

Technology School Board Update – June 2005

Overview:

High School laptop update (also posted on the web)

Next year, we will not be continuing to provide a laptop for every 10th grade student. This is next year's plan:

1. We've scheduled all sophomore English classes into two rooms. These rooms will be equipped with "permanent" carts with enough computers to have one-to-one computing in all English classes.
2. Students will be issued pen drives and required to bring the pen drive to all classes. Students will then have continual access to their work.
3. Two more laptop carts will be shared between other departments.
4. There will be a few computers that will be added to the current library laptops which available for overnight checkout.
5. Students may bring a laptop from home, provided guidelines are followed. The guidelines are posted on the web, and included in your packet.
6. Students will have web-based Falmouth High School (and Middle School) email addresses next year.

Students will be filling out a final exit survey this week. We are interested in knowing if their thoughts around laptops have remained the same or have changed since December. We also want some idea of the interest in checking out a laptop from school on a regular basis for home use.

We'll be continuing to gather data as we look at the 06-07 school year!

Professional learning days

On the Celebration of Teaching Day teachers are offering 14 different technology and learning workshops. As of last Tuesday (with another day until the registration deadline) there were 111 teachers signed up for these workshops!

Computers and Music	K-12 Music Department
Garage Band: Compose Music your Kids will think is Cool! No music	Renovia McKinney
How to Best Utilize iBooks in the Elementary Classroom	Dianne Rossi
iPhoto	Kathie Marquis-Girard
K-2 Cool Web Sites	Donna Gibbs
Literary Companion	Ogden Morse
Low or No Cost Resources for Teachers on the Web	Deena Mayo
OS X Introduction	Fran Worthington
Robotics	John Kraljic
The Homeopathic Approach to Technology and Using Portaportals in the Classroom	Marsha Campbell and Sarah Spring
Tinkerplots	Paula Hodgkins
Using Technology to Differentiate Instruction - An Overview	Sue Palfrey
Video 101	Beth Donovan and John Kraljic
What's Blogging & How Can I Use it in my Classroom?	Sue Palfrey

In addition, Sue will be meeting on Monday afternoon, June 20, with 9th and 10th grade teachers for some an overview of next year and an overview of how the laptops can be used to support teaching and learning. Some of the materials we are using for that day came out of a very productive day-long meeting of technology integrators in the southern Maine that was hosted by USM and the Department of Education.

ATM

Sue Palfrey and Suzan Nelson attended a meeting in Orono on ATM distance learning. It was opportunity to hear how other schools are using the ATM system and hear how schools are getting around the obstacle of scheduling when working across school districts. Some concrete take-aways for Falmouth were:

- ✓ There are exciting “virtual field trip” opportunities, and opportunities for communicating with individuals or groups outside of the Falmouth community. The ATM system (with available tech support) is capable of linking to other video conferencing systems.
- ✓ Schools that have been most successful in using the ATM for classes, have common needs and have worked closely with one or two other schools to coordinate schedules.

Community Resources Directory

Work on the Community Resources Directory continues to progress. Next year, teachers will be contributing to the directory after returning from professional learning opportunities outside the district. The directory is also getting some publicity in *The Portal* this week!

Summer work:

Summer provides an opportunity to continue to advance our capabilities in technology.

Trey and Brian will be doing the following projects:

Admin office renovations

- Re-cable entire building network
- Move server and internet demarcation to second floor
- Upgrade all desktops >3 years old
- Fiber optic link to Middle School network to share high speed connection with High School

Elementary schools

- Configure and replace a number of pieces of network hardware at Plummer
- Setup and migrate K-4 teachers, nurses, and Guidance to laptops
- Re-configure Plummer lab and mobile computing carts with updated software
- Regular preventative maintenance on desktop systems

Middle School

- Test and deploy new configuration to all MLTI laptops (~390 Units)
- Setup and install new mobile cart for 5/6 use
- Install clean and up-to-date configuration to existing mobile carts
- Preventative maintenance on desktop systems

High School

- Test and deploy updated configuration to all publicly accessible systems (Labs, Library, mobile carts)
- Install system upgrade for Guidance office support staff
- Deploy new configuration to existing 9th grade MLTI laptops and all HS teachers
- Setup new mobile carts for 10th grade
- Preventative maintenance on all office desktops
- Setup backend server and work station computers for Plato learning system
- Unify network directory structure between Middle School and High School and migrate all users to a single file server for 5th – 12th grade that will be accessible for home use.

District – Setup and assist with consolidation of all the buildings library circulation databases

Sue will:

- finish up middle school scheduling, set up the elementary schools for the coming year, do “end of year processes”, and make sure PowerSchool is set up correctly for attendance, grading, and data management for the coming year.

- be giving the web a face-lift. With a huge increase in the content in the last couple of year, the design needs to change to make the access to content clearer. Sue Morse, an ed tech at the high school who has worked in graphic design with several Boston firms and also is the interface designer for *Literary Companion* has volunteered consultation on the design aspects of the Falmouth web!
- be making some revisions on the special education database based on teacher feedback in its first year of use. Having the data centralized has already created efficiency and eased access to information. Some changes in the interface and design will make data entry and reporting easier for teachers.
- be working with several individuals and groups of teachers on summer projects including the 4th grade Maine studies project, K-4 report card groups, training with special ed on PLATO software which will be used with the Girls Transition Program, planning with special education on using assistive technologies, and working with librarians on using some of the new features of the web-based centralized library system.
- be attending the National Educational Computing Conference in Philadelphia at the end of June. She will focus on professional development for technology integration, and have an opportunity to hear how other schools across the country and world are using technology to transform learning.

Technology in the Classroom:

Featuring 5th and 6th grade general music

Renovia McKinney's work with technology in the music classroom has been highly innovative. Here is her description:

This year 5th grade used the laptop lab to explore the free program "Finale Notepad". They composed free form compositions as well as assigned work. They enjoyed the program as they could get instant feedback on their composition by pressing the playback button.

Sixth graders had an interesting year with the laptops. We started by inputting a 2 part composition they had previously hand written to see if it sounded as they expected. We then transferred select compositions into MIDI format. We discussed how MIDI files are very versatile, can be found just about anywhere on the web, and some practical uses for them. One use we explored was the transfer of student compositions (MIDI) into ring tones and then downloaded to my cell phone.

I was asked to present this unit of study at the Music Educator's National Conference in Baltimore Maryland this year.

I also attended a GarageBand workshop this February. GarageBand is a music composition program where the user can create "popular music style" songs with little music experience. It was absolutely amazing. After I returned, I borrowed a high school laptop equipped with the program and each of the general music classes composed 'class' compositions. I have burned a CD of our compositions and it will be available for check out in the library. This was a big hit and the students really enjoyed the program, even though they didn't have their own computer to work on.

I am extremely excited that the middle school was able to order an additional laptop cart for next year as it was difficult to sign up for time to use the computers this year. Additionally, I am overjoyed that the new computers will be equiped with GarageBand so the students will be able to experience the program hands-on.

Literary Companion wins the 2005 Codie Award in the "Education Newcomer" category

At a black-tie gala in Los Angeles, Ogden Morse's company, Way Interactive, and their software, Literary Companion, won the 2005 Codie Award in the "Education Newcomer" category!

The Codie is the most prestigious award in the software industry; it covers all areas, not just education. The Education Newcomer award goes to a company/product fewer than three years old that is judged to have the potential for the greatest impact on educational technology in the years ahead.

Sue Morse, Ogden's wife, is responsible for all of the design surrounding the program and the web site!