

Newsletter

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From Fortmando

HOW DID WE DO?

This year we instituted a significant change in how computer skills and applications are presented to the MS students. I met with every class in the sixth, seventh and eighth grade to assess the skills they acquired and to ask for their feedback on how they thought this change worked for them. I hope that you enjoy reading the students' comments.

8th Graders

"It has been good for us because it allows us to apply technology to learning. The programs make sense because they pertain to our studies. It also feels more productive. I enjoyed GSP." – James

"Incorporating computers into classes was better, I think. We applied concepts to real world situations and learned about things that would be useful for us. Excel was a huge thing with the Spanish travel project. GSP was helpful with the math fractals and PageMill was good for webpages." Application is more likely now when we learned to use computers in the real world." Kiran

"I liked how computers were integrated into the classroom environment." - Mila

"Learning skills can be more effective when included in other classes." – Benjamin

"I'm learning not only the subject but the computer skills as well and I'm having fun while doing it. I liked doing the Spanish i-Movie. It was a lot of fun editing and making transitions." – Safia

"By learning the skills that we need to know for computers with other classes helped a lot. That way what we were learning was directly corresponding with our projects so we had a reason to learn and it gave us examples of how we could apply our knowledge in computers to our school work. We still got to learn new skills, but I liked the environment in which we learned it better." – Jill

"Since we came to the lab once a week, we learned stuff continuously, so I think we may have learned more with weekly computer classes. Although that is true, I think it's better how it is now. We are able to come with classes and do projects we wouldn't get to do if there were classes going on in the lab." – Meredith

"It has been a good change because now we apply and learn new computer skills in real projects plus we care more because we get an important grade in core classes." – Christine

"I think the change was good ... and if we have questions we can always find Ms. Fortman." – Allen

6th Graders reflected on the projects they enjoyed this year and their overall level of confidence using technology.

"I enjoyed doing the architecture and genetic projects because it was fun using PowerPoint. My technology skills have improved by doing projects in my core classes. I feel very confident using a computer" – Anna

I liked doing cartoons for art because it was fun and counted as a class. My skills have improved greatly. Before I only knew how to type and change the fonts. I feel comfortable using computers." –Amy

In English class I learned how to do spell check, thesaurus and other stuff." – Andrew

I enjoyed doing PowerPoint presentations because I can be creative. They are fun. Because tech has been incorporated into core classes, I have learned a lot especially in science because I came into school not knowing how to use PowerPoint. I feel good about my computer skills and knowledge of computers." – Joe P.

"I most enjoyed our genetics project because Ms. Limaye let us have a lot of fun with it and because we got to use PowerPoint. It was really fun and I learned a lot. Now I can do a lot on the computer. On a scale of 1-5 (1-low and 5 - high) I feel 4.5." - Natalie

7th Graders

"I think it is a good change b/c the computer lab is open to you 24/7 instead of having to wait a week to finish it. Also you can learn things integrated into the curriculum." – Meredith F.

"I really liked the art project with drawing because it was fun to learn to do art on a computer." – Bethany

"I think this is a good change because we were able to apply technology to all of our classes." – Krissi P.

"I liked the Spanish project because it was fun to experience PP by myself just experimenting on the project." –Andrea

"My favorite project was the science graphing project. This was fun because I like stats and playing with numbers." – Michael H.

"The best project was INSPIRATION because I learned how to use a great tool." – Adrian

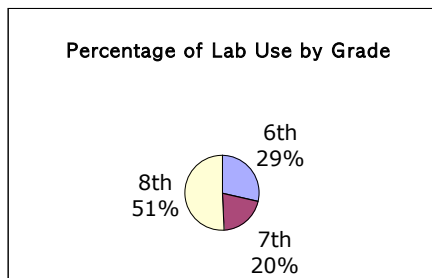
"I think it s a good change because while you're using technology you're also learning in school and it's basically double help. I liked the Drugs Project because we were free with what we could put in and that is when I felt I learned the most - to record voices, insert music and cool animations." – Matt

"My favorite project was the Japanese video. I make movies on a regular basis and it was absolutely brilliant to be making them on campus. I also learned a lot about making movies as a group which was a good experience for me."

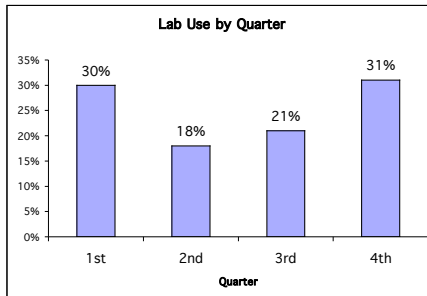
- Jenny J.

"Now we learn to apply specific applications to certain types of projects and can use that in the future. I liked INSPIRATION with Ms. Gray because I got to see a very clear representation of info and I now know how I could use INSPIRATION in the future." - Hannah

SOME STATS



8th graders spent the most time in the lab.



The first and last quarter showed the heaviest use of the lab. However, the lab was in continuous use.

Approximately 437 classes were held in the computer lab this year, averaging about three classes every day of the school year. This does not take into account the classes using the MMR in the library, club sessions, before and after school use of the lab or the times arranged during sports.

BUSY MAY

The lab was humming this month. Sixth graders were busy word processing literary magazine entries; seventh graders were using EXCEL to learn spreadsheets and graphing. Sevies also came to the lab in Human Skill's classes to create PP projects on drugs. Mary Ellen brought her sevies to the lab to use the drawing tools in WORD. The eighth graders chose a portion of their Decade's project to post on the web. Using Adobe PAGEMILL they each created a web page. A group of eighth graders in the drama class opted to create a movie for their drama project. Using i-Movie, they edited their film. Drummers in the second semester Percussion elective recorded their work on CDs. To see the student projects that have been posted to the web, go to my website – <http://sun.menloschool.org/~nfortman>. Then click on student projects.

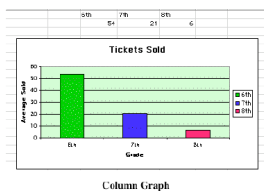
Class Breakdown by Subjects:

CORE.....	310
FL	52
AE.....	55
Tech Instr.....	20

Here are some sample charts created in EXCEL.

For viewing, click on "Graphing Galore" for your assign

Graphing Galore!



Column Graph

ELECTRONIC WHITEBOARDS

Next year the MS will pilot two types of electronic whiteboards. One will be available for use by all in the computer lab. The second one is a Copycam which will be more limited in use. It will be piloted by Ryan with his 8th grade math classes. After they arrive and are installed, I will let you know how they work. We are asking the teachers that are focusing on technology to use the whiteboard with their classes for at least one project. They will share those uses of this new technology with other teachers piloting whiteboards in the high school.

WITH APPRECIATION

Many thanks to all of you for making our first year of transferring technology skills and competencies into your curriculum so successful. I am grateful to Erik, MaryEllen, Mima and Stef for choosing technology as their focus this year. Thank you to Franklin, Jessica, Grace, Randy, Jennifer, Eden, Ryan, Rosetta, Christina and Erin for your innovative uses of technology in your subject areas. I have seen so many fantastic projects and experienced the enthusiasm and interest you generated from your students. I feel blessed to work with such a dedicated group of teachers. I look forward to expanding our horizons next year.