

**Digital Learning Initiative Committee Meeting Notes:
Thursday, November 12, 2015 (3:30-5:30pm)**



Introduction / Opening Comments

Mary Morgan Ryan explained the plan for the DLI Committee over the next several months:

- November: Learning together
- December: Drafting a philosophy
- January: Presenting that philosophy to the Board Learning Committee
- February: Presenting a final version of that philosophy to the Digital Learning Committee

Mary then discussed how that philosophy would be integrated into our schools. She introduced Matt Kunesh and explained his role in the District's Technology Department. Mary explained that we will present the Board of Education with technology options that include pros and cons for each. In April 2016, the Board will want to consider what the Digital Learning Initiative Committee has completed. Matt is working on completing a District 181 technology inventory to support the committee's work around the development of options.

Learning from Other Districts**

Three elementary school districts were chosen to speak to the Digital Learning Initiative Committee: Wilmette District 39 (Tony DeMonte), Arlington Heights District 59 (Ross Vittore), and Marlboro School District (New Jersey) (Michael Ballone). The goal of hearing from these districts is to learn about their process and implementation models.

Wilmette District 39

Presenters: Tony DeMonte (Director of Technology), joined by building technician, classroom teacher, librarian / K-8 district with four elementary schools for Grades K-4; one middle school for Grades 5-6; one junior high school for Grades 7-8

District 39 has a Community Resource Committee that studies a topic in-depth each year. The CRC is led by the community, rather than run by district personnel, and includes parents, school board members, and staff members. In 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, the CRC studied 21st Century learning, and putting technology into the hands of students every day because that is what students, parents, and teachers were asking about. They researched ways to improve education, working toward the good for students, and the district's 1:1 iPad initiative was born out of that committee. Members of the committee said there was a lot of thoughtfulness and buy-in, and commented that the resulting 1:1 initiative was more of a community push, rather than a teacher

***Notes from other school districts' comments are the interpretation of District 181.*

push. The committee reviewed case studies of districts and resources. Parents on the committee had questions about the purpose of a 1:1 initiative, and the committee developed a question/answer document to address their concerns.

A priority for the implementation plan was parent communication. Among other things, the district used "iPad Monday" newsletters as a method to inform and educate parents on use of the iPad, especially during the implementation year.

District 39 started their 1:1 initiative on a slower roll out, initially with 6th grade. Their teachers put together curriculum based on the availability of the technology. Therefore, it was an effective roll out. They have a Technology Integration Specialist who is a master teacher, fluent in technology, as an internal resource for teachers, and use a "Train the Trainer" model.

In 2013-14, piloted two classes in 6th grade, 2014-15 deployed iPads in grades 6 and 7 and deployed to 8th grade in 2015-2016.

Questions from our audience:

What does success look like?

- Students are coming in already using these devices. Discrepancy in what technology they could use at home when compared to school. How to be producers of this information. Teaching students how to navigate this information.
- Students respond very positively when they use an iPad rather than a textbook
- Students enjoy learning via iPads/technology
- Preparing them for college and careers
- Adults have to put their bias aside
- Completion of online assessment; getting assessment completed faster

What were some of the surprises (positive or negative) from the original vision?

- Curriculum team researches seeking best applications for learning
- List of core apps that they endorse for those grade levels; know which apps to train on
- 8th graders -TI Inspire app for a cost of \$30 rather than having parents buy calculators
- Must have a solid "beefy" infrastructure
- Mobile device management tools are important
- Must cover wirelessly all areas of the building-for example, teachers and students wanted to use their devices in a school foyer

Which vendor do you use for mobile device management or curriculum development?

- Use Meraki

- Casper used in D181 (big name out there)
- Your technology group can correctly choose items
- Choice of apps is through curriculum development and teachers, not using outside companies

How did you handle teachers who were reluctant?

- Due to pilot, two teams were carefully chosen - they really wanted to make it work
- Pilot proved that it was successful
- Recommends trying it with a small group who can work through it and make it successful, along with good planning

What were the criteria used to measure that pilot was successful?

- Surveys, taking anecdotal data
- Creativity, collaboration; things that students need to succeed (students connected at all times)

What were the indicators of success after full implementation?

- Not looking at measurement of success because the deployment exists
- Looking at student growth, not seeing a backward step; student engagement has increased
- Not calling it a program anymore because it is how we do business, how students learn, a new tool - teachers and students enjoy it

Who is driving the use of devices?

- Using it in a learning environment for their own subject area, teacher is using course requirements, more on sharing the results that they are gaining

Did you consider devices other than iPads?

- Did test other devices
- Apple district
- Looked at high school's technology that was also Apple

How do you handle inappropriate student use?

- It is going to happen
- If you did not have a device in their hands, they still would be doing these things
- Online safety digital component, assembly, tight Board policies and procedures, handled the same as other disciplinary issues

Arlington Heights District 59

Ross Vittore (Director of Innovative Learning)

PK-8 district with 10 elementary Schools and three junior high schools

For five years, until the 2012-2013 school year, the district had a 1:1 Apple Macbook program. At that time, the district asked how to differentiate learning for all students; "What can we afford to do for all students?" The current structure of their administration and technology decisions were driven by exploring that question.

The Director of Innovative Learning works with seven instructional coaches, the Director of Information Systems & Services, and the Director of Communications to show evidence of learning to the community. Ross walked the audience through the interactive timeline on the district website that shows their process (<http://www.ccsd59.org/innovative-learning-and-communications/>):

- Infrastructure preparation
- Hired coaches: job-embedded professional development to talk about lesson design, etc.
- Worked with administrators in modeling expectations
- Identified instructional drivers: creativity, etc.
- Implemented student Google Apps for Education accounts
- They are 2:1
 - Every student K-8 has a Nexus 7 tablet
 - Every student in Grades 3-8 also has a Chromebook (has two devices)
- No pilot (What would you gain?)
- Each district has different needs based on their resources
- Expect success and failures
- Identify drivers; identify financial resources
- High school has iPads, but that did not drive their own decisions because they believe kids can adjust from one type to another type of device
- Currently rewriting curriculum
- Supported parents
- Showed "Future Ready" video submitted to White House:
<https://youtu.be/XIPL-qb-0W8>
- Wanted both laptop and tablet because of different capabilities of each device
- Gave teachers professional development, now offer seven or eight different sessions and teachers sign up based on their choice
 - Halfway through their second year; long journey; only one piece of data (PARCC)
 - Links to parent resources: <http://www.ccsd59.org/innovative-learning-and-communications/innovative-learning/>

Questions from our audience:

Why give everybody tablets rather than pilot at certain grade levels?

- Wanted to get immediate access to all students
- Based on financial resources
- Grades K-2: tablets (they stay at school)

- Grades 3-8 could handle both devices (they go home)
- Did not want to miss another year

What is the cost of not having any technology?

- Terrifies him
- Nervous about traditional approach with only access to textbook
- Gradually getting rid of textbooks

How did you build the culture for this innovative step?

- Still in that process
- Cannot wait until you are ready
- Restructuring the leadership team
- Administrators using Google tools
- Modeling, starting with administration
- Built SEL into the day
- Not a black and white answer

As the district transitioned, can teachers use materials from Macbooks?

- Yes, items were comparable
- iMovie not available
- Instructional coaches teamed with the teachers on how to accomplish their goals
- Identified comparable technology sources to meet the purpose of a lesson
- Formal and informal support

What was the cost of technology?

- \$4,000,000

Sustainability?

- Technology always built into the budget

Did your district have a formal vision?

- Strategic Plan for where you wanted instruction to go
- Not a separate vision for technology
- Technology is a resource

Did you consider BYOD?

- No

Did technology include coding, etc.?

- P.E., Music, Art: during their two-hour session every Wednesday with one grade level, coding is one of the many areas implemented

Conclusion

The next DLI Committee meeting is Tuesday, November 17 at 3:30pm