

Hightower proposes upgrade to Edwardsville School District's technology infrastructure

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At Monday night's Board of Education meeting, Superintendent Ed Hightower provided a proposal to the Board of Education to upgrade the District's technology infrastructure over the next three years.

Superintendent's Comments – January 26, 2015

Technology Lease Purchase

The District's technology infrastructure consisting of its network, fiber optic cabling, and CISCO switches all function together and operate as the "central nerve center" for our entire platform.

The District must upgrade this infrastructure. The last complete upgrade occurred in 2002. With the current technology infrastructure, the District network operates:

- 2,500 computers
- Financial information system
- Student information system
- E-mail system
- Cafeteria Point-of-Sale system
- Telecommunications network
- Security network
- Webservers
- Curricular resources
- State assessments

Student and staff internet use has increased dramatically, creating a strain on our network bandwidth since most of our current curriculum and assessment applications contain large amounts of video and audio content.

For example, using the PolyVision Interactive white board and projection system in each classroom, teachers are now saving videos of their lessons and posting them to their websites for students and parents to access from home.

The District must take the next step in upgrading its infrastructure to increase bandwidth and to support wireless access. If these steps are not taken, the District will experience problems with network speed and incompatibility with current and future technology.

The bottom line is that the District has reached a point where more network bandwidth is required than the current infrastructure can support. At times, with the current bandwidth in place, slow performance and unreliable access for some applications is negatively impacting student learning and classroom instruction.

As the District moves forward with the implementation of tablets and state mandated on-line testing, our major concern is that the network will fail, negatively impacting the productivity of our students and employees. The District has been fortunate to get the number of years that it has out of the existing infrastructure and predicts failure in the near future if nothing is done.

Technology Goals

Goal 1: Install fiber optic cabling and upgrade the network infrastructure in all schools.

- Outside vendors will install fiber optic cabling
- District employees will install and configure the network components
- All work will be completed by the end of July 2015

Goal 2: Install wireless access infrastructure at Edwardsville High School, Edwardsville High School South, Liberty Middle School, Lincoln Middle School, and Hadley by July 2015.

Goal 3: Install wireless access infrastructure to intermediate and primary schools beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, if funds are available.

Funding

The District would fund the infrastructure upgrades by entering into a lease purchase agreement, as we have done in the past, with First Clover Leaf Bank. The lease would be for \$1 million payable over a ten-year period at an interest rate of 3%. The annual payments would be \$113,351.00.

Bid Requirements

The District is not required to bid per the Illinois School Code (Section 105 ILCS 5/10-20.21 Contracts) which exempts “purchases and contracts for the use, purchase, delivery, movement, or installation of data processing equipment, software, or services

and telecommunications and interconnect equipment, software and services.” However, the District is in the process of receiving bids/quotes from qualified vendors.