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| Technology Committee Proposal |
| Technology Committee and Stakeholders Mini Paper |
| Janet Johnston March 6, 2011 ET680  |

This is a proposal for a new Harper’s Choice Middle School technology committee for the 2011-2012 school year. I think that including a variety of people on this committee will add to the depth and perspective of the future uses of technology in our school. Our teachers will be receiving new laptops in the fall. This is the perfect time for a committee to work as a group to lead Harper’s Choice towards becoming a school where technology is integrated within the classrooms, allowing students to create a variety of products that will engage them in their learning. A team approach will help propel our school forward.

First, the media specialist (Marlyn) and data assistant (Val), who currently conduct the bulk of our computer trainings and troubleshooting, will be invited to join the committee. The media specialist is the first point-of-contact for all central office technology and school-based staff. The media specialist coordinates the staff training and has information as to the needs of staff members. The data assistant collects data for county assessments, state MSA tests, and is an expert in the online gradebook and attendance programs that we use. She also works directly with the office support staff and can communicate their needs and desires to the group. The media specialist and data assistant will continue in their technology roles for the school; however they will also receive assistance from others and enjoy the benefits of collaboration and teamwork. In addition, I am hoping that either the principal or assistant principal can represent the administration at each technology committee meeting. An administrative perspective is beneficial when choosing which programs are chosen for school-wide use by staff, and required in the approval process. In addition, any innovations that are developed by the committee will need to be endorsed by the administration if the program is to be widely used by staff members.

There committee proposal includes 6 teachers, one representative from each content team. The 8th grade math (Nicolette), 6th grade Social Studies (Leighanne), 7th and 8thgrade Reading/English (Meg or Kate) all currently use computers in the classroom for a variety of assignments. The Technology Education (Abe) teacher can represent related arts and add his insights and skills. The 7th grade English (Patrick) and Science (myself) teachers are working on master’s degrees in educational technology and have background knowledge that will be useful to the committee. This combination of teachers represents all ages among the teaching staff; in addition I believe they will work well together. I propose extending personal invitations to each staff member, and inviting them to a Friday morning breakfast meeting hosted by me. At that time I can explain the goals of the committee and extend some incentives for their participation. With administrative approval, I would like to offer them morning meetings with continental breakfast, and substitutes for hall duty and homeroom so that our meetings can last until 8:08. At these meetings, I will offer “door prizes” of small supplies (mouse pads, memory sticks, etc) that can be obtained inexpensively or donated. Last, and with approval, I would also like to offer each teacher active on the committee priority on any newly obtained equipment.

 By using a variety of staff members, the committee will be able to find out what Harper’s Choice teachers want their students to be able to do with technology, bring that information back to the committee, and help choose a focus that will be beneficial to our teachers. Currently, the staff appears to be using the mobile labs for researching and writing/editing; this core group of teachers will have the personalities, respect and influence to help teachers implement lessons that will excite and engage our students. Ultimately, we can improve the overall attitude of our students, atmosphere of our school, and high-stakes test scores. Once these teachers begin training other teachers, one incentive for them to continue their work would be to occasionally combine Pack Time groups, giving these teachers a free period to help other teachers at that time or after school as a small thank you for their participation. Reimbursing their planning time is a meaningful incentive for participation.

In order to fully represent our school on the committee, I would like to invite 3 students, one from each grade level, and 1-2 parents. Our student population is diverse and I would like these students to be representative of all groups. Preferably, one of these students will be from the morning HCTV crew, one a GT student and one a grade level student. One or more of the students could be participants in the Cougar Time after school program to represent our struggling students. Students give a different perspective; they know how to engage other students as well as what doesn’t work well. Our students have a wide range of skills; I believe that a diverse student group will enable the committee to develop tools that will engage all levels of students. I would like input on parents to invite to join the committee, including one PTA member to serve as a liaison between the committee and the PTA. The PTA member can advocate for our proposals and possibly help raise funds for training or equipment. This is an excellent opportunity to include a father, and a parent who works in the technology field would be a nice addition to our committee as well. I see the parents’ role as one of advisor, fund raiser, and “cheerleader”. We need parents who will support the committee, become liaisons between the staff and the parents as we innovate instruction, and instill responsibility in our students as creators of knowledge. Last, for a community partner, I would like to contact the Bright Minds Institute. They already provide computers for our students’ use at home if they do not already own one. If we could have 1-2 community representatives that are familiar with our school and school system policy, we will be able to correctly place computer technology in more student homes. I would like to include their involvement in our e-School Newsletters that go home to parents, publicizing their contributions and their businesses. In addition, these students, parents, and community representatives will be offered the breakfast and door prizes at the meetings, as well as Harper’s Choice spirit wear and T-shirts. I would also like to offer them “guest of honor” seating and public recognition at our school’s band and orchestra concerts. As a collective group, this committee can excite our staff and bring HCMS forward with technology.