Technology Director
Board Report

May 25th, 2010

Technology Support
This past month has been a great opportunity for Skot Barker to not only demonstrate the learning he has accomplished since joining the team in November, but to continue to expand his learning as he takes on more challenges. As the only fulltime dedicated technician at the moment, the demands on his time have never been greater. I am extremely pleased with how well he has handled the additional workload while continuing to develop and maintain a positive working relationship with the staff and students of the district. He continues to field incoming requests while finding time to develop innovative solutions to many novel problems with which he is presented.

The renewed commitment to making helpdesk (the web-based system for reports of trouble) has been very helpful during this time. With fewer hours to provide service, the wait time for some problems has become longer. However, the responses to urgent requests have improved markedly and there have been many positive comments from staff about the improvement.

Technical Support Specialist II
The currently vacant position for TSS2 has been posted and interviews will have occurred for four candidates by the time of the board meeting on Tuesday evening. I am looking forward to adding a new member to the technology team. In conjunction with Rob Williamson (this position also assists Rob in the area of HVAC), finding the person with the requisite combination of skills will be a challenge but they play an important role in the areas of maintenance and technology.

District Technology Plan
The technology plan presented last month was accepted by the state after several small revisions. I appreciate the board's willingness to endorse the plan even though it may have little direct benefit to us in terms of strategic planning. The work of the Technology Task Force will hopefully be more relevant to the future efforts within the area of technology.

Bandwidth Use
Bandwidth (the amount of Internet-based traffic flowing both in and out of the district) has become a large concern for the users in district. Although we doubled our bandwidth last year, we are already outstripping its capacity to transport data efficiently and quickly. The consequences of this saturation of bandwidth is felt by all users (slow response times in getting to web pages) as well as significant problems accessing data on the Skyward system (some users have reported waiting up to 30 seconds for a page to appear). This saturation is very inconsistent but we do recognize the source of the data as originating from within district. The heavy use of the labs along with more use of online video sources is the most likely culprits.

To manage this problem, I have been working with Jeff Andrews of ESD112 and hope to be able to provide a bandwidth management tool that will allow us to better understand what traffic is being sent through the network as well as the tools to manage/prioritize the packets of data we're sending out to the Internet.