

Change Action Plan: Eliminating Computer Labs

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Desired Change:

I propose that my elementary school should no longer have an individual room set aside for a computer lab. By eliminating the computer lab, teachers will be more likely to integrate technology into their classrooms and curriculum, rather than isolating it.

Areas of Resistance:

Many teachers will state that schools have *always* had computer labs, and that is the way it should always be. One of the biggest resistances to change is the fear of that change. Teachers may also be concerned about sharing a specific number of laptop carts among the classrooms, as currently the carts only hold 14 laptops apiece. Additionally, busy teachers may believe it hard to find extra time to schedule in laptop use in their classroom, as opposed to having two pre-set computer lab times.

Potential Adopters:

- * Classroom teachers (K-6) and principal at Bluemont Elementary
- * USD 383 District Technology Staff
- * USD 383 District Curriculum Coordinators

Rationale & Explanation of Change:

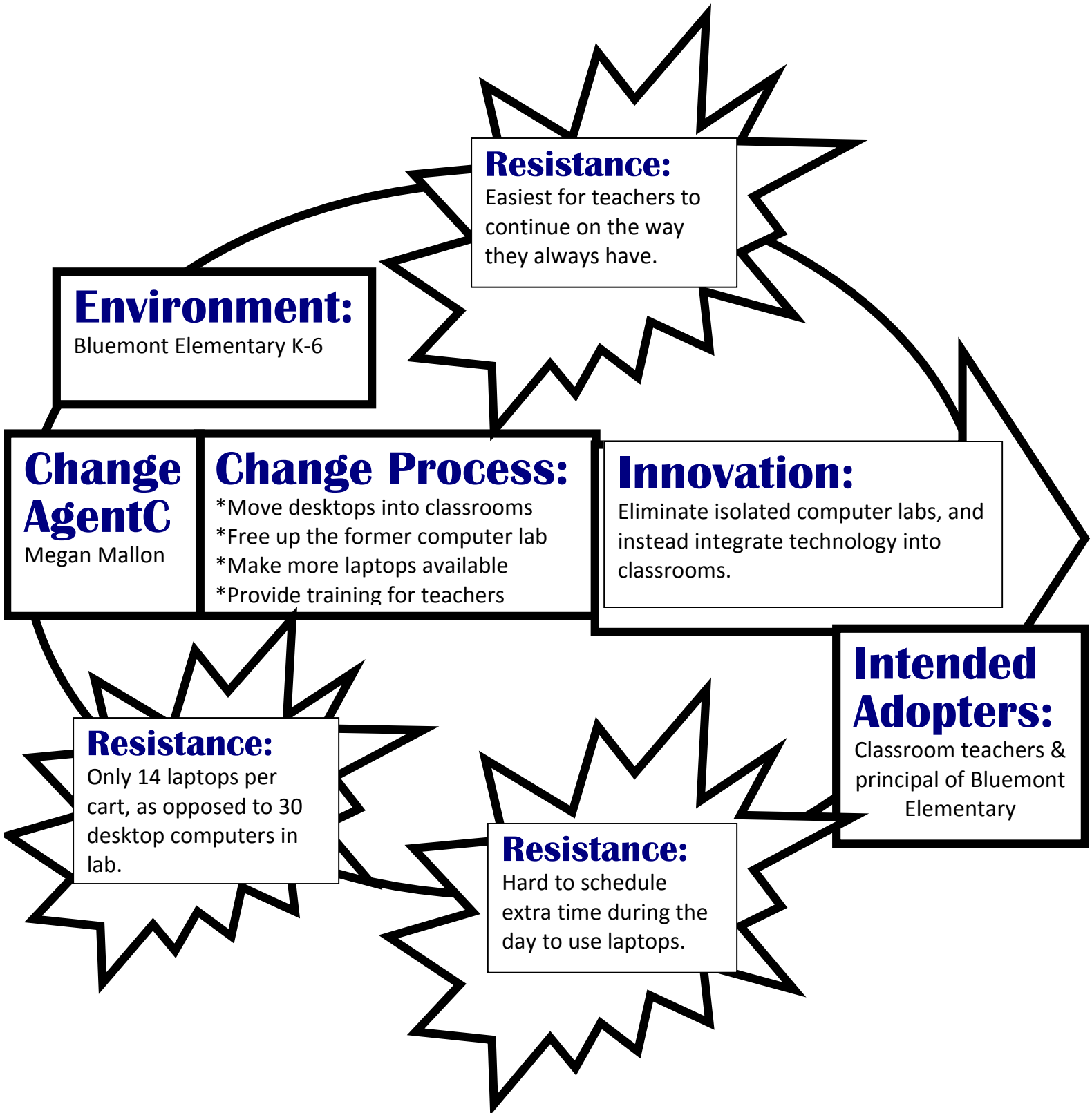
While some teachers may be reluctant to change the system, removing isolated computer labs from elementary schools is the next step in integrating technology completely into classrooms. Learning that occurs separately, as that in a computer lab would occur, is more likely to shorten students' memories of the

concepts (“Change Issues in Curriculum and Instruction/Isolation” 2007). Look at the example of a 3rd grade class studying Native American tribes. With the old system, if a teacher wanted students to watch a dramatization of a hunting tribe on the internet, the teacher would need to schedule a time outside of class to go to the computer lab. With the proposed change, all a teacher would need to do is pull out laptops, allow students to watch in groups, and then the class could blog about what they watched. Students are getting more hands-on computer experience, in the midst of their learning environment, and that is so important (Montgomery, 2010).

Another incentive for teachers is the extra time wasted going to the computer lab. There may be approximately 10 minutes (both ways) in a day of lining up, walking through the hallway, and waiting for a previous class to finish their scheduled time. Valuable instruction time is lost daily for this reason. What if an assembly was planned during a teacher’s scheduled computer lab time? These are issues that could be avoided by eliminating the computer lab and moving the computers into classrooms instead.

As with any change, it will take time. Teachers will need the opportunity to realize the benefits of integrating technology rather than isolating it. As Ellsworth says, change is not a linear, straight-forward model (Ellsworth, 2000). Different approaches to completing this change may be needed, but with the buy-in of classroom teachers, the integration of technology into classrooms can be successfully implemented.

Graphic Depiction: The Change Communication Model (Ellsworth, 2000)



References:

- “Change Issues in Curriculum and Instruction/Isolation.” WikiBooks. 2007. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.. Retrieved 17 February 2011, from http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Change_Issues_in_Curriculum_and_Instruction/Isolation
- Ellsworth, J. (2000). *Surviving change: a survey of educational change models*. [p. 35]. (ERIC Digest).
- Montgomery, B. (2010, April 20). School receives mobile computer lab. *The North Jefferson News*, Retrieved from <http://www.njeffersonnews.com/schools/x993504900/School-receives-mobile-computer-lab>