

Parent Advisory Council

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Kerri Vogel, Jodi Hartlaub, Tony Johannes, Laura Madson, Mike Lepisto, Karen Lepisto, Tammy Scharenbroch, Mary and Kraig Binversie, Tabitha Walsdorf, Stephanie Plehn, Tiffany Rafill-Pagel

Members Absent: Sheila Schmitt, Brian Murphy, Joanne Enders, Neely Hechel

Recap: Dr. Blankenheim recapped the first meeting explaining the gallery walk and determination of top priorities identified by the group. The top three area: 1) Technology; 2) Facilities; 3) Public Perception/Support.

Technology: Dr. Blankenheim introduced Dustin Goebel, Network Administrator, who provided a technical overview of technology. Dustin shared a timeline outlining technology upgrades since 2010, see below:

2010 - Devices that were 15 years old were replaced and new devices purchased to begin preparing the district for a 1:1 initiative

2012 - Wireless connections were added throughout the District

2013 - UPS's were upgraded and device refreshes were completed at the Middle and High Schools

2014 - Zielanis devices were refreshed with refurbished machines at half the cost

2015 - Video Surveillance System was upgraded

Phone System was upgraded

1:1 Chromebooks were implemented for grades 8-12

Firewall was upgraded

Bandwidth was increased

Is there a plan for upgrading the Chromebooks? Yes. Parents shared that students who have them like them. Why Chromebooks? Easier with the google environment, cost, battery life, size, and automatic updates were some of the reasons for choosing Chromebooks over laptops. Dr. Blankenheim explained that board members saw a presentation by Appleton at the State School Board Convention and then a group of staff visited Sheboygan South to see their 1:1 environment.

Was there any discussions with business/universities about device choice? What will kids know (word, excel, etc) for college and work environments? The instructional side works well with Chromebooks. Makes sense for educational institutes, but concerned about students lack of Microsoft Office knowledge. Google apps not as robust, but students are digitally inclined. They are two different program, but the concepts are the same on both platforms. There is an option for parents to purchase Office 365 for the chromebooks to provide students with

Microsoft Office. Where the Chromebooks purchased or leased? Referendum monies were available at this time, so the Chromebooks were purchased. The District may lease in the future.

Dr. Blankenheim introduced Trish Sabel, K-12 Media Specialist, who shared how staff is currently utilizing technology from an instructional side. She showed the Zielanis website where students and parents have the ability to access videos, interactive games, books, etc. outside of the classroom. Elementary has 5 classrooms set up as 1:1 and all other classrooms have 5 Ipads and 5 laptops. Because not all staff is comfortable with technology, they were asked who would be interested in a 1:1 classroom. How much time are students spending on computers? Grades 2-4 have computer class 1 day/week.

At the middle school, staff utilize Google Drive. This saves documents to the cloud for anytime access. It allows up to 50 people to collaborate on a project at one time. Jenna Sabel, a 5th grader, shared projects she has been working on in Google Classroom.

A parent expressed concerns in regards to the Chromebooks and the inability to sue them with Microsoft Office as students need to know Microsoft Office for college and the work environment. The district does use Microsoft at the lower levels (up to 7th grade). At the high school Microsoft is taught as part of an elective course offering. Can teachers see what's happening with group projects...yes and projects can be assigned to specific students.

This is the District's first year with 1:1 and it is a transition year for teachers as well as students.

What do we as parents do? Rely on Skyward. During this discussion it became apparent that as a district we need to better orient new families/students on skyward. Parents shared that there is a big difference in communication between the elementary and middle school for parents.

- Other Dr. Blankenheim sought input on the newsletter. Feedback was positive. She informed parents about the upcoming annual meeting and that the Board will be discussing the weapons policy and carry/conceal. She will continue to debrief the group on hot topics being addressed/discussed.
- Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 9th at 6:00 p.m., in the high school library. Agenda topic will be Facilities.
- Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.