

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Joe Abbatiello, Julie Altman, Diane Crocco, Rita Gedansky

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Angela McNabola, Thomas Hurley

Also Present: William Blake, John Brady, Charles Britton, Richard Dellinger, Kathleen Fuller-Cutler, Warren Gohsler, Marianne Lippard, Mary Raiola, Rocco Palmieri, Megan Wilson, Sheila Wycinowski

A meeting of the Curriculum Committee was held in the Presentation Room of District Offices at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 7, 2011.

1. Call to Order: Julie Altman called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes:

a. November 4, 2010

Motion to approve the minutes as presented (Ms. Gedansky, 2d Ms. Crocco).

Discussion: None.

Vote in favor of approving the minutes: Unanimous.

Motion passed.

b. December 14, 2010

Motion to approve the minutes as presented (Ms. Gedansky, 2d Ms. Crocco).

Discussion: None.

Vote in favor of approving the minutes: Unanimous.

Motion passed.

3. Vision / Professional Development Training Technology 7 – 12

John Brady said that the information presented tonight would address long-term plans at Amity, particularly how to enhance learning using technology. The District will be receiving about \$250,000 in grant funds, which is more than what was expected. The grant money will allow the District to move forward with technology plans.

Dr. Brady noted that on March 24th, the Policy Committee will examine whether to make policy updates with respect to technology. Smartphones are computers and the current policy needs to catch up with advances in computer technology.

4. Highlights of 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan for Technology

Warren Gohsler, curriculum facilitator, said that staff development training has enabled teachers at Amity to acquire knowledge to become facilitators. Computer technology is shrinking in size.

Rocco Palmieri, technology coordinator, said that Amity currently has SMART Boards in 65 percent of the classrooms. In five years, it is a goal to have SMART Boards in 100 percent of the classrooms. Plans are to redesign wireless access in the schools.

Mr. Palmieri said that we need to replace computer labs in the District. The computers in the labs are six years old and are due for replacement. The useful life of the equipment is five years. Since the computers are well maintained, they are in good shape.

The total cost to update computer labs at the two middle schools and the high school will be \$119,000. All 150 computers from five labs would be replaced. There are three labs at the high school and one at each middle school. In addition, two mobile labs would be added at each middle school. The current wireless infrastructure would be replaced with High Bandwidth Wireless Access to support an increase in mobile devices in the District.

5. Engaging 21st Century Learning / Emerging Technology

Megan Wilson, a teacher at Amity Middle School in Orange, said that new mobile technology is allowing her to individualize lessons for her students and is changing the way education is approached at Amity. She uses an Apple iPad® and finds it to be incredibly fast and effective. It adds significantly to the amount of time that instruction can take place. Laptops take much longer to get going and time is lost as students must get their computers to boot up.

Ms. Wilson said that she sees great benefits to using the iPad and views it as a great tool for learning on-the-go. She noted that Amity has not had iPads long enough to measure student achievement, however, a school in California saw improved student test scores with the technology. With the mobile devices, students have access to quality technology resources, such as Merriam Webster and National Geographic, but they can also collaborate with students all over the world through blogs and other on-line resources. She also noted that some universities expect students to have iPads.

Dr. Brady said that the mobile devices have an application that can be used to assess teacher performance. Professional development can be designed based on these assessments. He noted that laptops have limitations because the batteries don't last long. Instructional time isn't wasted with the iPad.

Ms. Wilson added that students are excited to use the iPads. Twenty iPads have been purchased with Perkins money for the Applied Education department. An iPad mobile lab would be desirable for the middle schools.

Bill Blake questioned how it works having some students using iPads and some students on laptops. Dr. Brady said that students move easily between the two. Mr. Palmieri noted that laptops would still be preferred for research papers.

Dr. Brady said that a keyboard can be connected to an iPad. It would make sense to consider iPads in the computer labs that need updating. Students are already bringing this technology to school.

Ms. Wilson said that the District would need software for the iPads. It is possible for teachers to create their own textbooks and include video as well.

Dr. Brady and Dr. Britton said that textbook publishers still need to catch up with new technology.

Julie Altman said that iPads are also less expensive to purchase than laptops.

6. Other: none

7. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Lippard, recording clerk