

**Boyertown Area School District
Curriculum Committee
February 25, 2014
Minutes**

Dr. Christman, Curriculum Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Colebrookdale Elementary Library.

Board members in attendance: Dr. Christman, Mrs. Dennin, Mr. Elsier, Mrs. Hartford, Mr. Landino, Ms. Neiman, and Mrs. Usavage

Administration in attendance: Dr. Faidley, Mr. Miller, Mrs. Woodard, Mr. Scoboria, Mr. Major, and Mr. Szablowski

BASD Staff in Attendance: None

Members of the Public: 2

Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and observed a moment of silence.

The minutes from the January 13, 2014, meeting were accepted. Ms. Neiman pointed out that her name was incorrect and should be listed as Ms. Neiman.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Presentation and Discussion

Dr. Christman began by welcoming everyone and introduced Mrs. Woodard.

To begin Mrs. Woodard introduced Mr. Major, the district's IT Manager. She shared that he would be helping with the presentation this evening. Mrs. Woodard went on to share some of the highlights of the district's comprehensive plan. Specifically, she highlighted the focus on students' development of 21st century skills as well as the focus on college and career readiness.

Mrs. Woodard explained that colleges are incorporating more and more online learning opportunities. Additionally, students are expecting to learn digitally and to have opportunities to use technology. They are expected to adapt to individual learning styles and allow for high levels of collaboration.

She explained that a 1 to 1 initiative enhances learning and student engagement and provides for the idea of any time anywhere learning.

Mr. Major shared some of the work done by his department to identify which device would be best for us to use in a 1 to 1 initiative. Ultimately, he determined the best choice for the district would be the HP netbook. He explained that these devices are more powerful than the laptops we had purchased only two years ago. He went on to share that this device offers the best of both mobile and laptop technology and that he has been able to negotiate a price of \$460 per device.

Mr. Elsier asked if Microsoft Office would be included. Mr. Major shared that it is included on each of the devices. Additionally, he clarified that it is included in the \$460 price point.

Mrs. Woodard went on to explain these devices will allow students to work online or offline and would not require internet access in their home. She also explained that the BYOT initiative has not taken off and we aren't seeing large number of devices coming into the building for many reasons. By moving to a 1 to 1 initiative we can ensure that the digital divide is not continuing to grow.

Next, Mrs. Woodard explained that providing a computer for each student would allow us to develop a flipped classroom model. She shared that students would have an assignment to view to allow them to be ready for the next day's lesson. This model of instruction allows for higher levels of rigor and engagement in the classroom. We already have teachers who are trying this but we need to increase the available technology to grow this model.

Mrs. Hartford brought up the possibility of using the computers to support instruction even on snow days. Ms. Neiman cautioned that some kids do not have internet access. Mr. Faidley shared that there are resources available to help families that do not have access.

Dr. Christman asked if teachers are concerned about not having the appropriate devices. Mr. Major and Mrs. Woodard shared that absolutely the teachers who are developing the blended classrooms are certainly asking for devices.

Mrs. Dennin also shared that we need to make sure that all of the kids have internet access by helping them to seek out the resources that are available. She explained that if a family does not have it, we need to work with them to ensure they do. Additionally, she shared that professional development is needed to ensure that all teachers are utilizing the devices for good instruction.

Mrs. Usavage also shared that we need to address the issues of not being able to print. Mrs. Woodard shared that we are continuing to work with our teachers on accepting digital work instead of always expecting hard copies.

Mr. Elsier asked if Outlook would be included. Mr. Major shared that it would. Mr. Elsier went on to share some of the positives in simply using the calendar for planning.

Mrs. Dennin asked if we are still using Type to Learn. Mrs. Woodard shared that it is used in 3rd and 4th grades but due to the increased use of computers students are requiring it much less.

Mr. Elsier asked if there would be a cost for the students using an Outlook email. Mr. Major shared that all of our students have gmail accounts through the district at no charge.

Next, Mrs. Woodard discussed some of the professional development that would be imbedded as we roll out the computers first in grade 10, followed by one additional grade each year until we reach full implementation at the high school in 2017.

Mrs. Woodard explained that grade 10 was chosen as a starting point because we already use about 1/3 of the total computers needed in our biology department. By initiating this year at the same time that the biology computers are being refreshed, we can cut the cost by 1/3 the first year. She also explained that we are growing the program to ensure that we are not moving too fast and can support our teachers.

Finally, Mrs. Woodard and Mr. Major shared the financial implications. The initiative is a 3-year program that in the first year will cost \$299,000. They also discussed the use of a self-insured premium to address any problems. The annual premium would be \$50 and would be enough to fund any problems.

Ms. Neiman shared that she has many concerns:

- Student responsibility
- This is being done at taxpayer expense.
- Electricity use at home and the cost this will create
- Families who lack Internet access at home
- The touch screen has the potential for more to go wrong.
- How will you stop kids from getting into things they shouldn't?

Mrs. Woodard shared that the students don't have to transport the computers back and forth if they do not want to.

Mrs. Dennin asked if the necessary money was included in the preliminary budget. Mr. Szablowski shared that it was not.

Mr. Landino shared that he appreciates that we would, roll this out slowly to ensure that we can support the teachers. He went on to share that there needs to be significant change in the way teachers are teaching. He specifically asked how we are going to ensure that we are getting the maximum use and that it is appropriate use. Mrs. Woodard shared that we will certainly be prioritizing this initiative through professional development and also through ongoing classroom visits and continuous support. She also shared that there will be teachers who take off while others need more support

Mrs. Hartford asked if we could find out how many students do not have internet access at home.

Mrs. Woodard asked if we can begin planning for this initiative and if we could place it on a future board agenda. Dr. Christman asked if the board would be in favor of this appearing on a future agenda. Most of the board members in attendance said yes, knowing that there are questions that they still need answered.

Committee Comment:

No comments

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Announcements

March 11, 2014 Board of School Directors, Education Center - Board Room, 7:00 p.m.

March 25, 2014 Board of School Directors, Junior High East - Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.

Dr. Christman adjourned the meeting at 7:00 pm.