

Pottsgrove School District

Community Budget Task Force Meeting Minutes

Name of Sub-Committee: Technology

Date of Meeting: March 15, 2011

Admin. Co-chair: Michael Wagman **Community Co-chair:** Les Startzel

Attending:

Tony Bickert, Michelle Bozzini, Brad Burpee, Marilyn Eaton, Jason Grubbs, Michael Neiffer, Dave Ramage, Greg Sproule, Les, Startzel (co-chair), Pete Tomaselli, Paula Taylor, Michael Wagman (co-chair), Amanda Wright, Don Young

Topics Discussed:

1. Review of West Chester School District Technology Committee Findings- this will be used as a guideline for our upcoming proposal
2. Mr. Wagman discussed the Governor's budget proposal
3. Mr. Neiffer explained that we thought we had a 1.2 million dollar shortfall and now it is between 2-2.1 million. Our index only allows us to raise taxes 1.8 percent. The governor does not want taxes raised at all. Accountability Block Grant was assisting with full day kindergarten funding- this has now been defunded- a total of 400K. Last year we paid 1.1 million dollars toward funding Charter Schools. We received 330K from state to help with this and now that has been defunded. We have 120 students attending Charter Schools. The governor proposed to cut money that goes to State Universities in half. Dual Enrollment has been cut- a total of 10K.
4. Discussion of a possible switch to electronic textbooks for cost saving measures. Mr. Ramage discussed Open Source Textbooks.
5. Mr. Wagman discussed the possibility of a consortium with other School Districts in the county to establish a Cyber Charter School. This could be a cost saving measure in the future.

6. Pottsgrove participates in several buying groups and we negotiate prices with vendors to secure lower than buying group contract pricing whenever possible either as an individual or in coordination with multiple districts under the IU.
7. Mr. Bickert discussed how Apple changed their pricing structure for licensing and now instead of pricing it per school it is now priced per full time employee. OS, iLife, and iWork- this would be a total of 39K more for just iWork since OS and iLife are included in the bundle.
8. Discussion of utilizing Google Docs as part of Google Schools. They will offer email, spam filtering, archiving, all the Google tools including word processing and spreadsheets. These forms can be shared. No recurring fees except for the services they provide. Entry level everything is free. Cloud storage could allow students to save work on any computer at school, at home and even on an iPad.
9. Pros and Cons of utilizing this were discussed. Mr. Bickert will look into it further by asking other districts that are utilizing Google's Cloud Network.
10. Mr. Neiffer asked what the potential savings would be if this type of plan was utilized. There would be significant savings in the future.
11. Archiving needs to be updated, which will be 11K- if we went with Google we would save this on our next Budget Cycle.
12. Mr. Wagman explained that Pottsgrove's Technology Department runs lean compared to other districts.
13. Mr. Wagman discussed Interactive Projections that will most likely be purchased for Rocks' new school. Immediate cost is slightly more than our standard projectors, but maintenance is much less- bulbs half the price and no filters. Also, we would not need interactive boards, as projectors and handset turns any whiteboard into an interactive board.
14. Total cost of ownership is being looked at with every technology purchase.
15. Business and Facilities Department will be reverting back to Windows.
16. Mr. Wagman discussed the pros of students using Macs and how they are more beneficial to students than PCs. The software is superior, Apple support is better, battery life and overall quality of product is better.
17. Mr. Wagman explained that when the teachers' laptop lease expires, these would be better utilized by students. Computer utilization across the district is very high, so adding 250 computers will be very beneficial

to the students and leasing new computers for the faculty will keep high quality technology in the hands of our teachers.

18. 120K of potential savings in the budget if we do not lease new computers, but support becomes an issue as computers age- it is important that we keep our technology on the newer side.
19. Make sure there is no technology gap at Lower since it is larger than the other 2 elementary schools. Enabling students to acquire these 250 computers will eliminate technology inequities at Lower.
20. Members got into small groups to brainstorm cost saving reductions- notes will be distributed via email.
21. Mr. Wagman next took Committee Members to the District Office to tour the District Operations Center.

Group Reports

Will be sent via email along with the minutes.

The following questions and/or additional information was requested:

Information on cell phone costs
Private Label Wiki usage patterns

Outcomes from the Meeting:

The committee has preliminary suggestions on paper to discuss at our next meeting for inclusion in the final report. Committee members charged with continuing their research and send additional suggestions, questions, etc to Michael Wagman.

The meeting concluded at 9:00 PM

Next meeting date: March 29, 2011