

DVR IT Committee Minutes

April 21, 2021

VIRTUAL GOOGLE MEET

2:00 – 3:00 pm

I. Introductions

Tony Pecucci (Leyden), Michael Henson (Triton), David Anderson (Triton), Neil Posmer (Elmwood Park), Stephanie Sneath (Ridgewood), Dan Renaud (Proviso West)

II. Conference or Webinar Attendance Sharing - Past and Future?

Triton attended CyberCon, which is a free virtual conference focusing on cybersecurity. While much of the conference was framed towards careers, it was worth noting that the demand for cybersecurity professionals is still high and in demand. Ridgewood attended the K-12 Computer Science Summit, where much of the discussion was about what “computer literacy” actually means from the state level and district level. This is in reference to HB 2170 and some new language for computer literacy requirements. There is also a Computer Science “Unconference” on Saturday, 4/24 that all can attend - it will include some CTF competitions and ideas for teachers.

III. New Triton Developments/Possible Dual Credit Update/Information (Triton)

Triton shared that they continue to work on more dual credit opportunities. Some in the works involve a certificate for A+ and MOS that will hopefully allow students to gain certification/experience and immediately look for employment. Triton also shared they are working to continue to update curriculum to be more relevant with today’s marketplace. A discussion was held over looking at a Cybersecurity Dual Credit opportunity, as both Ridgewood and Leyden are now teaching Cybersecurity. This will be moved on in future weeks.

IV. Coding/Programming Updates/Ongoings

Leyden shared that they are looking for other avenues to involve students in coding/programming, including developing games for virtual reality ([Developing for VR](#)). Triton shared they are streamlining their Visual Basic course from two classes to one class, as this is an introduction to visual programming for most students. Triton is also looking to offer/market their Android Development as there has been some interest from students. Ridgewood shared they are having some success with [CMU Academy](#), in terms of teaching Python. Besides coding, this program allows students to visually see how their programming makes changes - which has assisted more students in understanding the context.

Proviso West brought up the discussion on which programming language is a good starting point. Currently, they are using Notepad ++ and teaching Java programming. The group discussed why Python is a good starting language - and is based on industry recommendations. Proviso West also shared they are using PowerApps by Microsoft - which was a quick/easy way to develop database applications.

V. Cybersecurity Updates/Ongoings

Leyden shared that they will have 4 sections of Cybersecurity next year - the most ever. That said, the group discussed various curriculum programs available with a focus on a solid base understanding - and hands on learning in a "sandbox" environment. Programs such as CodeAcademy, CodeHS, TestOut, Cyber.org were discussed. Ridgewood currently teaches using the PLTW curriculum. Triton has been using TestOut to great success in a virtual environment. Ridgewood also brought up [this curriculum](#) that some schools are using. Either way, all agreed the curriculum must have some scenario/hands on activities to get students the skills they need to pursue at the next level.

VI. Certification Ongoings

Most schools continue to offer certifications in some shape or form. All agreed they are still important, although there has been no changes to offerings since the last meeting. Some of the cybersecurity certifications are now being used to gain entry level positions in the industry.

VII. [Leyden Tech Advisory Meeting from 2/21 \(Research Portion\)](#)

Leyden shared some research that was shared with their Leyden Tech Advisory on 2/21/21. Some glaring things come out of the research and the current state of the market; but in summary, the group agreed that "skills are king". Triton is working on various one year certificates that will allow students to gain skills and immediately be employable - which is what the market is looking for. While college degrees in the IT field are important, most we have spoken with (and the research shows) state that if a student has the skills to do the job - their education level will not matter. Ridgewood brought up the [Center for IT Acceleration](#) program at Chicago City Colleges as a model to start looking how to get our students moving quicker into the industry.

VIII. [Illinois Retired Teachers Grant](#)

The group went over this grant and had a general discussion on how grant funds are available. Leyden has written and received 4 grants in the last two years. This is mostly due to lack of competition as many do not want to take the time to complete the grant applications.

IX. [Top 10 Work-From-Home, Remote IT Jobs Right Now: CompTIA](#)

The group looked over and discussed this latest report from CompTIA. This report shows the states where IT positions are the highest, in addition to the most in demand positions in the current remote market.

X. [DVR Perkins Goals/Strategies](#)

The group reviewed the DVR Perkins Goals/Strategies as a way to guide their grant requests, along with the current relevant needs for students. The group bookmarked this information to ensure they are coming back to it when necessary.

XI. Other

XII. Adjourn