Tech Planning Update

Sept. 17, 2012

(present: Jeff Hill, Steve Evans, Gretchen Zaitzeff, Cory Culbertson, Jim Kurz, Wes Majteka, Jim Potter, Kim Rojas, Laura Erickson, Francesca Biundo, Maria Pessman, Kevin Thompson)

(next meeting: Oct. 17, 3:10 pm, 219)

Analyzing the current initiative:

- with regards to the use of online textbooks
  - faculty stated that most math classes have a virtual textbook.
  - many students prefer to have a hard copy along with the virtual copy.
  - Spanish curriculum is in Blackboard. The AP text is both electronic and hard copy.
  - In French there are many supplemental activities that accompany the textbook.
  - Various responses in the library–some students are more willing to read a digital book.
- with regards to the netbook "expanding the classroom":
  - teachers find it easier to assign many things that are on the Internet.
  - students are more resourceful. Rather than intimidating, it is more empowering to have students look up information and be more independent.
  - there is an expansion of more meaningful work.
  - if a students gets stuck, he/she can find out the information and advocate for his/herself.
- with regards to the netbook as a distraction:
  - the more we block gaming and social apps, the better.
  - no complaints are reaching administration this year.
  - seems like teachers are getting used to managing netbooks.
  - online shopping / sports sites seems to be a distraction for some boys.
  - the brightest students seemed to get distracted more than the others.
- with regards to the student help desk:
  - working well.
  - results can vary depending on which student worker you get. w
  - wish it was open at 12 and 2.
- with regards to "other intangibles" that we are seeing:
  - web-based activities make it easier for parents to see what's going on at school.
  - kids are better prepared for online classes.
  - students have a baseline of technology skills.
  - students are familiar with course management systems (blackboard).
  - students are learning online time management skills.
  - U-High's image as an educational leader in the area got a boost.
  - some students are very effective at using the netbooks for everything.
  - the hybrid learning format would not be possible without the netbooks.
  - information management for both students and teachers has improved.
  - C&I students learning skills in technology – online exams, video use in PE, etc…