

MINUTES
WOONSOCKET TECHNOLOGY SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2016
MCFFEE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
108 High Street, Woonsocket, RI 02895

Meeting started at 6:30 p.m. For the record the following individuals were present: Soren Seale, SC Chairman; Valerie Gonzalez, SC Member; Patrick McGee, Superintendent; Alfred Notarianni, Director of Technology; Sheri Thibeault, Recording Secretary; Geoff Barrow, Network/System Administrator; Ted Wheeler, Instructional Technology Specialist - Elementary; Tom Wakley, Instructional Technology Specialist – WHS; and Heather Neil, Technology Coach

Update on the Technology Infrastructure in the District

The Technology Director handed out the dashboard to the Committee that shows the distribution of the laptops, and lets them know that it will be done on the 31st of this month. We have also purchased new printers for the district that are all the same and have been configured and set up in all the schools. We have also updated all the remaining Apple computers as long as the operating system could be the latest and greatest. If the existing student computers could not be updated or able to update to the newest Google Chrome browser, because we are a Google District so we then replaced their Apple with a HP Stream Laptop. There was some controversy because some of the teacher that received those devices by going to training and have earned those devices years ago, they feel they should not have to give them up. When this does happen AI goes out to personally talk to the teacher. The concern of the School Committee Members was that we are replacing computers that we did not pay for with computers that we did pay for, and that if a teacher only knows how to use an Apple computer are they being shown how to use the new device. AI reassures them that only computers that cannot be updated are being replaced, and that if they have to replace an Apple computer with a HP Stream someone from the Technology Team will show them how to use their new laptop. If for some reason we missed someone we are doubling back and addressing those issues. That's why you don't see it at 100% on the dashboard. Those issues should be done by the end of this week. Also the Network has been updated to accommodate all the new laptops. We did also have to purchase some color printers for the Special Ed and Art classrooms. The Donor Choose Program laptops are going to be updated and handed out to the teachers. There is an issue with the fax machines in the district, and we have copy machines that are equipped to receive faxes; so that will help with fax machine that need to be replaced. Also there will be codes that are going to be in place so when the teacher sends something to print he/she will have to put in their code so just in case there is a student's private information that needs to be printed it will not be sitting on the copier waiting for the teacher to pick it up. That will take us up to the end of the month to finish. We also purchased carts, Ipevos and projectors for the district. So everyone will now have the same equipment throughout the district.

Mr. Seale would like the dashboard updated with a little more information; when we talk about wanting to purchase new equipment for some program he wants to see pricing on all different devices. A print out of what the program is and how it would be beneficial for the students of Woonsocket.

There has been an issue with teachers purchasing equipment for their classrooms. Once the equipment is in the classroom it is now WED Equipment. We need to make a Draft Policy so the teachers are aware of this Policy. There is a Draft Policy Sub Committee Meeting on December 7th, so make sure the **Technology Director drafts a policy for the meeting**. There was some concern about what is happening with the old equipment. AI tells everyone that we have a company that comes and picks up the computers and they will be recycling and clear out the hard drives to be recycled.

The work order system is being addressed. As of right now we have 194 open work order. All staff is being told that they have to put in a work order for any work that needs to be done. With the Technology Department busy with setting up the new laptops and the network the work order system has been neglected. So as of right now we are going to go school by school and making sure the work orders are being completed as a team. We are hoping that it will not take longer than 48 hours to have a ticket addressed. Mr. Seale would like a **Benchmark from Samanage** to see where we are at as of right now for the next meeting. We should have 75 open tickets at any time.

Next we are going to be looking at the gaps in the network and the server rooms. We have meet with RIDE and we will be getting the work done by January. So if there is a high network area we might have to put in a different access point than is there now. The server room ventilation is being addressed; also the server room cannot be used as a storage closet. As of right now we have purchased bigger servers so they are throwing out less heat, and all the supplies that are in the server rooms will need to be moved out, and we need to place locks on the server rooms.

Lighthouse Initiative, we would like to purchase Chrome Books and Storage Stations for the 7 Elementary Schools and for the 2 Middle Schools. Mr. Seale wants to know in more detail of what we are going to purchase especially when it is for the same type of devices. He needs more information because he wants to make sure the money is spent for the right purpose. Dr. McGee explained the Lighthouse Initiative. The main purpose behind the Lighthouse Classrooms is to get the teacher away from the stand and deliver model and be more one on one. Two classrooms in every Elementary School and Middle School will have a blended learning classroom. The Highlander Institute is an organization that provides Professional Development Coaching and Training to districts around infusion of technology within the curriculum. There are many districts across the state that have been a part of this work with Fuse Rhode Island. Heather Neil is a fellow with the program and now she is going around to other districts and

provides coaching around infusing technology into instruction. We applied a couple of years ago knowing that we would not be accepted because of where we were in technology. But I knew in a couple of years we would be in a position where we could support the use of technology across the district to support teachers and to provide opportunity to students to learn in different ways. Not just the teacher in front of them giving the student the information but to provide students with the opportunity to work in groups and work on the computer to practice skills, do research and to do projects. Right now the students don't have access to that. The reason for Fuse is to make our students competitive and to get them ready for the world of computers. Then there is the whole PARCC Testing that needs to be computerized and the students need to be familiar with a computer to take the test. So we re-applied and were accepted and have been working with the Fuse RI Group, and what we have done is we have meet with them many times and have created a vision of what Blended Learning would mean for Woonsocket and why we are doing it. We rolled it out in the beginning of this year at our orientation day so the staff is aware of it. Our teachers have already attended PD where they have learned more in incorporating technology into their classrooms. Not every classroom will be a Lighthouse Classroom. We would like to start small and see how it goes, and we want to have the other teachers see how good this is working in the Lighthouse Classrooms, so they will get excited about this program. I believe we need to do a presentation at the next School Committee Meeting complete with pricing and the benefits that it will be to our students. We need to make sure that our kids are competitive with the other school districts in the area because Technology is always evolving and if we don't our students will be left behind.

Discussion on PARCC Waiver

Mr. Seale and Ms. Gonzalez are worried that if the whole district has to take PARCC on a computer he feels some children will not be able to navigate the computer properly to do the test effectively. If they don't have the knowledge of computers how are they going to be able to take a test when they don't even know how to copy and paste something on a computer. The results are too high on the test and they feel the test should be on paper still. They feel we could go set up a meeting with the Commissioner and explain our worries and to do a paper test. Dr. McGee hands out the Waiver Form to everyone. Dr. McGee explains that there are two reasons to apply for a waiver; one is that we don't have devices for the students to use to take the test online and the second is the infrastructure that we will not be able to support all the devices. So based on what the Commissioner is saying in the Waiver they want to the children to take the test online. This year it is the device issue that is holding us back from taking the test online. What if the School Committee decides that they don't want to do this to their students and we vote that it has to be taken on paper this year. We would like to see technology intergraded into the curriculum so the children would know how to navigate a computer to take the test efficiently. We would like to ask for a waiver for grades 3 and 4 so at the Elementary Level we would still be testing grade 5. The Middle School level would be fine to take the test online and at the High School level we would have to do paper because there are not enough devices. Mr. Seale wants to apply for the waiver for grade 5 too. Dr. McGee and AI agree that we should set up an appointment with the Commissioner to address this issue. There is a dead line of October 31st to get the Waiver in to the Commissioner.

Next Committee meeting date

The next Sub-Committee Meeting will be held at McFee on December 15th at 6:30 p.m. The agenda will include; a detailed district snapshot and what is the Vision for Technology now and in the Future. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheri Thibeault, Recording Secretary