

Board of Education, Concord School District
Budget Work Session #5 – Curriculum and Technology
February 17, 2020

Board members present: Jim Richards, Gina Cannon, Pamela Walsh, Jonathan Weinberg, Brenda Hastings, Barb Higgins, Danielle Smith, Kate West

Board member absent: David Parker

Administrators present: Superintendent Kathleen Murphy, Assistant Superintendent Donna Palley, Technology Director Pam McLeod

Board President Jim Richards called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm, noting that the topic of the budget work session was curriculum and technology. Gina Cannon conducted a roll call attendance. Jonathan Weinberg asked to be recognized, and noted his concern that House Bill 544, which would be heard on February 18, was focused on divisive concepts and would essentially restrict any implicit bias training – including even acknowledging systemic racism – from state-funded agencies, which included public school districts.

Assistant Superintendent Donna Palley reviewed the agenda and noted that two groups would be speaking and presenting information on the Student Assistance Program (SAP) counselor roles and the Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) coordinator role.

- Student Assistance Program (SAP) counselors
- Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) coordinator
- Technology
- Public information
- Public comment

Aimee Tucker and Brian Daniels described their roles as SAP counselors at CHS and RMS and how they supported students. These supports included direct student intervention, drug and alcohol education, and working in classes. Ms. Palley noted that a portion of the funding for these positions had been in the District budget for several years and some had been covered by a grant, but that these roles had highlighted the need to keep them in the budget regardless of whether grant monies came in each year. CHS Assistant Principal Kaileen Chilauskas and Ms. Tucker explained that these were not disciplinary positions; and existed to provide support and rehabilitative resources rather than punishment. Ms. Tucker explained that whenever a CHS student or family had any police involvement, a member of ACERT (Adverse Childhood Experience Response Team) would meet with the family and determine whether to make a referral for SAP counseling services. Ms. Cannon asked about the scope of the illegal drug problem in the Concord school community. CHS Principal Mike Reardon explained that most drug activity took place outside of school,

although sometimes students were found with paraphernalia. He added that vaping was a common problem.

Mr. Reardon and CHS Assistant Principal Steve Rothenberg introduced the Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) program at CHS. Mr. Rothenberg described “21st Century Learning” as personalized and customized extended learning aligned to a student’s interest and their own college, career, and community plans. This program was a hybrid, modernized version of what used to be “job shadow” experiences or independent study. He explained that the program aimed to advise and support all students to help them see the larger picture of their future plans and that his vision was that every student completed at least one ELO during their high school career. He agreed to provide demographic data on student participation in the program and participation data in the CRTC and CHS populations.

Technology Director Pam McLeod reviewed technology staffing, device statistics, and project highlights.

STAFFING

- (1) Director of Technology
- (1) Network Administrator
- (1) System Administrator
- (2) Desktop Technicians (+2 grant-funded temps during Covid-19)
- (1) Database Analyst

DEVICE STATS (*prefer to use new Tech Stabilization Fund or finance 3 years*)

- iPads: 1600
- Staff: laptops – 900, desktops – 49
- Student Chromebooks: 4,044
- Student device replacement cycle was 4 years; 3 years for RMS
- Classroom and student PC labs: (2) RMS, (3) CHS, (1) BGS, (1) BMS
- Total: ~6,500 devices

HIGHLIGHTS

- Replace middle school devices (985 devices)
- Teacher laptop replacement cycle (175 devices)
- 5-year wireless network replacement (offset by e-Rate @ 60%)
- Increase software – many new curriculum-based tools adopted during Covid-19
- Level-fund dues, fees and contingency, supplies, etc.

Ms. McLeod reviewed infrastructure elements that fell under the Technology budget:

NETWORK and SERVERS

- (400) Wireless access points
- (45) Switches with (200) modules
- (8) Physical servers (*includes backup servers; hosting 80+ virtual servers*)
- (1) Firewalls
- (1) Content filters
- (2) Server room A/C
- (2) Enterprise battery backups

OTHER

- (10) Telephone switches and servers
- (312) Wall- /ceiling-mounted projectors
- (400) Surveillance cameras in 6 schools
- (67) Door access control readers in 6 schools
- (8) RAPTOR visitor management software stations

LOOKING FORWARD:

- WiFi upgrade summer 2021 (5 years; e-Rate 60%)
- Network switches upgrade 2022 (postponed by 1 year)

Ms. McLeod explained that the District had been fully 1-to-1 with student devices since 2017, with students receiving iPads or Chromebooks depending on grade level. She noted that CHS students received a Chromebook refresh this year and that there had been a focus on digital equity and helping students with hotspots and home Internet access. She reviewed staff device and software updates:

DEVICES

- Teachers – 4-year replacement cycle
- Covid-19 shift to mobile:
 - EAs/IAs/Tutors – received laptops
 - Office Assistants – received laptops

SOFTWARE

- *New* Nursing / EHR software (April, 2020)
- PolicyTech / compliance management system
- ParentSquare communications tool
- Increased PandaDoc eSignature licenses for special education
- New website provider selection

HR MODERNIZATION

- Beginning to implement applicant tracking
- Online benefits enrollment (planning phase)

Ms. McLeod explained that software had been a major focus this year, and provided operational and student learning examples:

OPERATIONAL examples:

- [PowerSchool](#) – student management software | 26,500
- [MUNIS](#) – ERP system to manage District HR and finances | 61,000
- [CatchOn](#) | 9,450
- [SNAP Health](#) | 7,500

STUDENT LEARNING examples:

- [Zearn](#) (Math) | 12,500
- [Lexia Core 5](#) (Reading) | 54,835
- [Mystery Science](#) | 5,000
- [BrainPop](#) | 1,900

Ms. McLeod noted software and hardware purchased this year with Covid-19 grant funding:

- Zoom
- Formative
- See Saw Plus
- EdPuzzle
- Explain Everything
- Gizmos
- Kami
- Screencastify
- TextHelp Equatio
- WeVideo
- Book Creator
- RazKids
- NearPod
- Windows virtual desktops (remote servers for high school Art)

Total NEW Academic Software: \$121,000

Budget: \$100,000 for continuing tools

Focus: creativity, engagement, deeper learning

New devices and infrastructure since April 2020:

- Laptops for EAs, IAs, Tutors
- Laptops (in addition to desktops) for office admins
- Additional iPads for kindergarten (100)
- Document cameras, speakerphones, classroom AV systems
- Increased bandwidth to 4 Gbps
- Central office access control and video doorbells
- Hotspots for students without WiFi (digital equity)

She reviewed a list of future planned projects:

- Elementary classroom projector upgrades: \$430,500 (ASAP)
- New elementary projectors: \$40,500 (ASAP)
- Elementary gym/cafe projector upgrades: \$60,000 (ASAP)
- RMS/CHS classroom projector upgrades: \$450,000 (FY22-25)
- Network switches replacement: \$1.3M (some e-Rate eligible) (FY23)
- Security camera upgrade: \$500,000 (FY24)
- City fiber: unknown (FY25-27) – capital planning with City

Ms. McLeod reviewed Technology revenue, which consisted entirely of the FCC's e-Rate program:

SUMMARY

- The FCC's E-rate program makes telecommunications and information services affordable for schools and libraries. With funding from the Universal Service Fund, E-rate provides discounts for telecommunications, Internet access and internal connections to eligible schools and libraries.

- **Category II** is a reimbursement for internal connections (wireless, switches, etc.). For the five-year period beginning in 2021-22, the District was eligible for \$417,533.40 in reimbursements.

BUDGET

- 15,000 (*Category I reimbursement*)
- 175,000 (*Category II reimbursement*)

HISTORY

| FISCAL YEAR | AMOUNT |
|--------------|----------------------|
| 2014 | 43,990.59 |
| 2015 | 44,288.10 |
| 2016 | 47,770.03 |
| 2017* | 416,435.72 |
| 2018 | 27,982.34 |
| 2019 | 16,667.28 |
| 2020 | 15,000.00 |
| 2021 | 17,000.00 (est) |
| 2022 | 190,000 (est) |

Ms. McLeod explained that she was hopeful that e-rate would reimburse generously for digital equity, which would include hotspots and Comcast access for families in need. She added that the intensity of educational software programs had evolved and that, while some of this software was expensive, it was a critical part of student learning, especially remote learning. She noted that a continued goal was streamlining District communications, and that ParentSquare had helped with both accessibility and security.

Mr. Richards reviewed upcoming meeting dates, Board member contact information, and public hearing dates, all of which can be found on the Board section of the District website: www.sau8.org.

Ms. Higgins made a motion to adjourn.

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn (motioned by Ms. Higgins, seconded by Ms. Cannon).

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Cannon, *Secretary*
 Lauren Hynds, *Recorder*