Finalist 'Best Coding Project'

Name: Marc Rowlinson
School: Northcross Intermediate School, Auckland
Name of coding project: MEGA Project

1. Describe the coding project that you want to be considered for the award?
The 'MEGA Project' was a student led concept that allowed them to study in an area of their own interest for 3 hours a week for 8 weeks. In my classroom I housed a set of Game Makers/coders. The brief was that the students had to work collaboratively to code their own game using whatever coding program they so desired. They students also had to be able to state the purpose of what they were learning and why they were doing it (other than for entertainment). The entire project was student led from the decision of what the game was going to be about to the format in which they chose to create the game in.

2. Why did you choose to use this project?
We chose this project in order to the give the students the opportunity to explore an area of interest and develop their skills of problem-solving and collaboration. It also allowed students from our team (4 classes) to call upon expertise/areas of interest from other teachers too in order to best facilitate their learning. Technology was too the catalyst for our project and allowed the students not to be restricted by the teacher's knowledge.

3. How did you implement and use this project?
We implemented this project across 4 classrooms (120 kids) for 3 hours a week (3 x 1 hour sessions). The students had to complete a proposal, a GANTT Chart, and have digital resource (site/blog) where they could share their progress and weekly reflections. The idea now is to have sharing afternoons in Term 4 where the students play each other's games and get feedback/feedforward.

4. What outcomes has it achieved for you and your class?
Each project has achieved its own individual successes, however collectively as a class of students the main outcomes have been these those of:
- Resilience- had to find the answers themselves
- Perseverance- game fixes, trying multiple solutions/scenarios, testing and developing
- Collaboration- had to work within their groups to complete, but also call on other in class experts for assistance and/or give assistance at times.
- Problem Solving- the students had to find the answers/solutions through their own means. Internet, trial and error, collaboration, help off classmates, emails. I was not an expert they could use!

All the students have individual blogs and sites but are linked through this site
https://sites.google.com/a/nxschool.kiwi/totara-challenge-site/mega-project?pli=1
Look under the Mega Project Games tab.