

# **Student Technology Think Tank Committee Notes No. 4 September 23, 2015**

## **Introduction:**

Kurt Gazow, Executive Director of Technology, opened the meeting at 3:04 p.m. and welcomed the group. The slide show agenda included the community survey, questions about the survey and questions the group will discuss.

Kurt introduced two new attendees, Steve Clarke, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning and Kulshan a new student Madeline Ellis and asked them to share why they are interested in the Think Tank Group.

## **Survey Data: Community, Family/Staff/Student – Jacqueline Brawley, presenter**

Jackie Brawley, BPS Communications Manager, talked about the results of the community survey and asked the group to take a couple of minutes to look through the findings. The community survey data graph showed responses to the following questions:

- How important is tech in today's education?
- Would you support a 1:1 tech program? 52% were strongly in favor.
- How concerned are you about online safety and security? Community members expressed a higher level of concern than students and staff.

## **Group Debrief: Discussion & Debrief – Brian Pahl, presenter**

Brian Pahl, BPS Ed Tech Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA), opened the discussion by reminding the group that the group's purpose is to make a recommendation to Dr. Baker about whether or not to proceed with the 1:1 initiative. His questions are: If we say yes, how should we move forward? If as a group we say no, then are we saying, "not now" or "never"? If not now, then when? Thinking about what you read – what are your reactions? What surprised you? What highlights are most important? What are your questions?

Comments/Questions from the group:

Q: What specifically does the breakdown of the community look like? Who will be voting on this? The people who did the survey?

A: All registered voters will have the opportunity to vote on our Tech Levy this February. The telephone survey responses were reflective of registered voters' thinking at the time of the survey. The team can look deep into the survey data. The end of the survey asked if they have a child at one of the schools so we can see their relationship to the Bellingham School District.

Q: Responses seem low. Is that a typical response?

A: The telephone survey reached enough registered voters to have confidence that those responses represent our community's thinking within 5% accuracy. The email surveys help to deepen our understanding of parent and staff thinking. Those surveys do not have the same level of scientific accuracy since people self-selected whether or not they participated. People who are interested in tech are more likely to fill out the survey. For comparison purposes, you could look to the survey we completed last year about school start/end times – the survey data was 4 times the responses. A lower response rate can be an indication that there's not a lot of negative concern.

C: One week survey seemed short.

A: Most people fill out a survey within 24 hours. Longer survey windows don't tend to increase response rates by significant amounts.

Q: Online safety – Is it attacking systems or getting into files?

C: Professional Development is a huge issue. What should we be looking for in online security? We should ask those questions when we visit Sammamish and Kent next week.

Q: With the 1:1, would students be able to take a laptop out of the school district – like on vacation?

A: Some schools do a 'take home' model where students can take it back and forth. The agreement is with parents and students that they take responsibility.

Kurt referred to the questions from the first meeting and asked the group to look back at the questions and find ones if you are still unclear.

- What are you excited about?
- What questions/wonders do you have?
- What concerns do you still have?

Team members were asked to break into groups with those who have conversations about those questions. Then the groups combined with another group to talk about the questions to find similar themes.

The groups shared their thoughts/ideas/questions:

Group 1: Theme of empowerment. Staff members should be empowered and not felt to be inadequate. Professional Development needs to be driven by empowerment. How we are going to do it? The 1:1 model means different things to different people. A concern is that teachers who are not into the 1:1 model. How do we help address it to get teachers excited?

Group 2: Idea of being 'squishy'. What happened with the previous initiative? If we are moving forward then we need to trust Bellingham will figure out how to do it well.

Group 3: Excited about potential for student learning. Concerns – accountability. How can we be sure the roll out will go smoothly? Sustainability – if we buy devices, we need a long term plan. How do we move forward with teacher confidence? We need to produce students who are prepared in the digital world. Do students know how to use a spreadsheet, compose an email? Are they prepared to do that well? We need to focus funds on staff development and training.

Group 4: Looking at the research – community was asking why haven't you already gone to 1:1? If we make a recommendation, what's the financial support?

A: We'll talk about the cost before we complete the recommendation.

How do we address safety if we're sending the devices home? What strategies should we use to bring the family into the loop? How are we ensuring that everyone is excited about this? How do we ensure the accountability to drive the investment forward? Will computer labs still be needed?

### **Road Trip Logistics:**

During the driving trip to Redmond, we can have some great conversation while travelling. We'll be meeting at BHS parking lot on 9/30 at 5:30 a.m. and getting to Sammamish High School by 8 a.m. The second day we'll be at the Microsoft campus and leaving for Bellingham at approximately 3:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.