

Technology Committee Minutes January 8, 2008

Members Present: Dorothy Small, Ann Bolvin, Tim Christopher, Dan Riley, Thomas Plourde, Iver Lofving, Leon Gin, Paul LeBrun, Sharon Lambert

This meeting was held to give members a chance to share some of their concerns around tech and therefore we did not have a formal agenda.

Naming Files and Folders

Poorly named files and folders can cause server issues. When a server goes down technicians spend a lot of time to repair file/folder structure. We can help ourselves by paying attention to how we name our files and folders. This will help with backing up to the server and with retrieving files from the server. Here are some basic rules:

- Keep the name to under 16 characters (letters and numbers)
- Do not use any special characters such as periods, commas, slashes, spaces, accents
- Leave the extension on the file name (.doc, .cwk, .xls)

Smartboard/Promethean Projector Installation

Members are frustrated with the long wait they have had for projector installations. This finally happened over the Christmas break but as it stands now only one of the eight installations were successful. Projectors for the most part, were installed too far away from the boards to allow for proper alignment. Math teachers ended up taking them down and went back to the carts so they could at least use them. Dorothy informed the team that she has talked with Dave about this and he is working on it. We will try to get this resolved as soon as possible. The problems we have had with installation are one of the reasons we are looking at the more expensive “all in one” Promethean Unit for future purchase. This unit mounts to the wall and the projector is attached. The unit also slides up and down to adjust for the users height, which makes it a great solution for boards with multiple users.

From Guidance

Dan Riley asked why they could not use Bold, Italics, Color, fonts in Entourage Email. Dorothy showed him how to use HTML. To do this click on the icon to the left of the Font Choice Box to switch it to HTML. You will then have more tools available to you.



If you need help with this please feel free to email or call Dorothy.

Guidance also asked for help with printing from PowerSchool with their Macs. With their PCs they were able to right click and print just the window they needed without all the extra information and need to know how to do this with the Mac. Dorothy will ask tech how to do this. It was felt that a “Control Click” would work but that does not seem to be the case.

Slow Internet connection

James Black mentioned concerns about the slow Internet connection in orange. Members of the team expressed that they also have concerns in their departments about slow and dropped connections. Dorothy answered that she has heard complaints and has been talking with Tech. No answers yet but they will keep working on it.

Room to Room connection issues. Going off line

Members expressed concerns about connection issues. The connection seems to be 'lost' on a regular basis. Dorothy informed members that she has also seen this and had heard about it mostly from Orange and Purple but the team all seemed to concur that connectivity is being dropped on a regular basis. Folks are seeing this when looking to print, email and especially when putting grades in. Dorothy has had conversations with tech and they are working to find the reason for this. When you are unable to connect please call B1. We need to keep track of connection issues and there are some things we can do to repair the connection and get you back online.

Printer Cartridges

James Black noted that his department is concerned about not having printer cartridges in stock, and slow replacement time. Dorothy shared with the team that this has been addressed and Andrew knows he can keep a couple extra cartridges. It is important that we call Andrew with our need for toner replacement and/or repairs. Please call Andrew when you get the warning that "toner is low" he will make the call to Transco and will have a replacement on hand for you. He will also keep track of problems and will keep tech informed of need for service. Before we call Transco for repair we need to be sure it is not a simple fix or a server issue.

Promethean issues, Alignment in classes

James mentioned that his teachers are concerned that they need to calibrate the Promethean Boards repeatedly. Dorothy shared that Skip has been in contact with Promethean's Tech for this and was informed that this normal in school settings with multiple users, boards and projectors. With the way we are set up, we do need to realign after we have hooked our laptop to another projector and/or someone else has used the Projector/Board. The only way we do not have to realign is if we are the only user of the Projector/Board in that room and if we do not use any other projector. This is just the way they are made and not a 'tech issue.'

Dorothy asked departments to be sure their boards are working correctly. If a board is in a room and not getting steady use, tech may not know there is a problem until someone goes to use it and has a failed lesson. Please contact Dorothy as soon as possible if you have a Smart or Promethean Board that is not working. There are updates that may need to be done and we will need to organize tech to do this if it is necessary.

Problems with Macs changing screens when hooked up to LCD projectors

Dorothy asked members to call her when this happens so she can see what is going on. This will help determine if it is only a 'training issue' or if it is a problem with the computer. When she has been called in, it has usually just been a training session for the teacher so they knew how to "Detect Displays" and "Mirror Displays"

Tech Response

Members of the team are concerned about some of the tech requests that are building up. Dorothy expressed the concern that yes we have been adding the technology load district wide but we have not added technicians to the staff. Our technicians are hard pressed to keep up with the demands and we as a school need to try to help by making tech requests through the Intranet. In this way all requests will go into a database. Dorothy will export the requests into a spreadsheet on a regular basis to help organize tech and to be sure things are done. If you are planning a lesson where you may need Techhelp please try to give us as much advance notice as possible.

Desktops in the classrooms

If you have a desktop computer in your room please try to be aware of how well it is working. If students are unable to use it or just never use the computer, please let her know so she can keep tech informed.

Staff Development

The NoteShare class with Thomas Plourde starts this Wednesday the 9th. It will be held in B4 from 2:00 to 4:30.

The Promethean Board class with Dorothy starts this Thursday the 10th. It will start in B4 and have break out sessions in classrooms with Promethean Boards.

The Independent Lab course with Dorothy starts on February 7th. It will be held in the Blue Section. We tend to use B6, B5 and B4 dependent upon what equipment the teacher needs to use.

Equipment Available

Please remember we have different pieces of equipment available for use through a sign out in B1. It is VERY important that when you borrow the equipment from B1 that you sign out on the sheet. It is hard to remember who borrowed what after a period of time has gone by. (Must be that age thing:) Students are welcome to use most of this equipment, they just need to be working on a school related project and have a teacher who is willing to help be sure it is taken care of and returned properly.

Below is a listing of new and old equipment.

- 5 Camcorders
- 2 Tripods
- 1 Digital Still Camera (I did have two but one left B1 and never returned. If you borrowed this and forgot to return it please let me know)
- 2 Scanners in B5 (One of these will scan negatives)
- 2 Editing Stations in B5
- 2 ActivSlates for use with Prometheans
- Speaker sets—I have these available but they are usually out on loan.
- 3 Projection carts with speakers
- 2DVD Burners
- 5 Firewire Drives
- 11 High-end Student Loaners (these are for Multimedia class projects such as iMovies and can only be signed out for use in school and with coordination between Dorothy, the teacher and the student(s)).