Meeting #10 – Tuesday, May 28, 2013
3:00 – 5:00pm District Office, Board Room

Minutes

Present: Jason Alexander, Kirstin Copeland, Paula Dagnon, Rob Freeman, John Getchell, Atrina Gharai, Ralph Hayden, Michael Jay, Gil Lund, Darrell Lutton, Brian MacNevin, Carter Maden, Connor McGreevy, Linda Miller, Kristin O'Malley, Brian Pahl, Tracy Shaw, Michele Shenkin, Jim Straatman, Jeff Thran, Tom Venable (partial), Greg Verbarendse, Joe Wooding

Meeting started at 3:02pm

Welcome: Co-chair Ralph Hayden welcomed the committee and gave an overview of the agenda.

Tech Plan Overview: Tom Venable updated the group on the search for a new Director of Educational Technology. The District conducted a nation-wide search and interviewed several candidates, including two candidates a second time; neither candidate was selected for the position. The search will continue and will incorporate the perspective gained by the process so far. Tom explained that the difficulty in finding someone is related to the fact that the District is changing how it is organizing itself around the work to be done, taking into consideration the Bellingham Promise and The Priorities for Progress.

Tom informed the group that a contract is being drawn up to hire Thuan Nguyen, IT Director from the Kent School District, to be a "thought partner" in the interview process and to consult on our educational technology program/resources (details TBD). Mr. Nguyen's outside consulting firm is Sound Strategy Technology Group and he has consulted for several districts across the country and overseas. He will be in the district June 10th and 11th to meet with Network Services staff and tour some of the schools. Tom said if you are interested in meeting Thuan or having him come to your school to contact Tom.

Tom mentioned that one of the district's forthcoming challenges in the area of technology and technology integration is redefining and reshaping the role of Library Media Specialists. To clarify, Tom explained that in moving forward the necessary role will be that of Instructional Coach. Not all LMSs may be effective instructional coaches. Several other districts (including Kent) have chosen to eliminate the position at some or all levels. Tom stated that it in order to ensure that the LMS position is relevant their jobs need to be instructionally focused around staff and students.

Tom agreed with the sentiment of a Committee member who stated that he struggled to communicate to stakeholders what things are going to look like next year. He said we are going to need to continue to struggle, looking at where we want to be and what it will take to get there, bringing in necessary resources to help us make these decisions. We need to be clear about what our direction, outcomes and support will be for the future.

Tech Levy Cash Flow:
Ralph distributed an updated version of the "unofficial draft of a Tech Levy cash flow scenario" from last meeting. This version includes a column for clarification and details. The Committee broke into groups of 3 to review the document and generate key questions that, when answered, will enhance our ability to communicate information to community members and decision makers. The groups generated the following list:

Key Questions

- Are there less expensive alternatives to subscription databases?
- Is there a way we can access the "net ending cash" for current tech purchases?
- How do we represent the benefit to instruction of subscriptions and salaries?
- How do we measure the cost-effectiveness of each line item?
- What are the items included in staff refresh and how are they determined? How do we ensure that this is not at the expense of student computers?
- How do we justify the large amount of money transferred from the tech levy to cover items previously covered by general fund?
- Will future years look like this year's cash flow?
- Can some of the future year's infrastructure costs be used in other areas?

The Committee broke into subcommittees at 4:05 for the remainder of the meeting.