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Board Report - Technology
May 24, 2016

Looking Back:

It is the time of year when a lot of us look back and are amazed and wonder where the time went! It has been a big year for us in technology and I'm very pleased to say that the major projects planned for this year are all still on course. This is in no small way thanks to the creative and, perhaps even courageous budgeting which Mark has overseen. The big four projects (network infrastructure upgrade, video security system, wireless upgrade, and lockdown strobes) are queued up and ready to go if and when we feel that our budget capacity is there and that our financial position will remain healthy upon completion and when the bills are paid.

What's Current

This is the year when our network is to face the big test as our students face their big test by way of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium exam.. We did some testing last year, albeit on a smaller scale, to be sure we could handle the technology component.. This year, we are in with both feet. I'm sure the Director of Teaching and Learning Report may touch upon the specifics for the test and (I hope) will have slipped in a "things are going great with the technology side" of testing. Even if it isn't there, allow me to be the one to say that the simultaneous testing of hundreds of students is going really well.

That isn't to say there have been no issues; there have been issues. We were extremely fortunate that our teachers took the time to have students take the 'practice test' so that we were able to see where our problems would likely arise and address those areas prior to testing. The teachers doing the practice test were patient as we worked through the connectivity issues and, as a result, we were in a much better place from which to start "the real thing". That "real thing" started this week. So far, I'm really happy with the minimal number of problems we've had and believe that the problems we faced were not even within our network to solve. I realize that this is begging the gods to smite me for a lack of humility, but one can't help but test fate once in a while.

Looking Forward

For the technology department, as the year starts to wind down, we will be turning our attention to inventory, maintenance of systems, installing some of the new projects. and getting two new portables onto the network.

If things go as planned, next year we will have a lot of new systems running. With these new systems comes the double edged sword: new management software. Back end systems like switches, security cameras, etc. all have some sort of interface that the owner uses to manage/configure the system. These are notorious for their spartan appearance, often kludgy style, and funky ways of connecting to the device. To be honest, the learning of these interfaces is a big part of how well the system can be used... so it pays to learn them well. I look forward to it.