

NEWFOUND AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL MEETING
February 15, 2011 4:00 PM
NMMS - LMC

In attendance: Josh Mulloy, Sandra Heaney, David Rose, Daniel Rossner, Christine Hunewill, Vincent Paul Migliore (4:25)

DR called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm

Old Business

After apologizing for the long duration since the last meeting, a general briefing was given by Dan on the status of major activities undertaken by the IT Group over the past 8 months. This included:

- Submission and State approval of the three year Technology Plan.
- Configuration and installation of all switch gear concurrent with our new WAN Services provider, G4 Communications. (Josh provided extensive details on the structure at the request of attendees)
- Configuration and deployment of new servers District wide.
- Re-imaging and deployment all assets previously imaged with the Ubuntu operating system.
- Acquisition through competitive bid and installation of 50 new PC Assets.
- Hiring and Training of new Technology Support Specialist Michael SHEMELEY.

New Business

A briefing was given on the issues we have been addressing at the user level since the school year began. The quota issue was discussed, with general agreement from the council as to its' appropriateness. The discussion turned to the subject of Infrastructure, and how the wiring in our buildings may be the cause of many user related and maintenance related issues the IT staff is addressing on a daily basis.

Josh provided details as to the issues regarding identification of wiring and switchgear. David recommended we consider buying a "line ringer". The group had a brief conversation about cabling types, capacity settings, and IDF vs. MDF switches. Josh led a conversation about the backbone interface and how we are attempting to straighten it out.

Dan briefed group on our current exploration of various proposals from potential vendors capable of analyzing and assessing our infrastructure from our current nodes to Points of Presence as this may be the primary bottleneck in our data network. Josh is also exploring options with G4 for altering bandwidth allocations that may cause bottlenecks too. Currently, our total internet bandwidth of 4 MPS that is shared by the schools is

pegged (maxed out) all day. The example of Maine was brought up, where the new state directive is for each elementary and middle to school to have 10 MPS and each high school is to have 50 MPS of dedicated bandwidth. We will report back to the council at our next meeting with some options that have been determined.

Christine detailed how the netbook assets purchased last summer are being used in typical classrooms, not ICT rooms. She further recommended that the best re-purposing of the assets coming out of service at the high and middle schools would be to start replacing the assets in individual teachers' rooms. These are the oldest and slowest assets that could really improve teaching in the "standard" classrooms.

David asked if we were using Blackboard or Moodle for teaching or administering exams, student data, etc.; discussed how it works. We all talked about student data systems and our Web2School product.

Josh briefed the group on our recommendation of Google Apps as a platform for student accounts (including email) and digital portfolio storage. Sakai also discussed. The Council concurred with Josh's direction on this, and supported the development of this program through Policy and School Board.

A lively discussion then took place with regards to student owned assets, (such as cell phones) and the various access methods that individuals can now access the internet from within our buildings, whether it be through our networks, or cellular services we can't monitor or control. Is this bad or good? We reviewed the District policy on cell phone use by students (prohibited during school day). Questions arose as to whether or not we could leverage these private assets to reduce our need for acquiring additional assets?

A reminder was asked of the group to review the tech plan; Dan briefly discussed the conflict between the Board's Computing Philosophy (platform directive) and the potential for helping students with the use of grants providing i-pads to the district.

In reviewing the problems discussed at the beginning of the meeting, Vincent discussed having a survey prepared and administered, to get feedback on the problems being experienced by IT users. Dan mentioned the high school survey and his concern about unrealistic expectations on the part of those filling out such a survey. The group understands both the needs and concerns, and will work at their next meeting on developing a potential survey document. If nothing else, to take the pulse.

Christine: The concern is the students

Vincent: We need the info to fix the problem.

Adjourned at 5:35 pm.