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Google Classroom for Everyone

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July 2019

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Summer 2019

Description of the Capstone Experience:

Dade Middle school has become 1:1 with Chromebooks in the last few years and this is where the idea for the DMS CHrome Squad started to blossom based on needs for professional development for the teachers and the students. Therefore my capstone project was born and was to be implemented in the 2018-2019 school year. Becoming a technology savvy school has been somewhat of an interesting fact because of the time and effort it takes for teachers and students to learn new and engaging technology for the classroom besides everything else that happens in the classroom. At Dade, we have clubs every other week and I was going to have my squad every other week for an hour, which would consist of students who were interested in learning more about Google and being able to implement it in the classroom. The proposal provided several different opportunities for students to become teachers and provide professional development to the teachers and become experts at using the Chromebook and/or fixing any type of technological problem in the classroom. Therefore the project has been split into three different sections in application for completion of the capstone project. The first project was training and application for the students who are in the Chrome Squad. The second project is the workshops created by the students and the implementation and follow-up of the strategies provided in the classrooms. The final part of the project was for the students to be in control of a help desk and serve as a resource to students and teachers to help with Chromebook issues.

The proposal created at the beginning of the summer was idealistic in time planning and expectations of embracing technology. This was not always the case for time with students, therefore the communication in the Google Classroom was vital. Training the students on the various parts of Google was really interesting because they got so excited about different

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activities and were interested in things that I would not have thought would be so much fun to share with others. Through our trainings and assessments, we discussed how to use Google Classroom, Google draw, Sheets, Docs, Forms, and how to use the Chrome Store. There are several times I let the create their own topics for potential training. One topic created was to share how to install the correct application for games and it was highly favored by the other students. While this may not have been Google related, gaming is a huge part of our students' activities in and out of the classroom.

The training for the students was successful and they were able to start creating their own Google training, which would be implemented after teachers greed to choose a topic and complete a training. The second project was for the students to create trainings and share with other students and teachers. This part of the project included the teachers answering pre and post surveys based on the trainings. The main use of trainings were for the students to use Screencastify to create videos on various topics. On the regular classroom, the students were expected to create a project using something they learned from a training and share with me for a potential prize. There were a few classes who completed the challenging and share their knowledge about Google by creating a slideshow to an introduction form for parents. The last part of the project was for the Chrome Squad to participate in a help desk for a few months to be able to fix any and all problems on the Chromebook. The thinking behind this idea was for the students to learn a possible trade or create some interest in different electronics. Surprisingly the Chrome Squad did get to complete several of the project including sharing trainings for teachers and students. The students liked being able to use Screencastify to be able to share their ideas and ways to make Google more user-friendly. There were a few apps that needed some working

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for the training but that has been a good way to reassess the document I have created for the squad for the next year. The evaluation for pre and post provide some detailed information to share with administration and create some conversation points with the students to ensure authenticity of activities. One obstacle that has been consistent is one of the teachers not wanting to participate because they believed it is a waste of time, which is not true because the students are learning speaking and presenting skills. The administration has been great to help meet to get support from majority of the teachers. Another barrier is when the students do not want to reflect upon their current issues/ presence in the classroom. I have tried to express the importance of reflecting and hope to continue to improve it over time. Based on the interaction and success of the year, the Chrome Squad will continue to improve and share different ideas for next year. I am excited to see what we can take from this year and put into action next year.

Discussion/Reflection:

As the year has progressed, it has been very interesting year to be able to take an idea and see it grow into something that will continue for the next few years. Technology facilitation is something that takes a lot of planning and effort and can end up with different rewards. This capstone project met several of the ISTE/PSC standards for completion but one of the main standards, I felt it meet was 2.5 (Differentiation) and 2.6 (Designing applications). It was differentiation because of the opportunities and activities created for the students to meet their individual needs. Therefore due to design applications for staff and student, it led to more technology facilitation in my school. I have created a team with a co-worker and we present professional developments for our staff and have shared at a conference at Murray State University this past summer. Being a leader means creating opportunities for others to succeed in

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engaging activities that result in mastery of different standards. As a special education teacher, being able to work with students and create different media presentations has allowed me to learn more about their personal preferences of learning in a fun and non-academic manner. The planning for the capstone project was a bit tricky because of being intentional with my planning time but it taught me how to prioritize my activities for the classroom for the students.

Being a teacher leader is a tricky thing in a school because it can either be taken well from your peers or you can be considered a know it all. By using this capstone, I was able to share information with my Chrome Squad and these students created their own trainings. I was fortunate enough for it to be the first situation because several colleagues are eager to learn from my students and were excited to participate in the activities. Part of being a teacher is creating opportunities for students to become their own teachers and this “squad” allow several students to get out of their shell and complete activities. By competing these activities, several of the students were able to self-regulate their reactions when reflecting from the surveys and discussions with peers (Hattie, Gan, & Brooks, 2017, p.298). This is a skill that many middle school do not have but being able to participate in feedback in a safe space, the students began to explore their own thoughts and empathetic feelings.

I have always thought of myself as a leader, but completing this capstone and finishing this program has created several new opportunities for me to flourish in the area of Instructional Technology. To help with my understanding of Google products and being able to share with my students, I have become Google Level 1/Level 2 and a Google for Education Trainer. In the last year, I have spoken at conferences and created a brand for myself: [SPEDTECHTEACHER](#). I am excited to see what happens in the next school year, as we continue to expand and improve on

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our practice for the Chrome Squad. The advice I would give to someone wanting to start some type of student squad is to have administrative support and being excited about all technology. Being a technology facilitator means you are excited about things and sharing with others and the students have to be the same way.

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