

The Technology Committee of the Northside Independent School District met on Monday, February 5, 2007, at NISD Central Office, 5900 Evers Road, San Antonio, TX, 78238, at 3:00 p.m.

Members Present: G. Lynn Britton (Chairman), Karen Freeman

Trustees Attending: Annie Holmes, Katie Reed

Staff Attending: Dr. John Folks, Kelly Smith, George Torres, Lori Jones, Gerri Collier, Ernest Vasquez, Elizabeth Langer, Joyce Stevens

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Britton called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Discussion of Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology 2006-2020

The Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology 2006-2020 replaces the LRPT 1996-2010. The plan may be found in its entirety (110 pages) online at the TEA website. It includes recommendations for school districts, the State Board of Educator certification, education service centers, higher education, and parents, community and the private sector. The recommendations are in four categories: Teaching and Learning; Educator Preparation and Development; Leadership, Administration and Instructional support; and Infrastructure. Kelly Smith discussed the goals included in the plan, as well as a self-assessment of where the district is regarding the recommendations in the plan (attached). Questions and comments from the committee included the possibility of online dual credit courses, the assessment of student technology literacy, core competencies for employees, credit recovery online using Plato, controlling students' abuse of technology as devices get smaller, online testing, and online databases. It was agreed that Northside technology is far ahead of other school districts with regard to the recommendations in the plan. A question was raised regarding staffing, and how we can keep up with the technology growth with our current staffing. Our CIT program is a great way for supporting instructional technology needs on campus, as is the campus librarian. The long range plan indicates that the technician to computer ratio should be 1:500 and 1:350 by 2020. Northside is currently at 1:1000. Dr. Folks stated that approval has been given for the technicians to receive overtime pay to catch up on the current backlog of technology work orders, as well as to include additional technicians in a growth package for next year. Technology support is vital to instruction and operations in our district.

3. Status Report on NISD/Elert 10-Year Technology Plan

NISD retained Elert & Associates in July 2001 to assist the District in the review of its technology resources and uses, and to help plan for the future uses of technology. This resulted in the 179 page NISD Technology Master Plan, 2002-2012. Two status reports have been provided to the Board on our progress in implementing the plan: one in July

2004 and one today (attached). The majority of the items in the plan have already been accomplished or are on-going. Kelly addressed the few items that were in process or had not been implemented due to changes in technology, priorities, funding, etc. The staff responded to questions regarding installation of software, online courses, and moving away from Region 20 with the upcoming Business/HR and Data Warehouse systems.

4. Discussion on Internet Filtering

This item was included on the agenda in response to a request from a committee member. Federal law requires school districts to use filtering software that attempts to block access to inappropriate sites and visual depictions on the Internet. The Board policy and Administrative Regulation regarding internet safety and filtering was referenced. Additional information about Internet Safety and Filtering was discussed (attached), and may be found on the NISD website. It was noted that we have a process in place for blocking sites that are not automatically blocked by the filtering software, and conversely, unblocking sites that a teacher or program director needs unblocked for a period of time. Approximately 20 sites per month are submitted to the Internet Safety Committee for review and action. We do block Google images, because even though the particular site may be blocked, the offensive image may show up in the thumbnails. The committee was shown that there are many safe alternatives for finding images for instructional use, using one or all of the searchable online databases to which NISD subscribes (attached). Questions were raised as to whether the blocking was district-wide (yes), or could be blocked at a single campus (no), or by grade level only (no).

5. Discussion of Bond 2007 Initiatives

There was no discussion of the Bond 2007 initiatives, as they have been discussed and approved in prior Board meetings.

6. Update on Data Warehouse, Business/HR Management System, Document System Initiatives.

All three of these important initiatives are underway. Kelly provided a summary of activities that have been completed on all three to date.

The Data Warehouse system is a digital repository for all the data that's important and necessary for a district to make informed decisions, whether it's student data, instructional data, financial data or employee data. The data warehouse servers will be housed in the Technology Services Data Center located at Central Office. When we have this system, it will put us on the leading edge of school districts. This initiative is funded by Bond '04. We hope to do some proof of concept projects with the data warehouse in the spring or summer.

A new Business/HR management system will bring increased functionality, such as on-line purchase orders and work flow. The acquisition phase for this system will be this spring. This initiative is also funded by Bond '04. Both of these initiatives will eventually replace the current data repository and business/HR system that we use at Region 20.

The function of the Document Management system will be to provide staff with the ability to securely digitally store and track, retrieve and manage electronic documents.

Another new information management system, to be undertaken at a later date, will be a new Student Information System. Staff responded to questions regarding online registration and mass e-mailing to parents. We do not currently collect parent e-mail addresses in our student information system, as they change so often. Parents may e-mail teachers through the Parent Connection System.

7. Other Business

There being no other business or questions, Dr. Folks ended the meeting by thanking the Technology Services staff by stating that the technology in this district is one of the most advanced compared to all the other school districts.

8. Adjourn

Mr. Britton adjourned the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

Approved: _____ Date: _____
George Lynn Britton, Chairman

Attachments: Meeting of the Board Technology Committee PowerPoint
Long-Range Plan for Technology 2006-2020
NISD Technology Master Plan Status Report
Internet Safety & Filtering
Safe Image Searches on the Internet
Board Policy CQ
Admin Reg TEC-01
Data Warehouse: What is it?