



District-Wide Technology Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday October 11, 2017; 4:00 p.m.
Central Administration Office

Members Present: Superintendent Douglas Sullivan, Mrs. Melanie Kathrein (Director of Instruction), Mrs. Elisa Kensinger (DHS), Mrs. Kim Goodall (DMS), Mrs. Kristi Meidinger (Heart River), Mrs. Laura Kelly (Jefferson), Mrs. Jackie Glaser (Prairie Rose), Mrs. Ruth McCabe (Lincoln), Mrs. Lexi Steiner (Roosevelt), Ms. Emily Bren (Roosevelt), Mrs. Tanya Rude (Board Member), Mr. Brent Seaks (Board Member), Mr. Mitchell Murphy (Technology Coordinator), Mr. Ryan Dukart (Technology Specialist), Mrs. Laura Hondl (Technology Specialist), and Mrs. Stacy Northrop (Technology Specialist).

Members Absent: Mr. Brian Ham (DHS), Mrs. Danielle Kappel (DMS), Mr. Christopher Kovash (DMS), Mrs. Andrea Dvorak (Heart River), Mrs. Chantal Heth (Jefferson), Mrs. Rebecca Bautz (Prairie Rose), Mrs. Kelly Jahn (Lincoln), and Mrs. Cill Skabo (Community Member).

Call to Order: Superintendent Sullivan called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Norms: The meeting norms were available on the agenda.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda Items: There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

Approval of the September 26, 2017, Meeting Minutes: Mrs. Meidinger moved to approve the September 26 meeting minutes, as presented. Mrs. Goodall seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Business Topics

Classroom Equity: Superintendent Sullivan requested a discussion on this topic so there would be a common understanding since equity may be impacted by the embedded technology. There could be a difference of opinion regarding the topic. The District tries to ensure as much equity as possible. There are individuals who have worked hard to write a grant and received devices from the DPS Foundation based on the grants they wrote. Dr. Sullivan requested a discussion regarding an individual that already has devices from a Foundation grant and what the perception would be for those individuals when additional devices are allocated. Mrs. Kensinger felt the individual that went through the process of writing and earning the grant should not be penalized. Mrs. Hondl inquired if those devices received from the Foundation grant could be used by the building specialists; those specialists that wish to have a device. An example was used of a teacher in a grade having 30 devices and their co-worker in the same grade having only ten devices. Would this be a concern? Mrs. Meidinger liked the idea of sharing the Foundation devices with the specialists. Mr. Seaks inquired how many classrooms in a building might have Foundation devices. Mrs. Hondl responded there is one school that has many Foundation devices and another school will have less.

Mrs. Kathrein explained several years ago there was a building PAC that was willing to purchase Elmos for all the classrooms in that school. The Board and superintendent at that time felt it was important to have the same experiences in all the buildings and therefore would not approve the request unless the Elmos were purchased in all the buildings. She emphasized they need to do what is best and right for the students across the entire district. Mrs. Rude inquired if the Foundation devices could be updated so they are all equal. She also inquired how many specialists there are in the buildings. The response varied since some schools may have more than others and the definition of a “specialist”.

Superintendent Sullivan asked the committee members if the intent was for there to be equity with the devices. The response was yes. Dr. Sullivan inquired if that message should be relayed to the building principals and let them decide the extra devices for the building and how many from the committee would support that. Mrs. Rude wanted to make sure that the specialists also would have equal access to devices in all the buildings. Dr. Sullivan responded that would be a discussion he would need to have with the building principals. It was noted that not all the specialists are as interested as the regular K-5 classroom teachers in having devices. Mrs. Goodall was in favor of the building principal having a discussion with the teachers in their building. She suggested a conversation with the teachers that have a Foundation grant device and inquiring if they would be willing to share it with another teacher. The age of the Foundation devices was discussed and also writing grants for the devices. Mrs. Kelly inquired if the Foundation devices would be replaced. There was additional discussion regarding specialists and it was noted there are different specialists at each building.

Mrs. Kelly inquired if the laptop carts would be replaced. Teachers explained how the carts are utilized in their buildings and trying to have equity since some classrooms have more students than others. Dr. Sullivan felt the District would buy the additional couple of laptops for the larger classrooms. At the high school, Mrs. Kensinger noted some teachers will not utilize the devices and the devices should not be purchased for them and therefore there will not be equity. She also thought teachers like Mrs. McCabe who are using the devices and wrote a grant for the devices should not be penalized. Mrs. McCabe has changed her lesson plans and designed them to include the devices. Mrs. McCabe explained if she did not have a device for each student it would have taken longer to complete projects in the classroom. Mrs. Goodall recommended Mrs. McCabe be allowed to keep her devices and still provide the additional 12 new devices.

Dr. Sullivan asked what the committee wished to do. Mrs. Meidinger suggested moving forward this year and not worry about how many devices one teacher has and how many another teacher has. Mrs. Hondl suggested when the Foundation grant devices are no longer working, the District would not replace them. Mrs. Kensinger added that a new grant could be written to replace those devices. The devices for the specialists would need to be addressed.

K-5 Embedded Technology Guidelines: Based on input from the committee, Superintendent Sullivan drafted guidelines for the embedded technology pilot. These were emailed to the committee for review before the meeting. Dr. Sullivan asked for input. Mrs. Kensinger was encouraged by the number of individuals that were willing to do the pilot. She noted that just because an individual may be good with technology does not mean they are good at teaching others how to use it as it requires a lot of patience.

Mrs. Kathrein referenced the District's strategic plan which addresses the District standards and also the technology standards. She felt it would be good to have a building representative at every grade level for the pilot program that would focus on the standards. Mrs. Goodall said that standards were a good place to start as the technology should not be a substitution.

Mrs. Kathrein said when the pilot teachers are ready to bring a trainer into the conversation, they will need to know what the focus is on the technology training and then expand on it. That is the purpose of the pilot; the decision has been made on the devices and now there is a lot of work ahead to find out what ways it can be used and shared with everyone else in the building so they can improve on their skills. Mrs. Goodall agreed and added that it needs to be tied into the curriculum.

Mrs. Kathrein explained there will be some on the curriculum review committee that will be enthusiastic and eager and others will be reluctant. It is good to have a mix where there are some that are technology savvy and others with a mix. The technology outdates quickly and it will be important that it is used and used well. In order to get a small amount of embeddedness she estimates it will require a minimum of three full days of training during this school year. Teachers do not have that level of time available. Mrs. Kathrein explained she felt this committee was doing great work. The support level to make this committee's plan a success will take time and she could not see having less than three days of professional development to make it successful. Having enough substitute teachers to cover for a training could be a challenge. Mrs. Glaser said she would like to see some training over the summer. Mrs. Kathrein was not opposed to the summer training and recommended there be a stipend for the attendees. She suggested maybe have the first round of the devices and then take time to learn how to embed them. Mrs. Kelly asked how it was implemented at the middle school. Mrs. Goodall responded at Dickinson Middle School they did the carts first and then had Microsoft training. She would not advocate the Microsoft training. They did not have professional development and it was detrimental. They ran into many problems. She said if she did not thoroughly enjoy working with computers she would have given up. She added that she is glad they did embed the technology as the students seem to be more engaged.

Mrs. Hondl explained the teachers at the high school did a lot of work over the summer months to be ready for the fall. Mrs. Goodall expressed a concern regarding doing the work over the summer months and inquired how that work would be communicated back to the remaining teachers before school started. The pilot teachers will have it all figured out in the summer but will not be able to share before school begins. They will do all the work but won't have the time to share it. Mrs. Kathrein suggested a pilot grade-level in January with the pilot teachers giving up some of their classroom time. Mr. Seaks was concerned with delaying the roll out and having it over a two-year span. He suggested if the pilot was started in January and then the pilot teachers could do training maybe on Saturdays or after school and then have the summer months to become familiar. Mrs. Kathrein said that other Districts have not done a roll out this aggressively and other Districts have technology specialists to assist. She suggested stretching the pilot out with certain grade levels done at a time. Do a certain grade level(s) (such as grades 4 and 5) this spring in a pilot and then roll out full implementation for that grade level in the fall. In the fall do another grade level pilot and then full implementation the following spring. The District is dealing with a level of support for the teachers right now. She would be cautious since not everybody feels passionate about the technology initiative. Mrs. Goodall concurred not to bombard the teachers.

There was discussion regarding the wireless access points. Mr. Murphy explained the engineer will be on site the week of the 24th. It will take approximately ½ day per school. Mrs. Goodall explained at Dickinson Middle School they maxed out the wireless which created vast problems.

Mrs. Steiner thought if some of the teachers were using the devices, there will be others that could eventually also want to learn more about the devices, even if they were not as enthusiastic about the technology. It will be important to try and have all the teachers on board so that they are using the devices and the devices are not setting unused and also so the teachers do not feel overwhelmed. Mrs. Kathrein said the intent will be to have some ideas to get started and then probably repeat the professional development on technology and try and work out some of the glitches.

Dr. Sullivan will make revisions to the guidelines and send them out so that the committee members have an opportunity to share the guidelines with others in their building. It may also change the landscape of who is interested in the pilot. Mrs. Kensinger noted there are some great resources in the District with some good technology savvy individuals. Dr. Sullivan asked that the committee members share with others in the building that there is a high probability there will be some training during the school year and possibly also over the summer.

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, November 14; however, this meeting date and time has changed to **Wednesday, November 15 at 4:00 p.m.** at the Central Office.

Other: There were no other topics for discussion. Dr. Sullivan thanked the team for their commitment to this committee and participation in today's meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Minutes provided by Twila Petersen.