

Technology Subcommittee Presentation to School Board

Monday, May, 19, 2008

The work of the Long Range Facilities Planning Committee began on March 10, 2008. The subcommittees were assigned and we began our committee work on March 26, 2008.

The Technology Subcommittee welcomed Mr. Tanner to the district by bombarding him with requests for information, as we began to assess the district's technology status. Carroll ISD is lucky to have Mr. Tanner on our team. We, as a committee, are grateful for his knowledge and guidance.

The Technology Subcommittee has worked with the CTO to assess the current state of technology in CISD. This assessment has consisted of tours of the technology data center, review of operations and procedures and the evaluation of existing and new technologies, both hardware and software related. Our research has found that the district is currently operating on "past-end-of-life" network equipment that, for the most part, is no longer supported by the vendor. As you might suspect, this poses an immense challenge in maintaining acceptable system performance and reliability levels.

Over the past year, the district has invested heavily in some new and innovative technologies, such as video security, interactive white boards, and Zen Workstation management tools. These technologies have the potential to greatly enhance the education process and increase productivity for teachers and administrators; however, our concern is that our current network infrastructure and design will not accommodate the increased data demands that these technologies require in order for us to consider them a successful implementation.

While we are in the process of developing our recommendations for a long-range technology plan, we feel that there are some intermediate steps that need to occur in order to ensure acceptable performance and reliability for our students and staff, short-term.

The following is a list of things we consider short term immediate needs for the district:

Infrastructure Upgrade

- Main switches at network core
- Switches at several campuses that have taken performance hits due to congestion

~~Security~~ Upgrade Mission Critical Applications Systems

- Skyward

Implement a New Data Backup Solution

- To include off-site storage

Network Monitoring and Management Solution

- Be proactive in managing problems on the network
- Have an "insurance" plan for replacing failed network equipment

CISD has already invested in some of the visible technology enhancements to educate our kids, but the underlying infrastructure does not allow for the maximum return on this investment. While the request for funds for these immediate needs will support the "invisible" aspects of the district's technology, it is an

essential investment to allow the visible items to function at their fullest capabilities. These technologies are not just the future, but for many, they are already the present. ~~As OISD attempts to recruit and retain the highest caliber of teachers, having these classroom tools will become a table stake.~~

~~One potential risk of not enhancing the underlying network is lack of performance of this new technology. We believe that it is critical for these new technologies to be successfully deployed. Initial failures limit the long term ability to succeed. These new technologies require training by the staff and if they do not perform as promised, it is very difficult for the employees to embrace these changes as well as future technology enhancements and changes.~~

~~OISD students are some of the most technologically advanced kids in the state. They are used to state of the art systems and technology.~~ While the district needs to address the long-range requirements for new technology, the underlying technology must be enhanced now so that future investment decisions can be accurately assessed and made.

The Technology Subcommittee feels that this list covers the short-term immediate needs required to enhance network security and sustain high performance and reliability. We further believe this work can be completed over the summer to ensure our system can accommodate increased network traffic as we return for the 08-09 school year.

Thank you for considering the needs addressed above.