Glenbrook District 225
Technology Committee Minutes – November 15, 2013

Members Present: Bretag, Caliendo, Doughty, Geddeis, Pryma, Ptak, Riggle, Shein, Thimm, Wegley, Williamson

Members Absent: Hanley

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 a.m.

Chromebooks

Business Model

Dr. Ptak reviewed the current business model and costs associated with the Chromebooks.

Problems were experienced in getting the Chromebooks enrolled correctly. Efforts are being made to get the remaining devices enrolled properly. The Chromebook breakage rate is high because students put them into their backpacks with heavy textbooks which causes pixilation on the screen. When textbooks adoptions are discussed electronic textbooks may be proposed which would reduce the number of textbooks students need to carry in their backpack.

Samsung will not be selling or supporting parts for the current devices after next year. Chromebooks are improving in quality. We will be exploring options offered by other manufacturers such as Hewlett-Packard which offers a Chromebook with a titanium case. The committee briefly discussed Chromebook devices scheduled for future release and how Apps are added to devices.

The committee discussed the $1 buyout at the conclusion of the 2 year student rental. The administration believes two years is the correct lease length because the Chromebook may not be durable enough to last through a third year. A $1 buyout may be an incentive for students to take better care of their Chromebook. Another concern regarding the buyout is the parent may not want to buy a new device if they participate in the buyout.

The use of Chromebooks has been very positive; however some teachers permit students to use alternate devices in the classroom which results in problems when a teacher is not equipped to help with those devices. This results in students being paired up to share devices.

Timeline for Class of 2018

Recommendations for the Class of 2018 need to be made at the time of the educational review in early January or February so that it can be properly advertised. We won't have to purchase the device until early spring which will give the administration time to evaluate Chromebook options.

Timeline for Chromebook Education Review

A presentation regarding the educational impact of the Chromebooks will be made to the Board in January or early February.

InfoSnap

Mr. Bretag presented information on InfoSnap which is a secure software application which interfaces with PowerSchool, our student information system, and would allow parents to complete and submit forms required at booksale through the parent portal from home. Digital signoff check-boxes are used. Parents can print out or get a PDF of their completed forms. Currently the data entered on forms submitted at booksale must be manually entered into PowerSchool by staff. Often the staff member entering the data is unable to read the parent's handwriting and or the parent left questions unanswered which require staff to call the parent. Staff members may also make errors when entering the data. The use of this software would streamline the booksale process, but students would still have to go to booksale to pick up their books and take their ID pictures.

Data for incoming freshman students from feeder districts currently utilizing InfoSnap most likely will not be pre-populated in our system unless their data fields match ours.

Projected costs and savings were presented to the committee. Implementation takes approximately 90 days and we would like to use it in our residency process which begins in February. Board committee members recommended that the InfoSnap proposal be brought to the Board on December 2.

DocuSign

DocuSign is a software application used to electronically sign documents and sales contracts. The committee was provided information regarding the product and costs. The administration wanted to make the committee aware that they are looking into the need for this application and plan to contact their colleagues to determine how they are using this software. If a need is determined, a recommendation will come forward at a later time.

Clear

Clear is an online search service that gathers information on people which is available on public websites. The administration would like to use this service in cases where residency is questionable and possibly for employment purposes. We have the ability to use the service for one year and opt out if it doesn't meet our needs.

The residency process was initiated near the end of the 1990's. At that time a significant number of students were found to be non-residents and were removed from the rolls. Each year there are approximately 50-60 instances where residency is questionable and verification involves someone making a home visit or the hiring of a private investigator. Dr. Riggle stated that he believes we do a good job with the residency process, but if we enroll 50 students who are not legitimate residents of the district the cost to taxpayers is approximately $125,000 or more. Dr. Riggle reviewed the cost of the license and stated that it would be limited to the district registrar. Both New Trier and Niles use this software and find it very helpful.

Job applicants are fingerprinted and undergo a criminal background check. This software would allow the administration to learn more about potential candidates before we employ them.

The committee discussed the common residency misrepresentations. Committee members expressed concern about a potential perception of discrimination related to the use of the software.

Dr. Riggle stated that this is a contracted service which doesn't require Board approval, but he would like Board awareness and consent. Following discussion, the recommendation will be brought to the Board for approval.

Teacher Laptop Refresh Timeline

Mr. Thimm stated we are in the last year of a three year lease on teacher laptops and they are up for replacement at the end of the year. He reviewed the timeline and process for the teacher notebook computer refresh. Teachers will be given the choice of a Mac, PC or Chromebook. Once preferences are known, notebooks will be evaluated and pricing negotiated. A recommendation for purchase will be presented to the Board in March or April 2014. Laptops will be ordered and deployed to teachers prior to the end of school. Old laptops will be collected, cleaned and returned to the leasing company. We've been through this process before, but Mr. Thimm stated he wanted the committee to have an awareness of the process.

Dr. Riggle stated that the current laptops are not available for a $1 buy-out, but may be available at fair market value.

Firewall Refresh

Mr. Thimm reviewed the need for a new Internet firewall due to our increasing bandwidth. He reviewed a recommendation to replace our existing two Cisco firewalls with two Juniper firewalls and vGW (virtual firewall) software. The Juniper firewalls can process up to 10 GB/sec connections with routing capabilities. This proposal would provide layers of security for our data. Additional modules can be added as the need arises. Mr. Thimm reviewed the costs and advised the committee that the equipment is budgeted in the long range technology plan and can be financed over 5 years. Contracted services for implementation are covered in the tech department services budget. The firewall options were examined and the recommendation is for Juniper. Following board approval he would like to begin. Board members on the committee indicated support for the proposal.

Developer Job Description

The lead developer position is open and changes in the job description and discussions with GESSA will need to occur before the position is posted. It is anticipated that the earliest date a candidate could be brought to the board would be the end of January.

Sharing Services with Feeder Districts

Dr. Riggle stated that positive discussions have occurred with the feeder districts regarding the sharing of disaster recovery services. The information will be brought forward when we have it.

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.