SMART Solutions: Implementation Plan for Robert Fabian

SMART Certified Trainer: Robert Fabian

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Implementation point-of-view: Trainer/Coach

I. Abstract:

The Pen Argyl school district in Pennsylvania has made a significant investment in Smart Boards for their schools. In addition the district leadership is committing more financial resources to acquire more Smart Boards with a goal of one board for each classroom in their district across all levels of schools.

Acquiring the technology is one thing, another is getting a return on the investment by having teachers using the boards so that student engagement and performance is improved. Despite some initial Smart Notebook training, teachers’ use of the technology was sporadic. So, to achieve the goal of increasing teacher use, Pen Argyl won a grant to provide Smart Notebook training, not for every teacher, but for approximately 1/3 of the teachers on staff.

The plan advanced by the grant included these key components:

1. Identify 1/3 of the teachers (elementary, middle, and high school) to be the cohort that would participate in this program. (The other 2/3 of the teachers would participate in training cohorts during subsequent school years)
2. Each of the identified teachers would receive three 3-hour training sessions. The training would be conducted by a Smart Certified resource who was recommended by vendor currently providing the Smart Technology to the school district. The three sessions are:
   a. Smart Notebook – Getting Started
   b. Smart Notebook – Intermediate Level
   c. Smart Notebook – Advanced Level
3. The three sessions would occur in 2-month intervals
4. Each teacher would participate in Coaching Sessions between the training to help insure learned skills were being practiced and school division goals relative to the Smart Technology were being implemented
5. A school district resource will become Smart Certified and would conduct the training for the remaining cohorts after the initial training program.

As a Smart Certified Trainer, I previously provided a Smart Notebook training session for the Pen Argyl school district. Based on positive feedback and reactions to the training session, I was asked to participate as the professional trainer in the grant program to provide training and coaching to ensure the school district was achieving its technology goals.

What is described below, is the first half of the “Getting Started” session with the Teacher/Participants.

II. Analyze: Perform a Needs Assessment

Overview: The Analysis phase is the foundational step to a successful implementation plan. From your analysis, you will design learning goals which allow you to develop the resources necessary to move your team’s knowledge, skills, and abilities to the next level of expertise with the SMART Learning Suite.
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System Organization:

The Pen Argyl School District consists of three schools: Plainfield Elementary (468 Students), Wind Gap Middle (660 Students), and Pen Argyl High (535 Students).

➢ The Assistant Superintendent is responsible for the Smart Board funding and the grant monies awarded to the school system for the Smart Notebook training program.

➢ The primary stakeholder responsible for the implementation of the grant program and for the subsequent evaluation of the grant program is the Supervisor of Technology Services. Responsibilities included:
  1. Coordinate with Professional Trainer
  2. Identify the teachers who would participate
  3. Schedule the training sessions and who would attend each session
  4. Schedule the individual coaching sessions
  5. Provide feedback to the Professional Trainer
  6. Insure Coordinator for Technology Integration becomes Smart Certified.

➢ The Coordinator of Technology Integration had two major responsibilities:
  1. Become Smart Certified – this resource will conduct the cohorts after the grant expires
  2. Work with teachers and the professional trainer to make sure system objectives and teacher objectives are addressed in the training.

➢ School Principals were only involved on the periphery. However, they have responsibility for the teachers.

➢ Teachers are the target audience. Teachers were chosen to participate, first on a voluntary basis, and then those who had a Smart Board in their classroom. Teacher responsibilities included:
  1. Attend the training sessions
  2. Bring laptop with Notebook to each training session
  3. Actively participate during the training sessions
  4. Work to integrate Smart Notebook skills into classroom sessions when appropriate
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5. Participate in the coaching session by teaching a lesson that required the Smart Board using a Notebook that contained items that were introduced during the previous training.

- **Professional Trainer** – Robert Fabian was employed to provide the Smart Notebook training and to provide the coaching element for the teachers. The Supervisor of Technology Services was the interface for the Professional Trainer.

Current State of the organization:

- What is the current state of your SMART Learning Suite Implementation?

**Current State:** The school system was not satisfied with the return on their Smart Board investment. Smart Boards had been purchased for many classrooms and while there had been some training, the technology was not being used as envisioned. (Some teachers were using the boards as interactive devices for their students and there some success stories.) The school district made the bold decision to purchase additional Smart Boards and Notebook licenses with the additional goal of providing the training teachers would need to enable interactive classrooms. The training component of the district plan would be funded by a grant. The training portion of the Smart Technologies integration into the classroom required identifying teachers from each of the three schools. For this training program, the teacher participants would all be at the Beginning Level.

**What do my stakeholders already know about the SMART Learning Suite?**

The district leadership is quite knowledgeable regarding Smart Learning Suite and the benefits and challenges of implanting the technology. While efforts to engage teachers has had limited success, there has been an ongoing effort to implement and integrate the technology district wide. Also, I categorize the current Smart Notebook knowledge as Notebook 11 – Notebook 14ish. The district has the latest software but is not utilizing the interactive features that are available with the newer versions.

Since my audience will be “beginners”, I have the opportunity to provide solid examples of the benefits achieved when utilizing Notebook Learning Suite. I also will have the “luxury” to provide additional training after the participants have had the opportunity to practice and learn the skills and techniques of the previous training session.

Coaching sessions are to occur a couple of weeks after training sessions. My plan is to provide constructive feedback to the teacher and to take pictures where appropriate to be shared with the group at the next training. My goal is to let participants see what others are doing so that we are building a community to share ideas and successes. Additionally, coaching sessions will permit me to capture data about which Notebook features teachers preferred or tried – see sample on side:

This data will provide me feedback as well. I can address the skills that were used the least during the teacher coaching sessions.
Assumptions and Constraints of your implementation plan:

Current Attitude of Group: There are 34 teachers divided into 3 groups for training purposes. For the most part, teachers are motivated to participate but there are at least two teachers who are entrenched in their classroom delivery, they are resistant to any changes. For those motivated teachers, my plan is to offer interactivity during the training and to provide examples they can take back to their classrooms and start using right away. In addition, I will communicate with administrative stakeholders to provide them positive feedback on their teachers so they can reach out to the teachers and “pat them on the back” or otherwise acknowledge their efforts.

For those not motivated, I plan to attend a couple of their classroom sessions to learn better how they are delivering their content. When I meet with them, I can provide examples and reasons why they might want to modify their content delivery methods to include Smart Notebook. I have been advised that should not motivated participants will have their Smart Boards moved to rooms where a motivated teacher will have access.

I do have resources to provide me assistance regarding implementation issues. But the district representatives and myself have spent a lot of time addressing what might become implementation issues. Items addressed include:

- Adequate network bandwidth
- Working Smart Board with Notebook 16.2 loaded and working
- Updates turned off (or re-timed) so they do not impact laptop performance while training
- Verify all classroom Smart Boards are in working order (Most are, but some have some screen keystone issues and a couple have dim bulbs in the projectors. Plans are to remedy these situations.)
- Substitute teachers scheduled so participants have unencumbered time for training
- Whitelisted websites Smart Lab needs
- Create folders to house examples and presentation materials so they are available to all participants
- At tempted to have school principals drop in and recognize teachers from the school
- Make available email and message links so questions and comments can be processed
- Address the role and interaction of Smart Boards and Google Classroom - Most teachers especially at the Middle and High schools are using Google Classroom.

Because Smart Learning Suite will be new for most of the participants – there is some participant trepidation - but seeing a meaningful difference in student learning should incrementally increase as comfort levels with the technology increases. I expect the first meaningful difference will be student excitement and willingness to volunteer to do activities at the Smart Board. I also expect the teachers to feel self-satisfaction as they try out ideas with their students. I will encourage teachers who tend to lecture and write notes on whiteboards, start to write and capture their notes in Notebook and distribute the set of common notes.
III. Design: Identifying Goals, and Objectives:

Overview:

Once the Needs Assessment is complete and there is an understanding of the organization’s current state, it is time to determine goals of the future desired state. The goals created during this step establish a learning gap; our purpose is to create one specific goal and three objectives for that goal to help achieve our new desired state. Our objectives are meaningful learning opportunities to bridge that gap and achieve the goal which is the next level of implementation using the SMART Learning Suite.

Establish the Learning Gap: One year from now teachers who participate in the grant funded training will integrate the Smart Board and Notebook Learning Suite in 50% of their classroom sessions. In addition, a Smart Professional Learning Community will develop within the school system. The purpose of this PLC is to share successes and failures and to “further the artform” of using Notebook Learning Suite. In addition, a district wide repository for successful Notebooks will be created with all teachers encouraged to be contributors. The one year vision will be quite an accomplishment! But for it really to succeed, district and school administrators will need to continue to be active supporters of the effort.

To accomplish the one-year goal, there are some learner-centered problems that will need solutions.

- Insure teacher participants know how to leverage Smart Notebook. This will be accomplished by providing all training with Notebook Learning Suite. Each Notebook page will contain information and use a Notebook tool or feature to present the information. Teacher participants will interact with the presentation much like their own students.
- Insure teacher participants know how to construct and modify Notebook objects. Many examples will be provided. In addition, during the training, objects used by the trainer will be deconstructed and then constructed so teachers see the process and steps.
- Increase teachers’ confidence level in creating and using Notebook materials in the classroom. To the end, the district must ensure consistent availability of Smart Board and computers.
- Available time is a factor in teachers’ adoption of the technology. Creating Smart Notebook materials does require a time investment and at first, teachers may find reasons to avoid tasks. In the case of Notebook Learning Suite, the investment of teachers’ time will pay dividends. Students will become more engaged and teachers will become quicker at developing materials.
- During the training sessions, some teachers will acquire and accept the skills quicker than others. Consequently, the trainer will need to provide differentiation to accommodate different teacher learning rates.

Design Instructional Goals:

Goal 1: Given a Smart Board (with USB and A/V cables connected), the teacher participant will be able to connect their own laptop to the Smart Board so that interactivity works and the board is oriented in less than two minutes.
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Goal 2: Given a computer properly connected to the Smart Board, the teacher participant will launch Notebook Learning Suite and will recognize and locate Notebook Learning Suite’s Tools and Tabs with 90% accuracy.

Goal 3: Given a computer with Notebook Learning Suit and Smart Ink, the teacher participant will differentiate Smart Ink properties when in and not in Notebook. The teacher participant will be able to capture any non-Notebook (Application or Desktop) digital Ink in a Smart Notebook file 100% of the time.

Goal 4: Given a computer with Smart Notebook Learning Suite open and 2 or more objects on a page, the teacher participant will be able to group and/or order, and/or lock the objects 100% of the time. The teacher participant will compose unique objects that they will use in their classroom setting.

Goal 5: Given success with creating and using objects for Notebook, the teacher participants will critique other teacher participant created objects. (This is the start of the Smart Notebook PLC.)

IV. Develop: Constructing activities to achieve the goal

Goal 1: Given a Smart Board (with USB and A/V cables connected), the teacher participant will be able to connect their own laptop to the Smart Board so that interactivity works and the board is oriented in less than two minutes.

Learning Activity 1 - Connectivity:

- Display Notebook page “Classroom Wall Plate” (Image is the customer’s standard wall plate.)
- Pull the HDMI cable from Trainer laptop and ask teacher/participants to observe what happens. Trainer will continue to write on Smart Board and ask teachers to observe laptop screen. Reinforce HDMI connection carries both Video and Audio to the Smart Board
- Pull the USB cable from the Trainer laptop (after reconnecting the HDMI). Note while video is displayed, interactivity has been lost.
- Select teacher/participant to bring their laptop to the Smart Board. Subject will properly connect the device to the Smart Board and launch Notebook Learning Suite. Subject will verify Video/Audio connection works and Interactivity works.
- During the first break, teacher/participants will each connect their laptops to the available Smart Boards to verify connectivity.

Learning Activity 2 – Orient the Board:

- Display Notebook page “Orient Your Smart Board”
- Demonstrate a symptom that would require the board to be oriented.
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➢ Choose a teacher/participant to “volunteer” to orient the Smart Board currently in use
➢ Explain using “slide the pen to the center of the dot and let go” method
➢ As follow-up, teacher/participants are to connect their laptop to the Smart Board in their classroom and orient the board.

Goal 2: Given a computer properly connected to the Smart Board, the teacher participant will launch Notebook Learning Suite and will recognize and locate Notebook Learning Suite’s Tools and Tabs with 90% accuracy.

Learning Activity 1 – Launch Notebook Learning Suite

➢ Show teacher/participants where to find and launch Smart Notebook Learning Suite. (Desktop, All Programs, Smart Icon in Icon Tray)
➢ Display Notebook page “Smart Notebook Software” (Which besides showing the Notebook components, demonstrates a “reveal information” technique having objects fade away when touched.)

Learning Activity 2 – Finding Tools in Notebook

➢ Focus now switches to “Finding Tools in Notebook”. (This Notebook page contains links to other pages in the Notebook file. This permits the Trainer to discuss another method of directing focus and to demonstrate a technique which will be seen more formally later in the training.)
➢ Using Teacher/Participant volunteers, have volunteer try these tools and view the contextual menu associated with each tool.
   o Pen Tool
   o Shapes Tool
   o Polygon Tool
   o Text Tool
   o Line Tool
   o Fill Tool
   o Eraser Tool
➢ Summarize and reflect the Contextual Tool bar using the Notebook Page “Tools Panel”
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➢ Teacher/Participants independently complete the exercise “Learning the Tools”
➢ Trainer is available to visit each participant and ask relevant or probing questions about how to apply this knowledge to the teacher’s classroom learning environment.

Goal 3: Given a computer with Notebook Learning Suit and Smart Ink, the teacher participant will differentiate Smart Ink properties when in and not in Notebook. The teacher participant will be able to capture any non-Notebook (Application or Desktop) digital Ink in a Smart Notebook file 100% of the time.

Learning Activity 1 – Capture Desktop Digital Ink

➢ Display Notebook page “Either in Notebook or Not”
➢ Ask for input”
  o How can you tell if you are in the Smart Notebook Learning Suite?
  o What types of tools are available?
  o What about writing with digital ink – what happens when you write with digital ink on a Smart Notebook page?
➢ Minimize Smart Notebook to the taskbar. I need a “volunteer” to imagine you are at the Smart Board with the Desktop on the screen and you just had the “best idea ever”! Pick up a pen from the pen tray and write it down.
➢ Explore what happens when one “writes with digital ink” on the Desktop.
➢ Now what? Can this writing be “captured” and saved? (Volunteer is still at the Smart Board.) Let volunteer capture the digital note and show how it was saved to a Notebook page.
➢ Compare and contrast how writing with digital ink on the Desktop is different than writing with digital ink in Notebook.

➢ Learning Activity 2 – Screen Capture Toolbar
➢ Ask “If we are able to capture digital ink and images say from a web page, how might that be useful to you?” – “Might that capability be valuable?” – “If you capture images and writing, how might that change your teaching presentation?” – Responses will be left open-ended for a couple of minutes.
➢ Display Notebook pages that refer to Capturing Images. Demonstrate where the Image Capture tool can be found and what the image capture choices are.
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Learning Activity 3 – Capture Digital Ink and other notes on an Application

➢ Request a teacher/participant volunteer.
➢ Task for Volunteer
  o Launch a browser and navigate to a url you might use with your students.
  o Choose a pen from the pen tray and make some digital ink notes or writing on the web page (Questions: Are you literally writing on the web page?, Can you erase the digital ink?, Nice job erasing! Now use the pen to make some more notes on the web page.
  o Launch the Screen Capture tool bar.
  o Use one of the screen capture tools to capture whatever it is you would like to capture.
  o Volunteer will save capture to a Notebook page
➢ Revisit initial questions for this section of the training: Ask “If we are able to capture digital ink and images say from a web page, how might that be useful to you?” – “Might that capability be valuable?” – “If you capture images and writing, how might that change your teaching presentation?”
➢ Ask for another teacher/participant volunteer to come to the Smart Board to run an application and to write with digital ink on the application and then screen capture the notes.
➢ Compare and Contrast Digital Ink use in Smart Notebook, Desktop, and an application.
➢ Teacher/Participants independently will do the Exercise “Writing with Digital Ink”

Goal 4: Given a computer with Smart Notebook Learning Suite open and 2 or more objects on a page, the teacher participant will be able to group and/or order, and/or lock the objects 100% of the time. The teacher participant will compose unique objects that they will use in their classroom setting.

Learning Activity 1 – Grouping 2 or more objects

➢ What are objects when it comes to Smart Notebook? Let’s insert some objects on a page. (Insert a star, circle, and handwrite “star” and convert “star” to text)
➢ We have 3 objects. What can we do with these three objects?
➢ Marquis Select – show the marquis select and then group the three objects as one. Show how to ungroup grouped objects. Also, demonstrate “shaking” select objects to group and ungroup.

Learning Activity 2 – Why do we group objects?

➢ Explore “Why do we want to be able to group objects?”
  o Make new objects
  o Pull Tabs
  o Hide information off page
  o Other ideas...

Learning Activity 3 – Locking Objects

➢ Show what can go wrong when students try to move objects. Explain we want to minimize the “technical glitches” that can occur when students interact with the Smart Board. We want to
eliminate or minimize possible frustration. As best we can we want to
insure a successful student experience.
➢ Show Notebook page(s) concerning “locking”
➢ Discuss advantages of “lock item in place” and “lock allow move”
➢ Teacher/Participants will do theExercise “Shapes, Images, and Grouping Lab”

**Goal 5:** Given success with creating and using objects for Notebook, the teacher participants will critique other teacher participant created objects. *(This is the start of the Smart Notebook PLC.)*

**Learning Activity 1 — Teacher/Participants will create a Notebook activity and use with their class**

➢ Teacher/Participants were provided a checklist of Notebook skills and tools to utilize to create a Smart Notebook lesson for their class.
➢ Trainer was scheduled to attend Notebook classroom presentations as a “coach”
➢ Trainer was permitted to take advantage of “teachable moments” in the classroom and to offer suggestions
➢ Trainer took pictures of important moments of the presentation
➢ Trainer provided a written assessment of the lesson and included any other thoughts and suggestions to extend the teacher’s Notebook knowledge.

**Learning Activity 2 — Follow-up group session with Teacher/Participants.**

➢ Objective of session is to look at different classroom implementations of Notebook and to provide constructive feedback to each other
➢ Other stakeholders were invited to attend so entire community could be present, *(Some Administrative stakeholders did attend at least part of the session.)*
➢ Trainer emphasizes good techniques and asks questions such as:
  o Did the Notebook page work as intended?
  o Did anything not work as expected?
  o What was the student response to interacting with the Smart Board?
  o What would you do differently to improve the presentation?
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- Did you see something in another teacher’s presentation that you might try in your own classroom?
  - At conclusion of session, Trainer sends email to Administrative stakeholders outlining the Teacher/Participant progress and encouraging these stakeholders to drop-in when a teacher is using Notebook and offer some positive feedback.

Additional Professional Development Opportunities:

Ideas that were implemented to help ensure the success of the training program included:

- The training schedule and the Class Visitation schedule were set. Substitutes were found for the participating teachers so that the sessions would remain predictable and consistent. Teachers could see the schools were supportive and schools valued the teachers’ efforts.
- It was made clear that coaching sessions were “classroom visitations” rather than “classroom evaluations”. Teachers were encouraged to view coaching as positive and to leverage teaching opportunities.
- Administrative stakeholders would be provided feedback regarding teachers’ progress and setbacks.
- Schedule and project communications would be coming from one person so that opportunities for missed communications would be minimized.
- Trainer would send pictures of teachers using Notebook to project stakeholders during the interim between training sessions to keep the momentum going.
- Pictures and sample Notebooks were shared with Teacher/Participants in the interim period between training sessions.

V. Implement: Putting your plan into action

Overview:

It is time for action within the implementation plan. During the actual implementation, don’t expect everything to go as you have planned. As trainers, we all can execute this implementation plan and assign people their tasks and deliver training sessions. In this section, we will focus on being flexible. If the process starts to go “off track” this does not mean that we should just stay the course. Time is precious and we want to ensure positive results for this implementation. Slight adjustments during implementation ensure that we don’t abandon the plan all together.

How will you ensure that your plan will work?

1. Trainer will minimize the chances and interruptions caused by technical difficulties.
   - Trainer will arrive 1 hour early and test the equipment.
   - Verify network and internet accessibility.
   - Verify Smart website is accessible.
   - Verify Smart Lab connectivity.
   - Verify power outlets are available for teacher/participant laptops
   - Verify everyone is running Notebook 16.

2. School District Stakeholder Support
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➢ About 2 weeks in advance of each training session, send proposed session outline to district stakeholders for input, calibration, and approval.

3. Teacher/Participant Readiness for Training Sessions
   ➢ 5 days in advance of the training session send teacher/participants a link to the Notebook that will be used for the training session.
   ➢ Provide teacher/participants links to video files that can be viewed before and/or after the training to provide additional ideas and support.
   ➢ Request input from Teacher/Participants about things they tried that did not work or concepts and tools they would like to learn about during the next session.

4. Tracking Progress of the implementation stage
   ➢ Teachers are provided a checklist of tools and skills to utilize during the coaching session. Trainer will track which skills and tools are utilized during the training session and then summarize this data in a spreadsheet to provide to all stakeholders and the teacher/participants.

➢ Raw Data from Classroom Visitations

➢ Summary Report provided to stakeholders and Teacher Participants
   • Trainer used feedback report to improve next training. The report revealed what skills/tools teacher were the most comfortable with and which ones they were least likely to utilize at the start.
   • The raw data revealed a teacher who was reluctant to utilize the Smart Board at all. A meeting was scheduled with that teacher/participant to gain insight that might help the person start to utilize the Smart Notebook products.
VI. Evaluate: Measure the impact made on your goals

Overview:

Some questions that you may want to think about during the evaluation stage are:

- Did you accomplish your goal?
  - Yes. The division stakeholders indicated the program succeeded beyond their expectations. The key seemed to be the communication process. Any input was considered and decision were consensus driven.

- What worked?
  - Sharing examples of teacher/participants Notebooks used in their class was well received.
  - During the training sessions, teacher/participants were provided time to explore the gallery and Smart Exchange. It was decided to provide time during the session for this purpose. Previously, the idea was for teacher/participants to explore on their own time. It was decided that it was likely that would not occur given how valuable teacher time is.
  - Using teacher/participant volunteers during the training session worked well. The trainer was modeling getting students engaged to promote the interactivity that can be achieved in the classroom.
  - The start of the Professional Learning Community. Besides meeting as a group to safely discuss success and fails, a common folder was established for teachers to share Notebooks and thus, learn from each other.

- What didn’t work?
  - Initially there some problems whitelisting the necessary websites to get Smart Lab to function correctly. The issue was determined to be a firewall issue at the Intermediate Unit (parent organization for this district) internet connection. The issue was eventually resolved but not in time for the start of the training session.

- Who was most successful with their implementation of the SMART Learning Suite and why?
  - Smart Lab! Teacher/participants liked the ability to “hand out” assignments. Each student at the middle and high school has and uses a Chromebook, so at these levels it made sense to capitalize on the ability to “hand out”.

- When do we start again?
  - This training program is unique. The subsequent training effort relative to Smart Notebook will be taken over by a school division resource. However, the effort was so successful, I have modified my normal full day training to include Notebook pages that were developed for this project. I have used these notebooks multiple times since this project ended with equal success.

Evaluate your plan: The Conclusion

This implementation plan went about as well as could be expected. The upfront communications and relationships with stakeholders helped insure a successful program. The fact he district is behind using their Smart Board investment was clearly visible as more Smart Boards were scheduled to be purchased and additional training was going to be available.
Another sign of success is a couple of the teachers took the initiative to develop specific Notebook activities directed at state standards that caught the attention of state representatives! These teachers are being permitted to hold a copyright to these materials and will share in any profits generated by these materials – that is quite novel.

Two teachers/participants never quite bought into the Notebook training program. While attempts were made to provide extra time and resources, it never took root and bloomed. I could have some success with one of the teachers showing him that Geogebra is a tool that he could use the Smart Board’s ability to provide interactivity. While Smart Notebook features a Geogebra feature, he was more impressed with using Geogebra directly as an application on his computer. We found several examples that permit interactivity and he said he was going to try that out with his students.

The self-directed Labs were another successful part of the program. Each lab provides the teacher/participant with the opportunity to try everything that was done during the training sessions. The lab exercises also challenged the teacher/participant to reflect and consider how the tools could be useful in their own classroom. These are lab/exercises I will carry forward in my future training opportunities.

If the training had not concluded in January 2017, there is one thing I would add to the plan and that is what the differences between Notebook 16.n and Notebook 17. The best I can do is to send information to my division contact and I will do that. But at the time, it was decided that the division would go with Notebook 16.n until the end of the school year.