



*By Jenny Grabiec, M.Ed.
Apple Distinguished Educator &
Director of Instructional Technology*

Ms. Patti Weiss and I are thrilled to announce that our very first “Techspert Bar” opened in the Media Center on March 23! The Techspert Bar is a Fletcher version of an Apple Genius Bar, but is run by our Middle and Upper School students or “Techsperts.” Faculty and staff have been invited to use the Techspert Bar every Monday from 3:00-3:45 p.m. to ask questions about using their devices, specifically iOS and Mac apps, web tools and Google Apps for Education. Faculty



and staff members can even earn “Tech Tuesday” professional development credits for visiting the Techspert Bar four separate times. The Techspert Bar gives our students the opportunity to offer our teachers professional development on technology skills that are necessary within our 1:1 school.

The Techsperts were invited to serve on our inaugural team based on recommendations from faculty and staff. These talented students were recommended due to their technology expertise and interest in the classroom. Their diverse skill sets have allowed the Techsperts to focus on projects, such as 3D printing, website development, graphic design, tech support and more. Most recently the Techsperts had the opportunity to work with our Information Systems Engineer, Mr. Allen Vaughn, as he updated our Apple TVs.

Having a Techspert Bar run by students is a tremendous leadership opportunity for them. By providing an important service to our school community, students are learning technical and people skills that are valuable and empowering. The Techsperts have taken lessons from the Apple Store by creating a clean, open, and uncluttered space that is welcoming and calm. The Techsperts receive training from Ms. Weiss and me to help them develop customer service skills, teamwork, technology, and mentoring skills.

Our main goal in creating the Techspert Bar was to encourage a “student-led culture” where responsibility, teamwork, and problem-solving is evident. We want students to develop confidence in problem solving by brainstorming potential answers to clients’ sometimes difficult questions. The Techsperts are currently working on managing their new Twitter account (@techspertbar), developing a YouTube account for sharing tutorials, creating business cards, designing photo IDs with lanyards and even producing a commercial using iMovie. Stay tuned for great things from this innovative group!