

EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2018

1. Call to Order – 5:30 p.m.

2. Attendance

Board: Mr. Buono

Admin: Mr. Edson, Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Kilmartin, Mr. Simons

Committee: Ms. Bernard, Ms. DeMarco, Ms. Duncan, Mr. Ecker, Ms. Mahar, Mr. Morrow, Ms. O'Connor, Ms. Snyder, Ms. Wladarczyk

3. Google Classroom Email

Mr. Goodwin showed how Grade 8 assignments are placed into a weekly summary email for parents. The summary is typically issued at 4:30 p.m. on Friday. Ms. Snyder noted that parents cannot see specific assignments or grades; they can only be accessed by students with login and password. Mr. Goodwin will speak with Mr. Adam on some additional communication to parents on the Google Classroom. Also note that missing assignments, once submitted, do not update the original email.

4. Technology in EG (TEG) Website

Mr. Goodwin showed the new link for internet safety on the TEG website for staff. Internet safety includes the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Parents Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security, and District policies on computer use, internet safety, and Code of Conduct. Another newer link is the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards for Students, a framework for amplifying, even transforming, digital age learning, teaching and leading.

Mr. Goodwin also spoke about upcoming discussions with Mr. McHugh to see if CTLE credit would be available for online tutorials.

5. Apps and Extensions

Mr. Goodwin demonstrated the Insert Learning app that allows insertion of instructional content on any web page, differentiation for every student, authentic sources to build lifelong learners, sharing of student ideas, engaging students as readers, and real-time assessment and intervention. More information is available on insertlearning.com

Mr. Goodwin also showed the Screen Shader extension which automatically changes the color of your screen to match up with daylight cycles in your timezone. Computer displays produce white and blue light which can irritate your eyes and interfere with your sleeping cycle. The extension is designed to tint the screen a “cozy” orange color to reduce eye strain, eye fatigue, and restore daylight balance. It has a series of color options for users.

Dogonews.com is a website with international news that is kid-friendly with news articles that can be set by grade level range. Another available option at cost is newsela.com.

Apps and extensions can be requested by email to Mr. Goodwin or through the TEG website.

6. WAN Project Update

The original WAN project upgrade was to be completed in mid-August. However, there have been some difficulties, and Mr. Goodwin continues to meet on a weekly basis with the vendor and subcontractor. The WAN project was designed to upgrade the links between school buildings from one gigabyte to ten gigabytes. Currently, Green Meadow, Red Mill and Goff are on track to be upgraded; licensing is delayed for DP Sutherland until the end of December. One of the obstacles to completion is running the fiber optic cable. The southern loop of Genet, Green Meadow, Goff, and DP Sutherland should be completed first.

7. Professional Development

Mr. Goodwin said that 90 individuals have still not registered for a professional development workshop on October 19. He said that some sessions have already closed, and walk-ins will not be allowed.

The November 6 full-day professional development will be start in the Genet auditorium at 8:00 a.m. with a presentation on sexual harassment, followed by a break, and then a presentation on the ISTE Standards. After lunch, buildings will host presentations on best practices, which connect teacher practices to the ISTE Standards. Columbia teachers will be at Goff in the afternoon, since Columbia is being utilized by Questar BOCES for other professional development.

8. Product Usage Statistics and Review

Typing Club: statistics are available by building, words per minute, accuracy, and by student. Discussion ensued about getting students to

use the product, not look at the keyboard, and other options by grade level.

NearPod: only 50 licenses of 125 total are being actively used. Mr. Goodwin will reconnect with individual teachers to see if licenses can be reallocated. NearPod will over time have a bridge to PowerSchool for grading purposes. A new ENL student module is being reviewed for potential implementation in the District. Many features of the product support blended learning.

Network: traffic is 75,000 to 85,000 websites visited daily.

Go Guardian: some network difficulties have been encountered, but the product is performing well and is gaining acceptance across the District.

9. Discussion Around The Table

- Mr. Simons said that the afternoon of the 11/6 professional development day will be for sharing of best practices for programs such as NearPod.
- Mr. Ecker expressed concern with the timeout of Chromebooks. The high school has been set at 30 minutes; it was suggested the elementary schools be set at 15 minutes. Mr. Goodwin said that sample student accounts have been set up for testing purposes, and that principals will be distributing them soon.
- Ms. Wladarczyk said that some schools have taken a bit longer to get up and running with Typing Club.
- Ms. O'Connor noted the benefits of having exemplar lessons in NearPod.
- Mr. Edson thanked Mr. Goodwin for hosting a Google training for twelve month staff on the September recess day.
- Mr. Kilmartin expressed frustration with the filter system. Although it was acknowledged that filtering is a District responsibility, it has caused some disruptions to teacher lessons. It was suggested that a meeting occur with some staff members who are experiencing difficulties. Mr. Goodwin explained that there are different filters for the Chromebooks and for the desktop stations. He said that the District was recently focusing on network security, but will continue to seek improvement regarding the filtering issue.
- Ms. DeMarco was impressed with the staff embracing the use of Google Classroom. She said more professional development is needed to share best practices. Mr. Goodwin said that some uniformity in communicating assignments through Google Classroom could be beneficial.
- Mr. Goodwin asked members for children who do not have internet access at home. He said that Erate funding could become available for greater access during longer bus rides home.
- Ms. Snyder also commented on difficulties with the filtering system. Mr. Goodwin also requested any information on students accessing games through the Chromebooks.

- Ms. Bernard asked if the student agendas were becoming obsolete. Discussion ensued that many teachers have continued with student agendas. Mr. Goodwin commented that this discussion is one that needs to involve the principals and the issue of the paper based agenda has not been discussed yet.
- Mr. Buono asked for review of the filtering system in light of the concerns brought up by staff and the need to not lose momentum. He also requested that consideration be given to making a video of the many great things happening in District classrooms.
- Mr. Goodwin brought up the transition happening with the technicians who are receiving less concerns with printer issues and now are supporting Chromebooks. He also noted the need for a replacement schedule for Promethean boards. Mr. Goodwin is reviewing implementation of Schoology as a learning management system to improve the learning experience for students and instructors.

10. Meeting Schedule for 2018-2019 Year

The agenda contained the following meeting schedule for the Technology Committee on Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m.: November 13, December 4, January 8, February 5, March 5, April 2, May 7, and June 4. Meetings will be held in the Citizen Genet conference room. The list of meetings can also be found on the TEG website.

11. Adjournment – 7:17 p.m.