

QUARTERS FEEDBACK

This past Monday, the Pixel Pushers hosted ETC faculty and visitors for our Quarters Walk-around. Quarters marks the one-fourth point of a project's cycle, and is an extremely valuable opportunity to have an honest, ungraded discussion regarding what's been done in the first month of work, and what the rest of the semester looks like.

Very quickly, we made a major change regarding our vocabulary. Many of the faculty had pointed out that what we had been calling the "evaluation tool" was misleading, and it became clear that we should be more precise in its label and its capabilities. As such, we've started calling it a "metric collection tool." The tool itself is not capable of making evaluations, but provides useful data

and visualization to a teacher. In turn, that teacher can use that data to draw conclusions about how students performed and behaved.

The more important and overwhelming feedback we took from the afternoon was a concern about our future directions. Up to that point, our only major concrete deliverable was the metric collection tool. The faculty was more interested in finding out where Minecraft has been used and can be used in the classroom. They also pointed out that our team's strengths, skillsets, and passions lent themselves to a more research- and design-oriented deliverable.

CLIENT CALL AND FUTURE DIRECTION

On Thursday, we presented a new goal for the semester to our client. Going forward, our main deliverable would be a research map of K-12 education in the U.S. This map would include subjects and concepts that have already been taught in Minecraft (and their perceived effectiveness) as well as concepts that are strong candidates for MinecraftEdu lessons. As an important part of this research, the team would create a set of lessons to be taught in the classroom and playtested locally. Considering our previous experience with Elizabeth Forward Middle School and its teachers, we targeted that grade range for our content creation. The client was extremely receptive and agreeable, so we've gotten back to work with a renewed passion.

We're also continuing work on the metric collection tool – playtesting our own lessons alongside the metric collection tool with teachers can give us valuable, pragmatic data

about the tool's interface and usefulness in real-world scenarios. Going forward, our programmers will be splitting time between the metric collection tool and lesson design so that our MinecraftEdu lessons can use custom modifications. One such feature is a "Quiz Block" – requested by our client and many teachers, and something we'd also find valuable to include in our own lesson designs.

