

Minutes – Computer Technology Program Network Group – March 31, 1999

Attendance – Larry Dugan, Sue Whitney, Priscilla DeBan, Dennis Bastian, Margaret Clark

Review of minutes of November meeting. Original goals of developing web site for job opportunities in computer technology was a lofty goal. Not attainable this year. Top job opportunities were discussed. How can we help students meet these opportunities? Will we meet the needs of the community at the same time? Possibly general skills for the elementary level and more job related skills or career oriented for the secondary level. Also newspaper survey is shelved for this year.

Assessing technology – What can we do or say when the board wants to see results of student achievement? First we must look at the objectives of computers in school. Were they meant to raise test scores? And if they were what software is to be used to meet that objective. With advances in technology are teachers being replaced with learning labs and distance learning? Technology is not meant to replace teachers, rather to enhance the educational level of our students. Programs like CCC can supplement student learning and report hard data as to the student's progress while other programs are not easy to assess.

Twelve districts have been working on a technology consortia document, which is assessable, but there are not required courses that fit the document. Perhaps integrating technology into the curriculum with definite exit outcomes for students to advance grade levels is an option. A sample Interdisciplinary Standards Projects 9-12 was discussed. (i.e. student presents a multimedia research project, which includes communication skills, research skills, technology skills etc.)

We use technology as a tool that enhances projects and often reduces completion time, but it must be done in school in order to accommodate those students that do not have equipment at home. Skills of those students that have technology at home have risen dramatically broadening the gap between them and those students without technology at home. We must continue to make technology accessible additional hours.

Also staff development must continue in order for the use of technology to reach the students. Everyone must get on board and we often need a trigger to engage everyone. Teachers must be accountable, perhaps use technology for attendance, email etc. Additional training can be offered during after school hours, conference days or during traditional meeting times. It must be on going and immediate with refreshers offered.

There is a difference between fact & opinion; information on the effects of technology and student achievement may not be accurate. More research needs to be done.

More alternate educational programs are springing up, home schooling, home school networks and charter schools. How will this effect our programs?

Technology assessment – Currently, none exist. A state established curriculum would require equal accessibility for all districts. Assessment would need to be broad to reach everyone, i.e. a publishing component, spreadsheet, multimedia presentation, programming and understanding the impact of computers. Possibly not traditional assessment. Can we assess whether we are meeting the needs of the community?