

West Hillsborough Site Council  
Minutes  
Wednesday, January 22, 2014

1. CALL TO ORDER

In attendance:

Valerie Leung (parent), Sorita Murphy (staff), Anu Hoey(parent), Katie Pierce (parent), Megan Medvitz (staff), Jay Beams(staff), Sherry Gavin(staff), Sarah Adams(parent), Chris Flores(staff), Don Geddis(parent), Jamie Adams(principal), Leslie Huie(parent), Roger Avedon(parent/chair), Peter Moore(parent), Elaine Chiu(parent) and Gayathri Goutam (parent)

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 11, 2013

3. CURRENT BUSINESS & OPEN FORUM

3-1. PROGRAMMING AT WEST SCHOOL:

A. Questions about Technology, Programming & Coding use:

- +How important is Programming for West School?
- +Do you want to write programs and execute on computers?
- +How about an after school program that introduces these concepts?
- +How do we bring more complicated programming concepts down to 1<sup>st</sup> grade level?
- +Does this topic relate to HSF Forward?
- + Should we teach kids about apps that already exist? Or teach them about what comes next to encourage problem-solving and innovation?

B. Responses from group (categorized):

+For the younger kids: reading, following directions, step-by- step learning with Lego demos, carts with basic diagrams about how to build. There's an application (other than Scratch) available on I Pad with programming concepts--spinning characters only...which could be better for the younger students.

+Names of apps available to elementary level kids suggested:

+KidPix is a favorite learning app for the Kindergarten class.

+Phases of Moon, etc. for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, how to search, some graphics, non-video arcades, ABCya , etc.

Kodables —fuzzy cute aliens—available as a free I Tune app. Check out info at <http://www.surfscore.com>.

Club Code(<http://club.lego.com>) in England uses “Scratch” ([scratch.mit.edu/](http://scratch.mit.edu/)) where one picks blocks of code--thinking logically to understand how it works instead of writing for hours and hours—creating your own interactive stories.

Pico Cricket ([picocricket.com](http://picocricket.com)) works with Scratch—like Lego blocks—where one can create own interactive stories, animations, games, etc. (used in I-Lab)

Lego We Do ([www.legoeducation.us/WeDo](http://www.legoeducation.us/WeDo)) ...drag and drop and program. (a parent mentioned that Pico Cricket might be dissolving) Ages 6-9

Lego’s Mindstorm kits—age 9 to 14.

+The kids start getting interested in this in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. In 4<sup>th</sup> Grade—students use multiple algorithms with multiplication---Algebra is introduced.

+Ms. Medvitz, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade teacher, thinks it is more about the process than the tools and wants focus more on the creativity than the tools. How to get the kids together and communicate and process?

+For apps development, the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher defers to Apple, to create apps and play a part in coding. Like in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade project “Biz World,” the students come up with products and maybe they could come up with an application(s) as a focus. Similarly project units, like Stock Market, in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, inspired the kids creatively.

+this new tech can just be used as tools to focus on innovation...do the Design Thinking, bring to life something, from sitting at desk, instead of needing a factory...

+ it is realistic for middle school students to make things/apps that someone would want... ..easier to do hands-on learning than sit and listen.

+why not buddy up older kids (5<sup>th</sup> grade) with younger (Kinder) as a way to introduce concepts? Or bring back local high school alumni to coach?

+conversation development is happening in the second grade. The teacher needs to almost script this level of communication for the kids.

+the influx of tech interferes with basic social skills. which set of skills is more important for a person’s success? Example: Many techies pointed to music as an inspiration for their success.

+public school curriculum....an issue of missing music and art...Common Core is response to that. Thought that Hillsborough is unique and lucky that there’s some

flexibility with the curriculum. Technology squelches creativity...teacher sees that evidence in the classroom, regurgitated from TV shows.

+Nueva School started using Scratch and Adobe as part of curriculum in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade in 2012- 2013. Thought is that they can develop their logic process. Kids have choices for multi-media electives such as Photoshop, etc, for kids.

+West School teachers are also teaching in computer lab...keyboarding, games... the younger kids have a 30 minute block with specialist and 1 hour bring in science related projects, literacy, math...South School might be ahead of the game because they have had a full-time specialist.

+Professional development for kids is important....

+lingo for tech in our lives now: "Digital Natives"(post 1980) and "Digital Immigrants" (born before 1980).

+Maybe HCSd high school students could come back and coach the younger kids.

+CPTA...(see acronym) (California Parent Teacher Assn)? lists Common Outlines for what is appropriate technology at appropriate grade level.

+Hard to find after school program for programming at elementary level, and they usually can be found in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Comments from Principal Dr. Adams:

+is there conversation about kids taking risks in learning stuff about programming in general or this is actual computer .....

+programming as a progression in general as related to problem-solving

+the Common Core will be directing where we are going from Kindergarten.

+Dr. Adams needs to contact Maureen/HSD to get OK to update to bring the computers up to speed at school. (Does this relate to HCS Forward?)

+Someone is teaching a class about Robotics and coding on weekends now. We will hear how that goes.

+Technology will likely push down into the curriculum and evolve eventually organically.

+complicated to weigh what's important.. how to balance the socialization of children with new technology as a tool.

+I LAB goal is to teach Essential Outcomes through Design Thinking....little kids learning how to learn. Not syntax of language itself but.....

+Going in to depth of programming is not really for middle school or lower.

+Programming might not be a priority. She thinks it as a societal problem...how to expand thinking?

### 3-2. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Improving student writing, world language, mindfulness, ...and gender and STEAM difference for remaining meetings. Looking for volunteer to write a couple of pages with links referring to topic.

### 4. ADJOURNMENT