Technology Task Force Focus Group
(Prepared for Technology Task Force)
October 28, 2014

*Confirming the Validity of our Findings from the Focus Group Interviews &
Recommendations for Phase 3: Developing the Vision in a Strategic Plan*

Background

Phase 1: Qualitative Research through Focus Group Interviews

In semester two of the 2013-14 academic year, we conducted qualitative research through a series of focus group interviews which were coded and analysed. In the focus group interviews, the interviewees were presented each of the three statements of the technology vision and asked to comment on the statement.The interviewers did not explicitly ask questions and the discussion was intentionally not guided with little clarifications and no probing questions: the goal was to have the respondents lead the direction. From the analysis of the interview data, through the extensive coding of the transcripts of the responses, we compiled our findings which led to our conclusions in *Phase 1: Initial Findings Report.*

A summary of the recommendations were to follow up with the community to decide if we use a tweaked and/or modified version of the vision (as a separate entity), OR Confirm that the vision is implicit in the school mission. It was also recommended that if the vision was to be modified then the barriers would be used to help articulate the new vision. Finally, to determine how to articulate the vision in a strategic plan taking into consideration the barriers, solutions and feedback from the stakeholders.

Phase 2: Follow Up - Confirming the Findings through Surveys

As outlined in the summary of our report from Phase 1, our next step was to confirm the validity of our conclusions: are the findings 'true' as in they accurately represent the situation and 'certain' in that our findings are supported by evidence? We created three surveys differentiated for the variety of stakeholders: Elementary students, Middle/High School students and our adult community comprising faculty, parents, and administrators.

The links to the surveys and data collected are here:

> [Staff/Adult community](#) 104 responses
> [MS/HS students](#) 180 responses
> [ES students](#) 100 responses

The following presents the findings from the surveys with analysis of the focus group interviews based on the three recommendations from the Phase 1 report. Please note that the focus group interviews were free-flow and therefore no specific questions were asked. The questions from the survey were derived from our analysis of the coded interviews.

Recommendation 1:

Trial a tweaked and/or modified version of the vision (as a separate entity), OR Confirm that the vision is implicit in the school mission

The questions for this part of the survey were derived from the general comments about the language of the vision and the impressions given about the clarity of the wording and the extent to which the vision is lived at WAB. The survey questions had to be modified for the different audiences.

		ES Students Survey Responses	MS/HS Students Survey Responses	Adult Community Survey Responses	Commentary
1	The vision statement language is appropriate for the target audience (it's a good length, etc)	55%	68%	Not asked	See comment (a) below

2	The language/wording of the vision is clear	Not asked	Not asked	70%	See comment (a) below
3	The length of the vision is appropriate	Not asked	Not asked	61%	See comment (a) below
4	I see the vision happening in school	35%	48%	63%	Of those the statements coded: 38% said currently happening; 17% impractical; 45% positive impression
5	The vision inspires me	35%	36%	56%	Consistent with survey findings.
6	The vision statement is the same as our school mission statement (Connect, Inspire, Challenge, Make a Difference).	56%	64%	74%	See comment (a) below

Comments & Recommendations:

(a) For #1, #2, #3 above, more than half of the survey responses suggested that the wording was appropriate for the target audience and that the length of the vision is a good length. Clearly the responses from the survey was inconsistent with our analysis from the focus groups. From #6 above, 65% of respondents indicated that the vision was the same as the school statement. We are unable to determine if (i) the extended Technology Vision statements were considered to be part of the WAB School Vision and (ii) if the respondents see the vision as the school vision (Connect, Inspire, Challenge, Make a Difference). An average of 49% said they see the vision happening in the school.

Recommendation: We will consolidate the current Technology Vision by adopting the WAB vision (Connect, Inspire, Challenge, Make a Difference) as our vision for technology.There will no separate technology vision. We will use the extended statements of the existing Technology Vision to help explain and further develop the strategic direction.

Which of the following are problems for you in your use of technology at WAB?

The following problem statements were derived from the analysis of the focus group interviews and were asked in the survey.

	ES Students	MS/HS Students	Adult Community	Ranking (1 being most problematic)
Access to resources from outside WAB e.g. VPN, Google Docs, YouTube, Internet access, access to WAB resource	48%	48%	70%	Average 55 % Ranking 1
My teachers need more training in using technology	21%	34%	33%	Average 29% Ranking 2
Not enough training to get better at using technology for my learning	33%	14%	33%	Average 27% Ranking 3
Not enough time to get better at using technology for my learning		19%	24%	Average 22% Ranking 4
Different teachers use different technologies	11%	18%	18%	Average 16% Ranking 5
There is a feeling that technology is a problem	12%	14%	18%	Average 15% Ranking 6

Some of the technology tool(s) we use are not appropriate	24%	11%	6%	Average 14% Ranking 7

Recommendation 2:
Rank the barriers making the simplified vision

Which of the following do you think would help us to continue realizing the technology vision?
The following solutions were derived from the analysis of the focus group interviews and were asked in the survey.

	ES Students	MS/HS Students	Adult Community	Ranking (1 being the most important)
Find time to learn about, explore and use technology appropriately	75%	57%	52%	Average 61% Ranking 1
Have more lessons in using technology	58%	44%	58%	Average 53% Ranking 2
Have clearer rules and guidelines in using technology	45%	50%	22%	Average 39% Ranking 3
Review and simplify processes		53%	16%	Average 35% Ranking 4
Review and simplify technologies		51%	13%	Average 32% Ranking 5
Define "appropriate use" of technology	48%	31%		Average 31% Ranking 6

Recommendation 3:

How to articulate the vision in a strategic plan.

The opened ended questions from the survey coupled with the coded interview data from the focus groups provides a rich source of suggestion and data that should be revisited to provide further details of potential solutions and perceived barriers.

The following is a snapshot to illustrate the main themes from each survey.

Question 8: How to continue realising the vision at WAB

Elementary School:

- We should continue technology lessons and still follow the rules.
- That each class has a computer trolley or iPad trolley so that is is very handy to use them. Use technology oftenly.

- Not using computers at lunch time even in pollution days.
- Follow expectations and rules but still have fun.
- I think we should continue using a lot of technology!
- We could have some lessons on technology once in a while, so that we can have the time to explore and use different information for our learning.
- Teachers can explain slower
- Continue using Personal iPads and Computers.
- I think it is a good idea to give every student an individual device for learning.

Middle School/High School:
- This is my first time to use MacBook, even i didn't know how to take screen shots. I think WAB should give a photocopy or print about technologies at the first day of the school or only for new students.
- To enforce the educational purpose of using technology
- Show more modern technology to get students interested instead of them doing games everyday.
- Enforcing the rules
- To create a more easy guidelines
- Practice using technology
- Have technology classes that teach us about computer use.
- Maybe it is good idea to give student more time to learn how to use the technology.

- making sure all teachers use moodle effectively - its very inconsistent at the moment. some of my teachers put on 3 different documents a day, some of them haven't put anything on their moodle in years.
- Making the vision as an official slogan and posting it on websites or making posters would help.
- Place a trust factor on students so that we can truly have creative freedom.
- Ignore it, technology is just a learning tool, no need to have a "vision"
- There are way to many websites for WAB.
- Standardize everything

Adult Community:
- Continue to have innovative technologies in the classroom and the support of IT integrators to support staff and students.
- Get feedback, analyse and adjust as necessary
- Encourage best practice
- Effective collaboration, communication and access to training/support are key.
- Continue to move forward with training opportunities for teachers and staff- 3T is a wonderful way for colleagues to help train colleagues in everyday technology that will impact their work in the classroom
- As technology is a tool, it does not need it's own vision but can rather serve the wider WAB vision.
- have better alignment between tools, platforms and purpose
- Continue to stay invested in technology. Keep promoting the SAMR model schoolwide. Support/promote PLCs of teachers to assist each other on learning/reinforcing technology.
- Keep consulting most/all of the teachers that use these different programs everyday. Please don't rely on SELT/SAT or only a few teachers to make this decision for us. Tech is very personal to everyone (to varying degrees) so please keep consulting as many people as you can. Forcing people to use programs they don't believe in will lead us right back here in 5 years.

Question 9: Changes/improvements

Elementary School:

- Maybe the students could have more lessons in technology with Mr. Cowell or Mr. T
- More classes on how to use technology and people being appropriate with technology.
- I think we are already doing everything possible so I think we have already done all the improvements to use technology.
- Make sure every student knows and understands the technology vision.
- More time to learn, explore and use technology
- Block more unappropriate links
- to make some more cleared rules for using all technology.

- Some of the students if they have a problem, they ask for help and the teacher comes up and fixes it up for them when all the instructions are already on the whiteboard. So, I think the teachers should only come to the kids if there is a really big problem.
- Keep doing what were doing

Middle School/High School:

- Make early years access more technology
  We could but have a class that could teach us stuff about computers.
- I want to see the teachers better at using tech
- Maybe use some more technology (ipads, etc)
- More use of smartboards by teachers (some teachers which currently use the smartboards are then able to send these notes to students to help review or use if absent that class) Many rooms have a static sound from speakers
- A more of a way to give students more freedom on what they can do with Technology. It's limited though because the one limiting it is school.
- Many teachers would benefit from further instruction on the controls of the interactive whiteboards as well as basic troubleshooting concerning these. Problems with the whiteboards often inhibit learning as well as take up class time
- Remind what are the technology visions at WAB, start of every year
- I want to see the Define "appropriate use" of technology and have clearer rules and guidelines in using technology

Adult Community
- Acknowledge and showcase the amazing work already being done especially In the elementary
- Whole school alignment and vision
- More time for specific training that will impact teaching practices
- Experiment in think tanks with ways to use new and old technology as a tool to enhance learning.
- Perhaps more training or sharing during teachers teaching teachers workshops
- Create expectations for teachers and provide opportunities for them to meet those expectations. Review the tools that are currently used and the extent to which they contribute to learning.
- only use technologies available in China

Summary
From this extensive internal research, we recommend the following:

We use the **WAB mission statement** to guide our vision for technology. The extended statements are used for guidance for the team.

Based on the barriers and solutions, we recommend that the following are addressed:

1. Access to resources from outside WAB e.g. VPN, Google Docs, YouTube, Internet access, access to WAB resources
2. Training of technology tools and practices to enhance learning/Have more lessons in using technology
3. Time to develop technology-rich learning experiences/Find time to learn about, explore and use technology appropriately
4. Have clearer rules and guidelines in using technology/Define "appropriate use" of technology (student voice)
5. Review and simplify processes & technologies available at WAB.

oOo