

# The Genius Bar Goes to School: Informal Student Support for Technology

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## The basics

In many schools, students provide informal, as-needed technology support to other students, educators, and campus staff. By learning the lessons of the Apple “Genius Bar®,” schools can leverage student interest in technology to create a support system for computers, software, and hardware that is run and managed by students. With training and a commitment to service, students can help create a culture of collaborative support and high expectations for technology use by all.

This document is written to help schools plan and implement student-led and student-run Genius Bar-style programs. It is a collection of information primarily gathered from Generation YES schools across the U.S. where students provide this service. However, the advice in this document does not require that your school be a Generation YES member school.

*GenYES schools will see the comments in blue throughout the document about using the GenYES tools and curriculum to support Genius Bars.*

### What is a “Genius Bar”?

The “Genius Bar” is an area in Apple Stores where customers can come with problems, ask questions, and get help. If you have been in an Apple Store, you know this is not like the usual Service Desk or a dark lab strewn with tools and parts. It’s a simple, clean table where customers and staff can talk with ease. It’s a place where customers can get help with a broken computer, but can also get a lesson on how to get their photos from their phone into their computer.

### Why is this a good model for technology support in schools?

For schools, this is a wonderful model of informal, friendly support. Having a Genius Bar signals that getting help with technology is not a shameful thing or the result of making a mistake; it is just a part of everyday life. Often placed in the library, two or three students are available to help other students, teachers, or anyone with any kind of computer issue or question they have.

Many “tech support” issues in school are not really about fixing broken things. They are simply people – both students and staff – who need a reminder about how things work or questions answered. Providing a service like a Genius Bar may free up time that tech support personnel spend on these issues, and therefore increase the time they can spend on “real” tech support.

Finally, having a Genius Bar run by students is a leadership opportunity for students. By providing an important service to their community, students can learn technical and people skills that are valuable and empowering.

### **Who should be Geniuses?**

Students who staff the Genius Bar can (and should) be all kinds of students. Do not assume that only gifted students or techies will be good at providing this service. Try to recruit a wide variety of students that cross boundaries of the usual groups. This will provide many benefits.

- Students will see that there are many different problem-solving styles.
- Students who are highly technical may see that students who can communicate well are extremely valuable. Learning the value of empathy, patience, and communication can be an eye-opener.
- Students who may not be as strong technically may find that they learn technology better by teaching others and that “all of a sudden” they know a lot more than they thought they did.
- “C” students may prove to be better at troubleshooting than “A” students and this is a learning experience for both.
- At-risk or students with learning disabilities may need extra help to participate, but can often gain self-esteem that is very helpful in all aspects of school.
- Students who are differently abled can prove to be extremely valuable, especially if they can become experts in assistive and adaptive technology.

It will be up to you whether you require students to maintain a minimum GPA, have a no “Ds” policy, no unsatisfactory citizenship grades, or other requirements. Be sure that you apply any such rules quickly and fairly, and keep the door open if students get back on track.

### **Who comes to the Genius Bar?**

Students and staff should be invited to use the Genius Bar to ask questions about using their computers, how to use any technology tools, especially school-provided technology or software. It is especially important to make the staff feel welcome to use the Genius Bar. This kind of teacher interaction with students benefits both. It breaks down stereotypes on both sides. It helps teachers see students as competent and serious about being helpful. Students also benefit when they see teachers as human beings and learn how to behave as a respectful peer to an adult.

The Genius Bar can serve as a model of a collaborative, cooperative learning community, where shared knowledge and collegial relationships are what matters.

### **What kinds of issues should the Genius Bar handle?**

Genius Bar students should expect to answer questions about software, hardware, and computer use.

- By nature, most of the questions will be about using computers in school. However, there should not be a rule that only school-related questions are allowed. Especially in 1:1 schools, the computer is a personal device that is used for both school and non-school functions. Helping people feel more comfortable

about their personal technology use may result in them using the computer or mobile device more for academics.

- Students should be trained not to answer questions that violate school policy (like getting around Internet filters) or are against the law (stealing software, illegal downloads, etc.) Students should practice how to handle these kinds of requests in training sessions.
- Students should not try to provide tech support with no training. This is something that will have to be addressed in training. There are more details about this later in this document.

## Hours

The Genius Bar does not have to be open the entire time the school or library is open, or even during class hours. Having it staffed during lunch and/or before and after school is a good way to start your program. As your program expands, you can add hours. Be sure to clearly post your hours so people start to rely on you being there.

Students should work regular shifts of at least 20 minutes. Don't rely on "drop in" staffing, or try to manage students working for 5 minutes and then leaving. Have students sign in and out and keep good records of who is actually there.

As your program grows, you may have students who can work the Genius Bar during a free period or even as an independent study class.

## How many Geniuses do you need?

Every school can come up with the plan that works best for them. But often, the Genius Bar is in the library and staffed by 2-3 students who rotate hours while the library is open. Two or three students is optimal; more than that can result in the students having too much free time and getting into trouble, and only one on duty means no backup or collaboration opportunities.

The total number you need will be determined by how many hours the Genius Bar will be open, and how available students will be during those hours. To start, it is best to keep the number of students involved small enough to manage and establish the club, 10-15 is a good number to shoot for in the first year. More than this number of students becomes a logistical hurdle of scheduling, training, and managing. It is more important that you establish a good relationship with students and get to know them well. In subsequent years, these numbers can adjust once everyone has a bit of experience in what it really takes to do this.

## Getting started

Start small and get something going. Don't try to tackle everything all at once, you run the risk of everyone being overwhelmed. For example, publicity is a good idea, but get something going first and then you will have some success to talk about. You may want

to hand pick just a few students who you already know to get started. This may mean that your Genius Bar is open just a few lunch periods a week, but that's a good start.

Hold at least one formal training session for incoming Genius Bar students and go over basics: rules, introduction to technology, and expectations. Training should not end there; it is an ongoing experience. Students will learn on the job and from each other, and also from regular meetings with all Genius Bar students.

Think about the people you need to get on board to make this work. Don't try to just start this by yourself with no other colleagues or administration support.

Work out the kinks, get your administration to support it, and document some small successes. Building your full vision will be easier with a solid foundation to start.

#### Things to think about:

- Who do you need to talk to and convince about this?
- How will you recruit your first group of Genius Bar students?
- Will your Genius Bar take appointments?
- How long will student shifts be? What will be the checkin/checkout procedures?
- What will the qualifications be for Genius Bar students?
- Will there be contracts or parental permission required?
- Will you be the one monitoring the students during Genius Bar hours?

### The space

Set up your Genius Bar in the library, media center, or other common area. Make sure that the space you choose is easily accessible and open to a lot of people. You will need to provide the students with computers so they can easily look up answers to questions, and space for students to sit down with their clients while solving a problem. There will need to be space for clients to set their computers down, power outlets, good wireless signal strength, or Ethernet cables to plug into.

This area may be near to the place where students already go to get tech support, but this is not always optimal. People should feel they can come to the Genius Bar anytime for help, not just when things are broken. Tech support can be intimidating to some people who may feel like going there is an admission of guilt or that they shouldn't waste tech support personnel time on basic questions.

#### Calm, open, and people-oriented

Take a lesson from the Apple store. The Genius Bar is clean, open, uncluttered, and makes it easy to stand next to the person who is helping you. Their "dirty" lab where they actually open up and fix broken computers is hidden behind closed doors. This is done for an important reason. *The Genius Bar is about people, not stuff.* The uncluttered,

clean surfaces radiate calmness – exactly what people need when they are worried about their technology not working or feeling slightly sheepish about asking a “silly” question.

Having the School Genius Bar in an open communal area serves multiple purposes:

- Open spaces encourage collaboration and an atmosphere of informal learning.
- There should be a responsible adult in the vicinity, but not hovering. Using existing spaces makes it more likely that there is already a teacher or staff member around.
- Students and staff will notice that the Genius Bar is available through casual contact and when they need it, it won't feel like a special trip.
- Seeing people use the Genius Bar will encourage more people to try it.

While the library may be a good place for the Genius Bar, everyone is going to have to understand that a Genius Bar cannot be run silently. The activity at the Genius Bar is about collaboration, communication, and sharing information. The balance will be in keeping the communication at an appropriate volume.

### It's not a clubhouse

It is best if the Genius Bar is not used as a club meeting area. The “club” activities, training, meetings, etc. should be in a separate area. People who come to the Genius Bar should never feel they are walking into a space that is not for them. Make sure students who are at the Genius Bar learn that their behavior is a signal for others. Talking and whispering in the group, sitting in a closed circle, or filling the space with their belongings signals that other people should not enter. Students should not “hang out” at the Genius Bar if they are not scheduled to work.

If you do not have this kind of communal space, think about the setting up your Genius Bar in the computer lab, outside, or even in a classroom. However, you will have to address the issues of supervision, atmosphere, and getting people to use it.

### Things to think about:

- Where will the Genius Bar be? Where will meetings and trainings be?
- Is the space adequate?
- Who do you have to work with to make this happen?
- If there are other computers in the lab, are Genius Bar students going to be walking over to these other areas to help?

## Training

Training is crucial to having a successful Genius Bar. Focus training on:

- **Number one** - customer service
- **Second** – teamwork, technology, and mentoring skills

Of course, training should also cover the responsibilities of being a Genius Bar student, rules, policies, and expectations. The initial training sessions should be short, just enough to cover this material quickly. All of these topics should be reinforced at team meetings held throughout the year.

### **Customer service training**

The genius of the Apple Genius Bar is as much in the attitude as anything else. Make sure that students learn to greet people, ask what the problem is, and answer all questions with a smile. There is no such thing as a stupid question. Refer to the people who come to ask for help as “clients” or “customers”. Measure success by the outcome of client satisfaction, not just problems solved.

The motto of the Genius Bar should always be, “We are here to help, and if we don’t know the answer, we’ll find out together.”

Monitor students closely as they interact with clients, especially when they are new. Arrange your work teams so that new Genius Bar trainees are paired with veteran students.

Model your own communication so the students can see how you handle situations, and praise students publically who have good interaction skills. Point out explicitly what they did that was exemplary. For example, instead of “Way to go Jenny!” -- say “Jenny, the way you explained how to use the Google calendar was so clear. I really liked how you asked the student to add a class due date before she left. You made sure she understood what you were saying and could do it herself.” This not only gives Jenny information about what she did right, but also gives any other student in earshot a lesson in how to provide good service.

*GenYES schools can use the mentoring activities and role playing scripts in the Learn section to teach mentoring skills.*

If you are going to use a feedback form to collect ratings from customers, discuss that in your trainings. The goal should not be to fear these ratings or cajole people into giving high ratings, but to use this feedback to learn how to do a better job.

### **Teamwork and mentoring**

Teamwork should also be a focus during training and meetings. Troubleshooting is not a solitary activity! Icebreaker games can be a fun way to encourage teamwork. Teaching about mentoring can take the form of role playing, or having students reflect on the way they learn best. Students will often say that they learn by doing, so encourage them to mentor others this way. Have students brainstorm best practices for helping others, such as not grabbing the mouse away from the person you are trying to help, being encouraging, asking questions instead of lecturing them, etc.

Be careful that the team spirit does not create a “bullpen” atmosphere at the Genius Bar that will discourage people from coming up and asking for help.

### **Technology training**

The basics that training should cover for technology should include:

- Using school server space, networks, logins, email, retrieving passwords
- Simple hardware issues – rebooting, syncing, updating apps, etc.
- Using school accounts or services (Google docs, Learning management systems, video services, library services)
- Citation, copyright friendly images, rules about using intellectual property
- Internet search strategies
- Acceptable Use Policies (such as who can download files)
- What to do if the Internet filter is triggered
- Troubleshooting skills – diagnose, isolate, and test

More advanced training can cover specific software, basic tech support, and finding specialty media, images, videos, etc.

Once the Genius Bar starts up, you will find out more about the typical issues and questions that people bring up and refocus your training to meet these needs. Also, as you have more veteran students, you can have them run mini-training sessions for new students on areas where they have developed expertise.

*GenYES schools can find lessons and handouts for all these topics in the curriculum activities in the Learn section.*

### **Things to think about:**

- Where and when will students be trained and hold regular meetings?
- Do you have the skills and information needed to train students? If not, who can you partner with to do this?
- Will the school’s Acceptable Use Policies allow for this type of student support? If not, what will you do about that?

### **Customer service**

Practice and model interactions at training sessions and follow up at meetings.

Acknowledge that there are clients who will be difficult to deal with, problems they won’t be able to solve, and situations where they may be over their heads. The challenge is how they handle the situation while maintaining their cool. Remember the motto is about how “we” will solve any problem as a team.

Veteran students can role-play the parts and show how to handle difficult situations and the rare unreasonable client. Let them take turns bringing in really tough problems to solve or pretending to be difficult.



## Dealing with difficult clients

In most cases, people who come to the Genius Bar are going to be glad they can get help quickly and will be fairly easy to deal with.

That said, there may be times when a client comes in with unreasonable expectations, is rude, or may be trying to show up or intimidate the Genius Bar students. The only way to learn to deal with these situations is to try to keep cool and call in the help of other students or adults as needed. The students should never feel that they have to solve every situation themselves. Students should also be taught that they can step in and help if they see a situation getting out of hand.

## Customer service feedback forms

Have a simple paper form at the Genius Bar with a short satisfaction survey. After a Genius Bar session, the student can write their names on a survey form and give it to each customer to fill out and deposit in a closed box. Surveys can be collected by the teacher and reviewed. In general, ratings should not be made public (like a leaderboard). This just encourages competition and gaming the system. Use the ratings in aggregate to discuss ways to improve as a team. Only review individual ratings or comments in private with the individual student.

*GenYES schools have access to customer service surveys as part of the TAP system.*

## Creating a culture of excellence

As time goes on, the Genius Bar will settle in and become part of the life and culture of the school. Take time to continually encourage students to take leadership roles inside the club and around the school. Challenge students with new responsibilities and new roles. Empower students by listening to their ideas and allowing them to lead the way whenever possible.

## Ongoing meetings

Have regular meetings where students can learn new skills, share expertise, and plan. Schedule times for students to present an interesting problem they encountered, whether they solved it or not, and take time to explore the issue. Keep up the “customer service first” attitude at all times, especially at your meetings. Don’t allow jokes about the dumb things people do with technology, or make fun of mistakes they make. Anyone who comes to you for help is a guest, not the butt of your inside jokes. Don’t let the Genius Bar students become a clique or cultivate an “us vs. them” attitude about other students.

Meetings should be informal with plenty of time for unscheduled interaction. Since students are discouraged from using their Genius Bar time as a club meeting, you will need to provide this time in other ways. You want your Genius Bar students to become friends and allies, but this needs to happen away from the Genius Bar.

## Student-led culture

Cultivate a culture where students can be comfortable presenting problems and brainstorming potential answers. Push responsibilities to students, so this becomes a student-led club. Move towards a student-led culture where “we” are responsible for what happens, rather than adults telling “us” what to do. Encourage responsibility, teamwork, and problem-solving by consensus. Listen to student suggestions and try to give them new challenges and responsibilities to match their personal goals.

Reinforce school policies regarding technology and teach students where the limits are. They may know how to get around school Internet filters, but they **MUST** follow school rules at the Genius Bar. Any Genius Bar students deliberately breaking school or district policy or misusing school equipment or services should be dealt with immediately. Put veteran students in charge of setting rules and meting out punishments for violations.

## Team spirit

Create a team name, logo, motto, and use these on your school webpage or any other material you create. Having a t-shirt, name badge, pin, button, vest, lab coat or lanyard that students wear while on duty can also be a student-led project. Make sure the students don't think it is dorky.

Reward students with benefits they get from any other school clubs or service-learning activities. Encourage students to write articles for the school newspaper, principals newsletter, website, or Facebook page showcasing your Genius Bar.

## Publicity

Let your team come up with publicity that will showcase their talents and attract more students or teachers to use the service. Post the hours that your Genius Bar is open around the school, on the website, and everywhere people can see it. Have students create a video advertising their services and play it at a school assembly or staff meeting. Create flyers for teachers to pass out at the beginning of the term offering help with technology related questions.

Document your work with photos, videos, and articles that you can show people. Be ready to show that the students aren't just goofing around and take their jobs very seriously.

- Mentions or “ads” in the school newspaper
- Invite local reporters to visit. You may get more interest if you make up an event of something they can film or photograph. For example, create a “challenge” like setting a record for most tech support problems solved in one day.
- Blog/newsletter: Some students may want to write articles or reviews about new hardware or apps and how students and teachers can use them. Set up a simple way for students to contribute, such as a Tumblr account and have students manage it.

- Set up a YouTube channel, Twitter account or Facebook page (if that is allowed) that gives quick tips on computer use and academic resources.

### **Downtime**

Make sure the students have something to do when they have no clients. Decide what they will do in that time and what the expectations are for staying in the area. There should be a clear list of things they are NOT allowed to do, like play games or text. Use the Apple store as an example – do you see those employees standing around texting? These rules should be developed by the students and policed by the students themselves.

This is something you will have to monitor closely, especially at first. You may find that some students (maybe all) aren't going to handle sitting behind a desk for more than a few minutes. This is something you can look at as a problem, but perhaps it is an opportunity! You can bring in some problems for them to investigate or do research on new technology, They can work on projects, update the website, or investigate new computer tips. Ask your veteran students to keep an eye on this and buddy up with newer students as they work on more difficult projects.

*GenYES schools can use the TAP system to assign longer-term projects to students so they always have something productive to do in downtime.*

### **Who manages the students?**

Typically, a teacher or staff member manages the students day to day, either in a club or class, plus facilitates student training and meetings. If students are getting credit for the time they spend as independent study, it may be district policy that a certified staff person be in charge. This person is a key factor in the success of the Genius Bar. First of all, they should want to do it. Running this group of students will be more like managing the band or putting on a play than it will be like teaching algebra class or doing tech support. Of course teaching skills will be important, but having a real passion for empowering young people is even more important. This is a club with the potential to change lives.

Being a “tech guru” is not as important as being willing to dive in with the students and figure out the answer to questions. This teacher or staff member should also have a good relationship with tech support staff on campus or at the district and be willing to liaison with them in planning the Genius Bar project.

An early decision to make is whether this one person will be in close proximity to the Genius Bar whenever it is open. If you plan to leave and have other adults (such as a librarian) be responsible for the students, you will have to have very solid plans about how much they will have to manage the students. There will be problems if the expectations are not clear and the librarian feels either overwhelmed or out of control. It may be best to keep one adult in charge until the Genius Bar is well established. In time, there will be veteran students who can take on roles of responsibility and management.

## **Integrating into the whole school**

### **Connect to tech support**

This is a crucial part of planning and sustaining the Genius Bar. You need to coordinate your Genius Bar plans with the school tech support personnel. In some schools, this may be you, which obviously makes it a lot easier! If not, you must agree upon the boundary between what the Genius Bar can handle and what needs to go to tech support.

There will be times when a problem comes to the Genius Bar that needs real tech support. Students **MUST** know what kinds of problems they should not attempt to handle. Even with the clearest rules, there will be things that aren't completely clear. You will have to coach students when and how to decide that a problem needs to be sent to tech support.

This is not a simple task! It's going to be difficult for some students to admit that they can't answer a question or quickly fix a problem and they may spend too much time working on something that is just too difficult for them.

One simple way is to have a time check of 5-10 minutes. If a student can't solve a problem in that time period, they must check in with a more senior Genius Bar student or the adult supervisor for a second opinion.

If a problem does need to be sent to tech support, make sure that the time already spent analyzing the situation is not wasted. The student should either walk the computer to the tech support lab and explain what is going on and what they have tried to do already. If they can't, they should write down these facts and send them and the computer to tech support.

It is important to have open channels of communication and clear expectations about what students can and can't do at the Genius Bar. These should be negotiated between the adult in charge of the Genius Bar and the tech support staff. There should be regular reviews of these rules to make sure they are working and communication of any problems.

### **Serving the whole school**

In many GenYES schools, students do not just sit at the Genius Bar waiting for problems, they are on-call to go anywhere in the school. If a teacher needs help in the classroom, for example, can they call the library and see if a Genius Bar student is available to help them? As your Genius Bar matures, there may be additional possibilities for the service students can provide. Students may think of some of these as well, and propose that the Genius Bar go mobile or even into the community.

### **Connect to the library**

The most common place for a Genius Bar in school is the library. If that's where you are, why not take advantage of it? Teach your Genius Bar students how the library functions

in addition to technology skills. Many libraries have transformed to technology hubs so this should be a natural thing.

- Buy some inexpensive digital picture frames and have students upload a rotating collection of tips (both about technology and the library)
- Have students create video podcasts about new library books to post on school website
- Update the library page on school website to be more interactive and up to date. Have a rotating assignment for a group of students to update the page regularly. Create a Facebook page for the library or have a Twitter feed with 140 character book reviews.

#### Things to think about:

- What is the relationship between the Genius Bar and the tech support at the school? If Genius Bar students discover a technical problem, what will they do?
- What is the relationship between the Genius Bar and the library/media center at the school? Have there been clear guidelines and expectations set about the Genius Bar sharing this space?
- Can Genius Bar students leave the area without supervision to assist a teacher or address a technical issue? Who will monitor this?

## Sustainability

### Recruit recruit recruit

It's very easy to settle in with a small group of students who become very tech savvy and indispensable, but they do grow up! Make it a regular part of the annual schedule to recruit new students to join the Genius Bar staff. Every workshop the students do should include some recruiting activities.

### Rewards, roles, and badges

Students should be able to advance in their responsibility by showing that they can be trusted to work independently, contribute to the group, and be a leader. Consider having titles for various roles that students can work towards.

- Rookie: Can only work the Genius Bar partnered with a mentor level student
- Genius: Has shown the capability to answer questions and provide a high level of customer support.
- Mentor: Mentors Rookie students one on one
- Creative: Is responsible for creating resources, tutorials, writing articles, etc.
- Team leader: Is responsible for training for groups of students in a particular area of expertise, scheduling, and helping to run the club
- Club leader: A single student who is the leader of the club and responsible for all activities.

These are only examples. You can use these kinds of level names, use military ranks, or choose names that match other school activities. Choose levels that show progression and create ceremonies for students that achieve new levels. However, not all levels need to be on the same path. Students may want to focus on mentoring others, the Genius Bar, or creating resources.

Try not to choose names that imply gender identification or are negative in any way. This should not be a hazing ritual!

As an alternate to roles, badges can be given to students who show mastery of certain areas of expertise. Students can become experts in different software applications, graphics, tech support, movie making, using cameras or high-end equipment, Google apps and docs, IWBs, or others.

Badges can be used in a different way than roles or titles. A student may wish to focus on becoming an expert in one type of application, but may not wish to be a mentor. Another student may love creating tutorials but not love being at the Genius Bar answering questions. Providing different paths to success is important to students, and by reducing the pressure to succeed in only one way, you may find that a student who does not want to mentor one year will come back the next year with the confidence to try it. However, if you pressure them about it, they may never come back.

## Academic and other types of credit

Consider giving students credit for the time they spend at the Genius Bar. Be sure that they get credit for actual time spent, not just for signing up or attending meetings. This can be a class that actually meets, or an independent study period.

In lieu of academic credit, it may be an option to give students graduation credit or have Genius Bar hours count towards a service-learning requirement or a senior project.

If students are getting academic credit for this experience, there are three extra things you may find helpful:

1. **Trouble tickets.** Having students document the help sessions. Document time spent, problem, solution, and other information. *GenYES schools can use the TAP system for this function. Schools without GenYES tools may wish to program a simple Google form that students can complete after each client session.*
2. **Customer service ratings.** Customer service ratings can be factored into a student grade. Take care that students are not gaming the system to get good reviews. *GenYES schools have access to the surveys as part of the TAP system.*
3. **Projects.** You can assign specific projects for them to complete over the class term. Projects can be things like: programming a form on the school website to

get input, creating help tutorials for applications, planning and implementing a workshop for students, teachers, or the community, etc. These projects should be proposed by the student and a timeline for deliverables should be agreed upon with the teacher in charge of the class. *GenYES schools can use the task and to-do list tools found on the left menu of the application. The GenYES tech support units in the Curriculum in the Learn section also have a number of suggestions for project management and assessment.*

Your grades can then be based on a combination of these assessments.

#### Things to think about:

- Will students get academic credit, graduation credit, service-learning credit or other forms of school credit?
- Will students be compensated?
- If students are getting credit, how will they be scheduled into the class? Do school guidance counselors understand what kind of class this is?

### About Generation YES

Generation YES is a non-profit organization that supports schools as they empower students to use technology to improve teaching and learning in their own schools. Our research-based resources provide implementation support and long-term sustainability. Learn more about Generation YES at: <http://www.genyes.org>

**GenYES** - Student-Supported Professional Development. Students in grades 4-12 provide tech support and partner with classroom teachers to build technology-infused lessons. GenYES offers curriculum and online project tracking tools to foster best practice student support of technology in every classroom.

**TechYES** - Student Technology Literacy Assessment. Students in grades 6-9 learn technology by creating authentic projects with help from peer mentors who are trained to assist students and assess projects. Powerful online tools support the project-based classroom with authentic assessment and Common Core standards. Curriculum and online resources help teachers teach technology through hands-on projects, culminating in a TechYES Certificate.

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