



A Community of Learners

Informational Memo - Technology Focused Professional Learning and Parent Education

TO: School Board
Superintendent Kocanda

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Overview & Background

In 2014-2015, The Winnetka Public Schools established the Desired Student Learning Outcomes for the Mobile Learning Initiative (MLI). Additionally, a baseline of measures was established using quantitative data from BrightBytes, Google Apps and Schoology.

Students have increased opportunities for self-directed learning experiences.

measures: 4Cs, Assistive Tech, Formative Assessment, Access, 3Ps, Beliefs, App Requests

Students use technology to effectively initiate and engage in collaborative learning. **measures: 4Cs, Access, Skills (foundational, online, multimedia), Schoology, Google Apps, App Requests**

Students are savvy, strategic, responsible and balanced users of technology.

measures: Assistive Tech, Access, Skills (online, multimedia), Behavior Data, Content Filter, Paper Consumption

Based on the data, areas of growth were targeted for the 2015-2016 school year. The areas include both teacher and student use of the 4C's (Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking and Creativity), use of digital resources, professional learning and digital citizenship.

Targeted Response

Professional Learning

Teachers will explore the use of digital resources, enhance their expertise with Digital Citizenship and work towards fluid use of iPads and other technology in the classroom. Institute day sessions will be dedicated to the targeted areas of growth and include use of social media for professional learning, building a productive and safe online presence, and creating authentic student products. Sessions will be differentiated for staff based on skill levels and interests.

Winnetka University courses will be taught by Winnetka staff. Topics will include Schoology, Google Apps for Education, Digital Citizenship, iPads in the Classroom and more. Teachers who have served on pilot teams or traveled for conferences will be asked to bring learned expertise back to their colleagues. Dates have yet to be determined, but courses are anticipated to begin in October.

Opportunities for learning for teachers will include Institute Days, Winnetka University (WU) Courses, a Google Apps Summit, and individualized coaching from the building-based technology coaches.

Parent Education

Parent focus groups are included in the qualitative data component for measuring the MLI outcomes. In September and April, The Winnetka Public Schools will host parent focus groups. Parent focus groups will provide data related to the Mobile Learning Initiative as well as seek parent input related to the focus of future parent education initiatives.

The Winnetka Parent Institute (WPI) offers a series of workshops for parents. A major goal for WPI is to support parents by raising awareness and understanding regarding the Digital Citizenship themes of Internet Safety, Privacy and Security, Relationships and Communication. Another goal is to provide an overview of the multiple apps and subscription services available to our teachers and students including Schoology, Google Apps for Education, Chromebooks and iOS Educational Apps.

In May of 2015, a WPI was offered titled “MLI: A Day in the Life.” This session received positive feedback from parents and will be offered again this year in late September. Additional WPis will be offered at least quarterly throughout the year based on interests of the parent community.

Digital Citizenship

With students connected to a device for both education and entertainment, the need for continuous education on Digital Citizenship is greater than ever. The Winnetka Public Schools will be partnering with Common Sense Media (commonsensemedia.org) to provide lessons for students in grades K-8. Digital Citizenship education includes internet safety, cyberbullying, social networking, data privacy and security, digital footprint and reputation and self-image and identity.

Students in Grades 5-8 will participate in various lessons from Common Sense Media. Each month will focus on a different theme. Lessons will be taught in the classroom and advisory setting when there are natural connections to the content. An example would be students learning about Information Literacy and citing sources when they are starting a research project in social studies or science, or when students and teachers are having a conversation about bullying, and then extending that conversation to the topic of cyberbullying.

Next Steps

There is still much work to be completed to support these initiatives. For Institute Days, a “Call for Presenters” will go out in September and then work will begin to create a mini-conference for the November 6, 2015, Institute Day. Course offerings and dates will be finalized for Winnetka University (WU) and shared via a new WU course catalog in October. Following the parent focus group in September, dates and topics will be announced for future WPI events. With each Institute Day session, Winnetka University Course and Winnetka Parent Institute Event, feedback will be collected from the participants to inform planning for future events.

To monitor the effectiveness of these initiatives, we will review our BrightBytes data. Two data collections will take place in the 2015-2016 school year. This is a change from what was proposed to the School Board in 2015. The original plan was for three data collections from BrightBytes, but with numerous parent surveys and student assessments, it was determined that a more natural time for data collection would be to during the two Parent-Teacher Conference periods.