

SALISBURY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 2008

The Salisbury Township School District Curriculum Subcommittee met on Monday, January 28, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1140 Salisbury Road, Allentown, PA.

Board Members Present: Mrs. Feinberg, Mr. Frankenfield, Mr. Giordano, Mrs. Heffelfinger, Mr. Mantz, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Pauloski, Mr. Reinsmith, Mrs. Ziegler

Administrators Present: Ms. Aponick, Dr. Beauchemin, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Haffner, Ms. Morningstar, Mrs. Perron-Jones, Mrs. Pfungstler, Mrs. Piperato, Mrs. Samide, Dr. Wright, Mr. Ziegenfuss

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Miller at 7:00 p.m.

2. **PROPOSED DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY ADVANCING PLAN**

Mrs. Miller introduced the topic, and she stated the purpose of the presentation was to explain the proposed Technology Advancing Plan and to receive feedback from the school board in regard to questions, concerns, or the need for additional information. Mrs. Miller explained the proposal has been shared with the board president and the chairs of the Curriculum, Technology, and Budget Committees. Mrs. Miller provided some questions to consider in evaluating the proposal:

- What will our students gain/lose?
- What problems will be solved/created?
- What values will be amplified/reduced?
- What are unintended benefits/consequences?

Mr. Ziegenfuss began the presentation by identifying the documents from the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills that accompanied the Advancing Plan. He stated the presentation would begin by explaining *why* we need this plan followed by *what* is contained in the plan.

Mr. Ziegenfuss stated “educated” students today must master core subjects, 21st century themes and skills such as global awareness, life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, information, media and technology skills, and new literacies related to information, media, and technology. Dr. Beauchemin described how technology standards have shifted in the past ten years from a focus on tools to a focus on using technology as a powerful means to learn core subjects and applied skills.

Mr. Ziegenfuss explained the proposal is a result of input from representation of all district stakeholder groups. The input was gathered during teacher and student focus group sessions, the Level of Technology Implementation (LOTI) survey, the building technology committees, the administration team, and the District Technology & Learning Implementation Plan which was approved by the School Board in May 2007. The proposal focuses on the (5) goal areas defined in the district plan:

- Teaching & Learning
- Access
- Professional Development
- Information Literacy
- Assessment & Evaluation

Mr. Ziegenfuss proceeded to explain the details of the Advancing Plan. The plan has two options: Option A is predicated on receiving year two of the PA Classrooms for the Future (CFF) Grant in 2008-2009, and Option B is based on not receiving the grant in 2008-2009. Mr. Ziegenfuss reviewed the contents of the CFF Grant and the affordances it provides to the district in year one and in year two.

Mr. Ziegenfuss stated the recommendation is to implement the Advancing Plan in one year. The rationale for this recommendation is to immediately provide all students and staff with increased access to current technology in the learning environment, to facilitate creation of a unified, synergistic district culture of learning and thinking differently coupled with a district-wide professional development plan, and to provide all students with increased enhanced opportunities to develop information and media literacies as well as to provide daily opportunities to learn and to practice internet safety.

Mr. Ziegenfuss and Dr. Beauchemin explained the professional development plan to support the Advancing Plan. They provided explanation on the current and future Emerging Technologies training provided by the district and CLIU, the Smart Classrooms collaborative groups, the 30-hour online course, *21st Century Learning: The Need for Change*, for the current CFF high school teachers and its inclusion in the district-wide professional development plans for 2008-2009, and the Tech Wizards program for developing student technology leaders. Mr. Ziegenfuss explained the plans to address the areas of Assessment and Evaluation and Community Awareness and provided examples of student and teacher data collection this year.

The proposed Advancing Plan requests an additional computer technician to assist with the increased technology inventory. The plan is based on a three year lease and the total budget of the plan is approximately \$600,000, excluding the computer technician position.

The building level administrators provided school perspectives on the plan. Mrs. Samide spoke about the pivotal role of instant technology access in the classroom to develop background knowledge, foster student engagement, develop ownership for learning among students, and utilize problem-solving strategies. Mr. Haffner stressed the limitations of our current computer lab configuration in fostering 21st century skills and

in the integration of technology and literacy. Ms. Morningstar stated she is participating in the PA Inspired Leadership Academy, and she explained the research is showing the adult workforce is ill-prepared for the technology skills required in the workplace. She spoke of the excitement from teachers and students for the Classrooms for the Future (CFF) implementation. The high school is experiencing collaboration in many forms: staff/students, staff/staff, and students/students. Dr. Beauchemin shared Mrs. Pfungstler thoughts on the imperative to integrate technology into instruction at all levels and in all content areas. Mrs. Pfungstler expressed the idea that classroom access to technology is as basic as a pen or books in the learning process.

Mrs. Miller opened the discussion to board members for comments and questions. Mr. Mantz addressed the board as the Chair of Technology Subcommittee stating he has seen the proposal several times. He met with Mr. Ziegenfuss prior to the curriculum meeting and asked many questions about the logistics and impact of the plan. He stated his questions have been satisfactorily answered, and he supports the plan. He thanked Mr. Ziegenfuss and the staff for the time and research that went into the proposal.

Board members asked questions in three main areas: clarification of the plan, finance, and philosophy.

The clarification questions resulted in the following:

- The difference between a smart classroom and a modified smart classroom is the number of student laptops (nine versus five). The increase to (9) laptops is a result of feedback from the current modified Smart Classroom teachers in 5th and 6th grade. Hardware for a Smart Classroom includes one (1) interactive whiteboard, one (1) projector, and nine (9) laptop computers. In addition, three (3) cameras/video cameras would be added to each school building and seven (7) printers would be added district-wide.
- Two high school and one middle school computer labs would be dismantled and these desk-top computers would be distributed to primary and non-core area classrooms (World Language, Art, Music, Family & Consumer Science, and Health at the high school and middle school levels).
- There will be comparable equipment for each elementary building.
- The network and bandwidth capacities are not a problem.
- The MACs were chosen for many student-centered reasons such as ease of use, creative options, and durability. Students will have exposure to MAC and PC platforms.
- The plan recommends (1) additional computer technician. This is sufficient since the lease contract with APPLE has a maintenance agreement, and historically, there are fewer systems problems with MACs than with PCs.
- If ninth grade moves to the high school, the grade 9 equipment will follow the students.
- Students may eventually have access to their files from home. We are currently investigating this option for administrators.

The financing questions resulted in the following:

- The plan recommendation is a three-year lease based on utilization of fund balance in the amounts of \$300,000 (year one), \$150,000 (year two), and \$150,000 (year three). When we are ready to move forward with the Advancing Plan, we will investigate the best financial option for a three or four year lease, and a contract from APPLE will be provided.
- Mr. Ziegenfuss and Mr. Smith will prepare a current inventory of district technology and a projected inventory based on the Advancing Plan. In addition, they will prepare a projected technology budget for maintaining our current inventory compared to a projected budget based on the Advancing Plan as well as an on-going replacement plan and related costs.
- Dr. Beauchemin will provide projected costs of other up-coming non-technology related curriculum costs as a result of our on-going curriculum review cycle, such as the elementary language arts review to begin next year.

The philosophy questions resulted in the following:

- Mrs. Miller asked if administrators had concerns with how quickly the plan would unfold? The principals responded they had no more concerns with a limited versus total implementation. In their professional opinion, every year without increased access impacts students negatively. Additionally, there is concern that if implementation is done over time by grade level, it creates teacher and student dissonance among those who do not have daily access within their classrooms. While teachers are at various stages of comfort and proficiency with the tools and related skills of Smart Classroom technologies, they cannot become more proficient if they do not have increased access.
- Mr. Giordano asked if there are things better learned without technology? Ms. Morningstar responded classrooms of today require students to still use some traditional strategies and resources, but technology can be integrated with these traditional methods. Dr. Beauchemin stated no one is viewing technology as a tool to isolate students within a learning environment; rather, it has the potential to increase social interaction and allow all students to be engaged simultaneously.
- Mrs. Miller stated that while she supports increased access to several desk-top computers within all elementary classrooms, she is struggling with the developmental appropriateness of Smart Classroom technology in the elementary grade levels to the extent outlined in this proposal. She asked whether given the money to be expended to fund this proposal and to ensure its sustainability over time, should we consider other initiatives that would benefit elementary age students more such as increased field trips, language immersion programs, and other developmentally appropriate practices. Mrs. Samide explained how technology can provide immediate background experiences and knowledge for elementary students to improve their learning and understanding. Dr. Beauchemin stated the primary teachers believe technology integration is

developmentally appropriate for their students who are functioning as readers and writers and who want to produce their own writing and stories.

- Mr. Pauloski stated he did not fully understand the Advancing Plan handout when he first received it, but after the presentation, he believes it is well thought out.
- Mr. Reinsmith questioned the consequences for inappropriate use of district technology. Mr. Ziegenfuss and Mr. Smith explained the filtering system and the safeguards in place. A revised Appropriate Use Policy will be developed.

Mrs. Miller thanked the board for their questions. The administration will provide the additional information requested by the board. It will be presented at the next curriculum meeting in February.

3. **OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIP REQUEST**

The overnight field trip request for the Indoor Twirlers to attend a competition in Wildwood, NJ on May 1-4, 2008 was presented and approved.

4. **OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

None

5. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 p.m.

7. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, February 25, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building, 1140 Salisbury Road, Allentown, PA 18103.