review and discuss, Ellen brought everyone back together. She invited table groups to share, noting the complexity of the topic.

Plus / Delta Discussion

- **Group 1:** I think the most meaningful part of our discussion was getting clear on the "why". Why are we looking at a tool like this? Is it to solve a problem? What is that problem? Is it to enhance our tools? What enhancements are we looking at? Having worked in classrooms with this kind of monitoring software, I know there is a lot of great functionality. I don't think the "how to" is very hard. Implementing it well and using it productively will be the greater challenge. Teachers would need models for good use for a tool like this. In terms of the concern about teachers monitoring from behind screens and relying on it for classroom management: my thought is that teachers who would do that, already do that in other ways. Both good and bad behavior will be amplified. They wouldn't be created or solved with this tool.
- **Group 2:** Our group had a lot of different perspectives on this. We thought about the ways that it might help students focus, and how it can be a tool to help support classroom management. We also considered how it could impact the relationship between students and staff; over-monitoring could create power struggles. We also talked about the link between this and digital citizenship. How do we train staff to implement digital citizenship effectively? Would having something like this increase those conversations or incentivize people to integrate more digital citizenship into their classroom learning?
- **Group 3:** A lot of what we wrote down has already been said, but what we came to pretty quickly is: students always find a way. If they want to be distracted, they will find a way to be distracted. Also, at the high school level, they have phones. So, they will use their phone if they can't use their device. If you have a teacher who does not have strong classroom management, this tool will not help fix that. It could be helpful for test/exam

security issues, and could include tools useful for sharing, or grabbing attention. It won't fix a classroom where students are not paying attention. Based on the feedback, it does look like there is a consensus that some kind of tool could be useful, but the "why" also comes into play. The other thing was the concern about family perspective. Some families already have difficulty trusting schools. Would this help? Would this hurt? What would that effect be and how would we address it? How would those families feel about us having that much oversight into what a student is doing online?

- **Group 4:** I don't think we have more than what everyone has already said. I think what the first group said is true: any tool, including classroom monitoring, will amplify current behavior. For example, the Promethean panel can be used to collaborate and share a students' work directly from their device. That is a great tool, and used well, can enhance the learning experience. But a tool like that could also be used to call out a student who is off task.

+ • many believe there is a need for this tool • awareness they could be monitored → awareness • freezing, sharing, private communication, collaboration tools, test/assessment security • appropriate use - not used 24/7 in the classroom	△ • They still have a phone • Students always find a way → classroom management is still needed • False sense of security - teacher monitoring screens and not facilitating learning • Families already distrust schools • Teacher training - when/where • How does this teach digital citizenship? - OR Does it help the conversation happen?
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+ - level of oversight by ① can increase ⑤ accountability. - mgmt tools - dignity/face saving option/alternative to verbal corrections - feedback tools - mimics a current professional/workforce skills. - response/correction can happen quicker	△ - needs ① training & models of good use - another source of more info - need to know our why? what problem is this solving?
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+ - The interaction between student and teacher in positive ways (introverted students) - Share student/teacher slide - Scaffolding teacher control → student control of management	△ - could be used for negative items like discipline - Over reliance vs class management
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+ * Helps to focus students * Would allow a space for students to private messages to staff (feature in clever) * Push student to sources that need support * Ways to support classroom management	- * Students privacy * Trusting/Building relationships → negatively impact * Staff building rapport & support vs. sitting @ their desk. * Overmonitoring that creates power struggle
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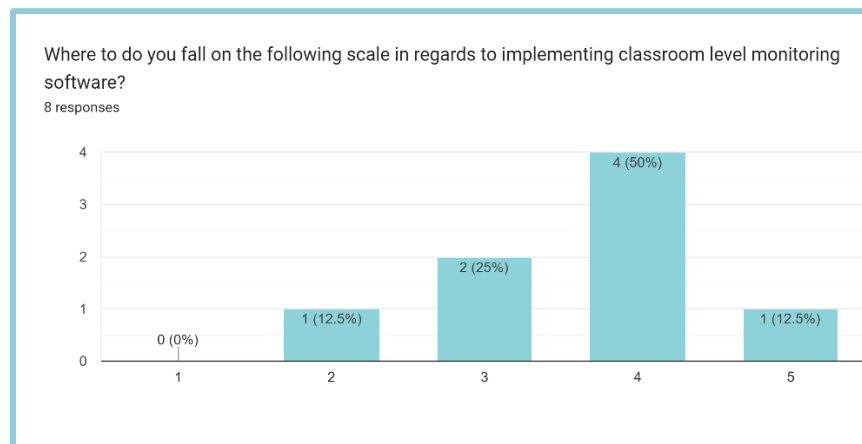
Questions, Clarifications, Further Considerations

- **Alex:** I just wanted to add that the considerations might be different at the elementary level. Our students don't change classrooms; they are with one teacher for most of the day. So, a tool like this could be really helpful for them. I think part of it is because the students are relatively new to technology, and it's exciting and can be

distracting. A monitoring tool could help support classroom teachers with that. I do also think we would need to train teachers to use it well and couple it with digital citizenship.

- **Emrie:** Would this be in lieu of our current filtering/monitoring systems (GoGuardian & Beacon) or in addition? A lot does get through our filtering. When I used classroom monitoring before, we didn't do it outside of school hours. That was one of the rules: that we weren't monitoring student use at home. One of the problems we have right now is the inability to limit access without affecting other resources. For example, when I attempted to block YouTube, it also blocked Google Classroom and iReady. What I would want is a tool that allows students to do their work, but also provides options to create guard rails for students who need it. Is this solution addressing part of that?
 - **Keith:** I know that with the software in my computer lab, I do have the power to create an approve list. I can limit what students can access. However, there are ways around the software, and students do find them.
 - **Ellen:** We do want to continue to use GoGuardian Admin and Beacon. The classroom level monitoring software would be an addition that has the option to create more granularity, where the teacher can create "scenes" that limit what students see and can access.
 - **Emrie:** In that context, I think elementary could benefit. Having a tool where teachers can catch the behavior and respond quickly (teach, re-direct) minimizes opportunities for a student to remain off-task or for using their devices inappropriately. Having a little more control would be helpful in that way.
 - **Keith:** The other thing this makes me think of, is taking a scaffolding approach to the use of monitoring software. For example, when I start my class, I could be really strict with the monitoring and not allow students to use their device for anything other than what we are working on. As I teach them about digital citizenship, I slowly give them more leeway, so they have an opportunity to learn to manage their own device use. The idea is, I use the monitoring to manage student technology use at the start, but eventually I want them to manage it themselves.

Ellen sent an email to the RTCC members who are instructionally focused, that included a form. Based on the discussion, she asked them to give a score from 1 to 5 (1 - Opposed, 5 - In Favor) regarding their perspective on implementing classroom monitoring software and to provide reasoning for their score. When they were done, Ellen presented the results.



Ellen noted that one thing she saw in the responses is a kind of differentiation between the needs of grade bands. The question that comes up more from high school is about lock down browsers for assessments, and at elementary and middle, it is more about supporting digital citizenship and classroom management. One thing to consider is exploring different solutions at different levels. It has also been suggested that we pilot the classroom monitoring software at a few schools first or at a single grade level.

- **Emrie:** Would it be mandatory, or do people opt into it and receive training?

- **Ellen:** When you had it in Kent, was it just your school or the whole district?
- **Emrie:** Both. It started in my classroom and then expanded.
- **Bob:** Yours was the first classroom?
- **Emrie:** Maybe one of the first three.
- **Ellen:** There was one district that took the approach of providing it to teachers if they requested it. However, it may be better practice for the request to go through the principal. I would want to think through the pros and cons of expanding it in that way.
- **Ellen:** On another note, there is a budget implication as well. This would be a new expense. I am also wondering, are there any additional ideas or considerations to take to instructional leadership?
- **Kelly:** In GoGuardian there is a way for me to get a report to see how students are spending their time online. Will there be something similar with this software so that teachers can review that data for their class period? I feel like that would be a helpful tool for teachers to start a conversation about digital citizenship, and would be something to reference for parents.
 - **Ellen:** I don't know all the details of the teacher module. That is something we could look at.
 - **Keith:** I can see those details with the monitoring software I use.
- **Alex:** Is it a huge expenditure change? Don't all parents have access?
 - **Ellen:** Parent apps are free, but we pay for GoGuardian Beacon and Admin. Admin is our general filtering where we can create custom groups, and Beacon is the monitoring software that sends notifications for self-harm. The Teacher module would be an add-on. It would be approximately another 40% of the cost. I don't want cost to be the driving factor, but it is a consideration.
- **Alex:** What is the next step after the instructional leadership team reviews it?
 - **Ellen:** I do not know that detail yet, but I think we have really good information to bring to that team. One thing people might wonder about is the capacity for learning a new technology, especially with the advent of New Skyward coming up. Maybe we will consider a phased approach. I'll bring it back to you all when we have concrete next steps.

CELEBRATIONS

Before closing the meeting, Ellen opened the floor for celebrations and appreciations. She started with her appreciation for the very thoughtful conversation, how this group works through the pros and cons, and considers it from different angles. She also thanked Bob for helping her think through the process of discussion.

- **Ellen:** Thank you to Director Teal for joining us.
- **Bob:** I am grateful to everybody, but especially for the school-based folks being at this meeting tonight. Your input is so important in helping us understand how these things would play out.
- **Ellen:** Thank you Kerrie for good notes and snacks.
- **Carlito:** Thanks to Emrie for your comments and helping us to consider the "why" of what we are doing.
 - **Ellen:** From what I have heard, the "why" can really vary depending on location and grade level.
- **Kelly:** I appreciate the work that we are doing is based on what we had discussed and envisioned.
- **Ellen:** I appreciate everybody for being honest and authentic when grappling with these topics.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Next time we will look at AI guidance from OSPI and Digital Citizenship.

5:45pm

ADDENDUM

Dr. Ellen Dorr, Chief of Technology & Strategic Initiatives

One thing that is going well is how our team is gearing up for our budget cycle. Though it is a challenging budget year and there are definite constraints, our team has been really thoughtful about putting structures together to see where our expenditures are, determine where we can decrease expenses, and focus on the things that will maximize outcomes for students.

Pam Teal, Board of Directors

I am only four meetings into my role as a board member, but I am happy to be back serving the community.

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

I am seeing a lot of growth for kids. I just had one student who qualified to exit Special Education (SpED). It is great to see the students' progress arch, and to know how positive the experience has been for my students who are served by SpED.

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

One of our Strategic Framework goals is to focus on 3rd- 8th grade math, and I think we have been doing it in a way that feels powerful, especially with the new instructional material in grades 6-9 that is transforming what math learning and teaching looks like for kids. This is in part due to leveraging technology to visualize some of the mathematical content. In addition, we have developed some deep systems, partnering with instructional leadership, to use these tools in our elementary schools. I am really proud of the work.

Kristine Farwell, Customer Service Director

I joined the Technology Services team in November. Something that is going well is how much I am getting to learn. I am excited about the opportunities that I am seeing, the impact we can make, and how we can improve our systems of support.

Barbara Folmer, District Website Coordinator

In the last 2 weeks, I have trained two new web masters. It always makes me happy to get them started on the right foot.

Amy Frey, Principal, McKnight Middle School

I feel like things are going really well for us! One of the fun things is we are starting to have more evening events. Our 6th graders are doing a live history piece, where they will put their research in motion to share with families. We are also making progress with planning registration and doing meaningful things for our teacher professional development.

Jay Gray, Infrastructure Director

I feel good about our Technology Services team as a whole. We are going through a team building process and through stages of growth together. I feel really good about it.

Emrie Hollander, Assistant Principal, Honey Dew Elementary

Today, I saw some good independence and growth steps in a dysregulated kindergartner. It is nice to see the skills, teaching, routines, and supports we have put in place being effective for this student.

Kelly Jones, Assistant Principal, Hazen High School

We just wrapped up our behavior intervention committee meeting at our school, and I am proud of the work we did. Coming into this year, we developed a new plan for interventions and how we will track it. It relies a lot on different systems like google docs and google forms. We have been working with Keith (who has been awesome) to set up a more robust system to take some of the work off teachers, and to increase the amount of collaboration around providing interventions for kids.

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

One thing I am excited about is the Computer Science (CS) Study Buddies program at Honey Dew, where CS students and teachers are creating cool CS lessons to teach to students during the school day. It is cool to see that in action.

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

One thing I am excited about professionally is my amazing team of administrative assistants, who are working so hard and growing with me. Recently, we did a big change to how we are tracking our budget, which is part of the budget preparation work Ellen mentioned. It was a great collaborative experience.

Carlito Umali, *Assistant Principal, Talley High School*

One thing that is going really well is grad tracking. Every year around this time (90 days out), we begin to count off which seniors are ready to graduate. Every day, we are trying to move kids from yellow to green, or from red to yellow. It's hard to tell a student that they have another year, but it can be a positive thing. For example, if a student was out on medical leave, but is now ready to return to school, they may have another year, but we can move them from red to yellow and get them on track to graduate.