



To: Dr. Mike Riggle
Board of Education

From: Karen Geddeis
Dr. R.J. Gravel

Date: September 8, 2015

Re: Website Hosting Provider

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve a 3-year service agreement with AmericanEagle.com for web hosting services in the amount of \$1,019 per month, or \$12,228 per year in total.

Background

At the June 22, 2015 meeting, the Board of Education approved the FY2016 technology budget which included costs to transition our internally hosted web server to an external provider in the amount of \$15,500. This budgetary allocation is consistent with the recently adopted Technology Vision and three year plan which includes the, "shift to cloud-based solutions" (Area of Focus 1).

Prior to researching potential vendors, the technical services team in partnership with the public relations and communications team defined a series of requirements that a successful vendor would need to exhibit. These requirements included:

- A documented track record demonstrating a high-level of support to PreK-12 school districts in the northern Illinois region,
- Establishment of a primary data center within the northern Illinois region that would be open to inspection by school district officials, prior to a recommendation to the Board of Education,
- Establishment of a secondary data center for redundancy and disaster-recovery purposes,
- Experience hosting web sites that utilize the Kentico Content Management System,
- Availability of resources to support future development and expansion of our school district's web presence to provide a 21st century browsing experience to our education community,

After an investigation into potential hosting providers, one vendor stood out from the rest. The recognized vendor that met all of the district's requirements was Des Plaines-based, AmericanEagle.com.

Following an onsite visit to their primary data center, and several face-to-face meetings with our dedicated account representative, we have identified a few highlights contained within their service proposal:

- Des Plaines-based data center, staffed 24/7/365 by AmericanEagle.com personnel (not outsourced to a third-party), and a secondary data center providing backup and disaster recovery services located in Kenosha, Wisconsin,
- Recognition as a PCI level one service provider, enabling their ability to maintain and support the processing of bank credit cards,

- Stable hardware and network design featuring multiple internet service provider connections, backup power sources, and redundant server and network equipment,
- Active security patch application, server software updates, and antivirus definition updates,
- A commitment that planned outages will be performed between the hours of 1:00 and 5:00 AM,
- A written terms and warranty agreement that stipulates all content within our website remain the property of Glenbrook High School District 225 with a perpetual, royalty-free license to any programming code created by AmericanEagle.com should the District terminate the agreement,
- Existing long-term partnerships with several school districts in our region including: Chicago Public Schools, Evanston Township High School District 202, Maine Township High School District 207, Stevenson High School District 125, Northbrook School District 27 and Township High School District 214.

End-User benefits of external hosting with AmericanEagle.com:

- In the event of a localized power outage, or a network connectivity issue, the district web presence will continue to function,
- Our staff members will continue to interact with and utilize the Kentico Content Management System, and therefore the user experience of our district and school webmasters will not be impacted,
- As part of our agreement, we have the ability to implement advanced website search tools that have been developed by AmericanEagle.com's staff, which will allow our visitors to more efficiently find the content they are seeking,
- AmericanEagle.com's experienced network management team and web development team will be able to provide assistance with the design and improvement of our district's web presence.