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St. Some Times

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Tech Fatigue

MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT MORE CHROMEBOOKS



ANOTHER 300 CHROMEBOOKS ARRIVE FROM DUBAI FOR GR02. LOTS OF WORK.

The Ease of Chromebooks

Chromebooks, or CBs as we call them, are very easy to maintain. Since a CB is simply a way onto the internet, we can administer them very easily from one admin login (or 10) and don't have to worry about installing programs like in the old days.

Reimaging is a thing of the past. Unlike Windows or Macs, we can install a fresh operating system on one or multiple machines in ten minutes.

Students are not allowed to install extensions or apps from google. We have that turned off. Instead, we "push out" the school extensions and apps from the admin to every machine.

Google really knows how to provide for schools. Yes, working with a Mac network is easy from a Mac server, but this is Cake! So easy. So Robust.

IT'S GREAT TO HAVE THEM, BUT SOMEONE HAS TO ENTER THEM INTO OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM....

One of my many jobs is to maintain the Chromebooks that our students use. We are not yet 1/1 but close. The goal is to have kindergarten through fourth grade.

Our small tech team at school had to basically install the updated operating system through our network from the school google administrator servers. It took us about 20 minutes per machine: take out of box, enter the school sticker identification number and match it to the serial number of the machine, then enter the machine into our Enterprise system so students and staff can log into them. The 20 minutes was rare.

Most of the time, the update took longer because these CBs came from a Dubai warehouse and they were created in 2019. That's two years of updates, about 3 separate update sessions.

Between Jim and I and Katherine, we would each have ten or more chrome books open in different stages of the process. We developed quick fingers as the days progressed. It took us about five full school days to get it done. Thankfully, we didn't have any students in the building.

All we had to do was maintain the tech for teachers while they taught online. People just don't understand HOW MUCH we have to do in one day, one hour.





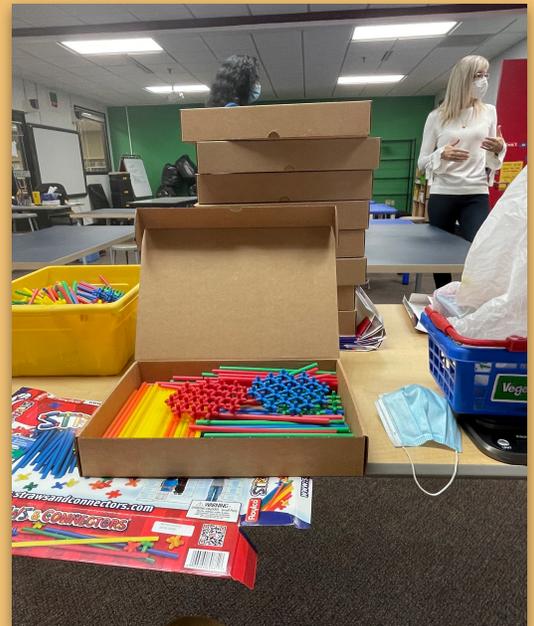
No Sharing

During the Covidication, we cannot have students sharing. That means every student has to have their own individual stuff. Our lab stuff is basically in class sets. That meant we had to separate straws, building blocks, legos, cardboard cutters, scissors, and all other resources into individual baggies for 40 students for just one day.

WEIGHING INSTEAD OF COUNTING

(above) MakeDo kits come already in sets for 10 students. But we had to divide THESE sets into single student sets. Instead of counting out the pieces, I made one set and weighed the others. It went quick.

The straw sets were the same. I divided boxed sets of Straws and Connectors into baggies. It went fast, so I decided to do all of them with the scale method. (25 for me, 25 for Jim, and 25 for Katherine. Ugh.) 25 gave us extras ready to go.



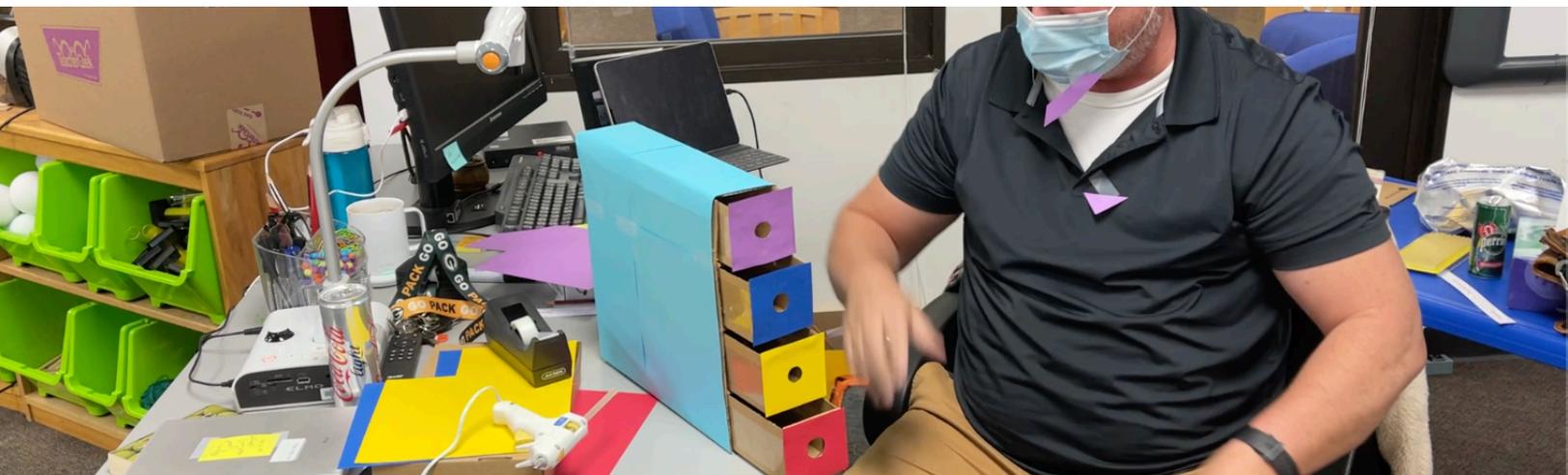
Tinker Tues?

The midweek day off will be no more. After months of making video after video of tinkering projects, we are going to have students in the

classroom. I don't know which is more appealing. I miss the students but I love the freedom of Distance Learning.

In case I didn't explain before, Tinker Tuesdays were basically a stay at home day. We go to school Sunday

through Thursday , so hump day for us is Tuesday. The Hybrid 4 model allowed students to stay home on Tuesday and participate in Tinker Tuesday projects in the morning with the afternoon off or for Arabic online. We did hundreds of videos.





Hybrid 4 Day F2F Model Since Nov, up to Mar

From November up until March 18th, our school has been running a hybrid model. Even though every school in this country is Distance Learning until the NEXT school year, we have students in the classrooms. 4 days a week, half a class comes in the morning, half in the afternoon. So the average class has 10 students at a time, with social distancing, masks, "sand hanitizer" everywhere.

Hybrid Changes

Katherine, Jim, and I spent the first part of March getting our labs ready for the next step of the hybrid teaching progression. [insert heavy sarcasm] It's not like we were busy with Chromebooks, fulfilling our Corporate duties, or assisting teachers with their classroom tech or online classes.

Did I mention that specialists, that means me too, had to do up to an hour and a half total of recess each day so the classroom teachers could have breaks? I have been one of the highest paid recess duty babysitters since November 4th.

It all changed on March 18th. The five day model for kids in school during Covidcation was designed to have a full day of specials for a class level. Sundays, all of the grade 4 students have specials. Mondays, the third grade would go to Art, PE, Future Lab, Music, and Library. On through Thursday Kindergarten. There are so many homerooms of each grade level, the specials rotate on a three week cycle. It may be hard to grasp, but over the three weeks, I would see each homeroom once in the morning (10 students) and once in the afternoon (the other 10). Since there are three Future Lab teachers, we rotated one Tech week. So I teach two straight weeks, then have a week without students. My week without students designates me as the roaming tech support. That's when I do my other two jobs helping staff with everything tech and try to complete the corporate and district level work that accumulates since we teach full time "on the side". Imagine planning for hands-on student projects without sharing resources and seeing them only once every three weeks. This is my life.

Dance Class?

The first rule of Dance Class is: you don't talk about Dance Class.

It can only mention a little bit. Just three of us are in the class besides the dancing dragon. It's a secluded group of students that

meets two or three times a week to learn fitness. There is no manual, no set plan. We just practice different ways to stretch out to our individual limits and learn how to do special calisthenics. I love it. No, I don't offer it up to others to join. That

would defeat the joy of a secret club. It works out well because of the covid group limits. The limits go up and down without warning. Our small group isn't affected. We learn well together. The dancing dragon pushes our limits and shares a lot of knowledge.