

Community Consolidated School District 181

BOARD REPORT

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TITLE: Digital Learning Initiative Update

DATE: June 13, 2016

Background:

In 2008, the District 181 Board of Education approved a regular technology device replacement cycle. The cycle would ensure reliable devices for teaching and learning, as well as predict financial commitments. The Board asked the District 181 Technology Committee to investigate four vendor proposals to replace the middle school student notebook computers, along with the elementary school lab computers, and to present a recommendation to the Board of Education. Vendors responded to a District Request for Proposal in August 2008.

The Technology Committee included teachers, MRC Directors, principals, District administrators, building technology assistants, and District technology staff. The group evaluated solutions from Dell, Hewlett Packard, Lenovo, and Apple. The committee conducted visits to vendor reference schools, participated in live vendor presentations, and completed evaluation reports. Evaluation rubrics completed by teaching and administrative staff focused on technology use in teaching and learning, while rubrics completed by technology staff focused on infrastructure, performance, and support. The Board was given cost estimates for each proposal. The cost estimates for Dell, Hewlett Packard, and Lenovo included new servers and software, as well as professional development costs for teachers and technology staff, as the District operated on an Apple infrastructure at that time.

The Technology Committee's recommendation, approved by the Board of Education on October 27, 2008, was to implement a regular three-year device replacement cycle and continue using Apple devices and related infrastructure. Further, on November 23, 2009, the Board of Education extended the replacement cycle from three years to four

years.

During the summer of 2011, the @d181 Initiative was developed to explore options for student learning that would further promote creativity, problem solving, and educational risk taking through the innovative use of technology. The committee was comprised of teachers, administrators, students and a community member. The committee established the following mission statement: To support an environment of excellence that encourages students and teachers to collaborate, innovate, and take educational risks, and prepares students and teachers to lead, learn, and live in a society that will be mobile, ever-changing, and global.

Using funding from the The Lane and Elm School PTOs and the D181 Foundation, the committee led a research initiative that compared 1:1 digital learning environments using both a MacBook Air and an iPad. These environments were compared against the existing shared cart environment in use at all District 181 schools.

The @d181 Initiative Committee research focused on answering the following question: How does the environment support District 181's overall goals of: increased differentiation, enhanced critical thinking and creativity, and improved climate?

The committee presented its findings along with a recommendation for a three-year implementation of a District 1:1 program at the May 21, 2012 Board of Education meeting. The Board did not approve the committee's recommendation. In June 2012, the Board instructed the committee to return in the fall with a proposal to gather more data related to student achievement during the 2012-13 school year without increasing the District budget.

District and building administrators identified \$138,000 of budget reductions to support the second year of the @d181 Initiative. The Board of Education directed the @d181 Initiative Committee to gather additional data and approved an application process to select additional participants. As a result of Board of Education, administration, and teacher support, the action research expanded to two additional buildings and grade levels for the 2012-13 school year; Walker School third grade and Monroe School fourth grade joined the fifth grade teams from The Lane School and Elm School. Devices were deployed to classrooms in late fall.

Participating teachers received professional development on iPad use and technology integration in December, January, and February.

At the conclusion of the second year of the @d181 Initiative, the committee presented its findings and asked the Board of Education to adopt the vision of a 1:1 computing environment for District 181 and charge a committee of teachers, students, community members, administrators, and a Board member, to design a three-year implementation plan, to include grade levels, devices, professional development, financial costs and funding. The Board of Education did not adopt the vision and the work of the @d181 Initiative Committee ended.

Because of high demand from District teachers and the proponents of the @d181 Initiative, the four 1:1 elementary grade level programs have continued and five more 1:1 grade level programs have been implemented with the support of PTO funding. Though not uniformly implemented, 1:1 initiatives are being used to support instruction in at least one grade level at each elementary building. Including these 1:1 programs, District students currently use over 3,000 Apple devices and 155 Samsung and HP Chromebooks. Teachers and staff use over 800 additional Apple devices.

On February 23, 2015, the Board of Education approved the formation of the Digital Learning Initiative. This initiative, a collaborative partnership between the District and the D181 Foundation, was developed to create a needed unified vision and plan for digital learning. This is needed because digital learning is impacting many areas that need direction, particularly

- long-range development of curriculum, assessment, and instruction, as well as
- long-range planning for professional development.
- Present and long-term Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) plans, activities, and expenditures
- Present and long-range financial planning
- Present and long-range Technology Department staffing and operational planning

In August 2015, the Digital Learning Initiative Committee became a subcommittee of the Board of Education Learning Committee. The work of the Digital Learning Initiative Committee led to the development of a set of belief statements regarding digital learning; the belief statements were adopted by the Board of Education on March 14, 2016. The belief statements are being incorporated into the District's strategic plan, and the Digital Learning Initiative developed a device ration recommendation based on committee learning and staff data.

Discussion:

The result of the work outlined above has resulted in the presentation this evening. A comprehensive presentation with data from the most recent staff survey has been posted to BoardDocs. An abbreviated version of the presentation has also been posted and will be reviewed with the Board during the June 13 meeting.

Financial Impact:

This is for information only. The financial impact will be considered as part of the budget development process.

Recommendation:

For information only.