

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

Work Session

MINUTES

April 4, 2011

President Brophy called the work session to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the FNSBSD Administrative Center at 520 Fifth Avenue. The work session was called to discuss technology, board protocols, and board planning.

Present:

Kristina Brophy, President
Sharon McConnell, Vice President
Sue Hull, Treasurer
Sean Rice, Clerk
Silver Chord, Member
Wendy Dominique, Member

Absent:

Leslie Hajdukovich, Member

Staff Present:

Pete Lewis, Superintendent of Schools
Dave Ferree, Assistant Superintendent – Facilities Management
Mike Fisher, Chief Financial Officer
Wayne Gerke, Assistant Superintendent – Secondary
Roxa Hawkins, Assistant Superintendent – Elementary
Peggy Carlson, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Traci Gatewood, Director of Grants and Special Programs
Kathy Port, Elementary Curriculum Coordinator

Educational Technology Plan

Traci Gatewood, grants and special projects director, Peggy Carlson, executive director of curriculum and instruction, and Kathy Port, elementary curriculum coordinator, reviewed the implementation of the District's Educational Technology Plan and Technology Curriculum Guidelines. The curriculum was based on the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards. It was intended to provide support, guidance, and instructional suggestions for teachers in order to infuse technology within all content areas. The technology plan had been submitted and accepted by the state and developed as a requirement of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

FNSBSD Educational Technology Vision

“Preparing our students for the future requires innovative technology. A variety of technology formats and accessible resources allows every child within the FNSBSD to reach his or her potential and achieve success. An array of quality digital resources, online learning for students and teachers, and technologies, some of them not yet discovered, will shape how teachers teach and students learn. When students have access to technology resources across all content areas, not only will they increase their academic achievement, but they will become proficient in the use of technology and be responsible for the ethical and safe use of information. Support to teachers will be vital as they infuse new and innovative technologies into rigorous curricula and into their teaching practices. By positioning ourselves to seek out and embrace the practical application of technology to improve academic achievement and college and career readiness, FNSBSD will ensure students who graduate are able to compete and excel as they shape our future world.”

Educational Technology Plan (continued)

Introduction to the 2011-2014 FNSBSD Educational Technology Plan

The following nine goals were established as the foundation of the FNSBSD Educational Technology Plan (ETP), which was developed with input from a variety of internal and external stakeholders:

- Goal 1: Ensure all students and staff have equitable access to technology (bandwidth, software, and hardware).
- Goal 2: Standardize all hardware and software use and management and establish a process for evaluating and adding new technologies.
- Goal 3: Provide professional development opportunities for all district personnel to attain competency in the use of designated technologies to increase student achievement.
- Goal 4: Develop a K-12 Technology Curriculum that integrates technology into all content areas.
- Goal 5: Provide for the ongoing assessment of the technology skills expected of and demonstrated by students and instructional staff.
- Goal 6: Use technology to enhance communication within the District and with the public.
- Goal 7: Continue to develop and update policies governing the use and management of technology.
- Goal 8: Investigate educational structures and innovative strategies to optimize the use of technology to improve student achievement.
- Goal 9: Fund educational technology and evaluate its use and impact.

Technology would be used to help students develop 21st century skills. From the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, *Learning for the 21st century school: a report and mile guide for 21st century skills*, "Today's education system faces irrelevance unless we bridge the gap between how students live and how they learn. Schools are struggling to keep pace with the astonishing rate of change in students' lives outside of school. Students will spend their adult lives in a multitasking, multifaceted, technology-driven, diverse, vibrant world and they must arrive equipped to do so." To support the development of 21st century skills for students, the District was incorporating the following six elements outlined in *Learning for the 21st Century School* into current practices:

- Emphasize core subjects
- Emphasize learning skills
- Use 21st century tools to develop learning skills
- Teach and learn in a 21st century context
- Teach and learn in a 21st century content
- Use 21st century assessments that measure 21st century skills

To improve student academic achievement, the District will integrate technology across all content areas during the curriculum development process. Curriculum development in all content areas was an ongoing process within the District. Normally, the District followed a six-year, four-phase curriculum review cycle to provide continual program planning and evaluation for each discipline. Curricular objectives were aligned to Alaska (AK) Content and Performance Standards. Additionally, the District would complete the development of the K-12 Technology curriculum, develop and provide a variety of high quality professional development opportunities, and investigate educational structures and innovative strategies to optimize the use of technology.

Educational Technology Plan (continued)

The objectives in the Technology Guidelines were correlated to the Alaska Standards. The educational objectives were formed in "I can" statements for student expectations for grade level groups. The goal of the document was to obtain feedback from teachers on the early out, scheduled for April 22. Part of the focus of the early out would be the Technology Guidelines Grades K-12 document. With the feedback, more time would be spent over the summer revising the document to have a second draft at the beginning of next school year.

The District would continue to stay abreast of current research that supported the use of teaching strategies, tools, professional development, and materials which supported and improved student academic achievement. The plan will continue to be refined as necessary to ensure it remained a useful guide for using technology to improve student achievement and to assist the District to meet its primary performance goals.

Board Questions/Comments

Board members had several questions and comments including:

- Board's role in the technology plan;
- ways of getting technology into the hands of students;
- similarities between the Technology Blueprint and Technology Plan;
- fluency of the document; routine Board updates on technology;
- anticipated results and goals from plan – support student achievement and maximizing resources;
- time commitment – same amount of time and effort should be devoted to core curriculum items such as math and reading;
- technology programs designed to keep students (especially boys) engaged and in school;
- incorporating technology into core areas;
- future change resulting from the plan;
- professional development and in-service presentations;
- technology consistency;
- funding;
- assessments;
- inventory control;
- E-Rate; and
- technology equity for all students.

Board members were very impressed with the plan and thanked Mrs. Gatewood, Mrs. Carlson, and Mrs. Port for their presentation and work coordinating the development of the plan.

The Board took a short recess at 6:40 p.m. and reconvened at 6:47 p.m.

Board Protocols/Planning

The superintendent and board members discussed their communication protocols and systems and expectations. Communications should go through the board president to the superintendent as a collective group. It was agreed the more opportunities board members had to hold conversations, the better the communications would be.

Board Protocols/Planning (continued)

Board members discussed their meeting times for special meetings and work sessions. Due to work conflicts, it was suggested the noon special meetings for student discipline and other executive session topics be scheduled in the evening to accommodate members' work schedules and allow more time for conversation and discussions. It was agreed to start work sessions at 6:00 p.m. instead of 5:30 p.m. It was suggested the meetings be scheduled every other Monday before a board meeting to allow for regular communication.

The Board reviewed a couple of different versions of the lobbyist evaluation form. Board members determined to have the lobbyist evaluated by the legislative committee and superintendent, since other members had little or no contact with Mr. Ringstad. It was suggested the lobbyist provide regular quarterly reports to the Board. There was discussion on the pros and cons, effectiveness, and budgetary implications of having a district lobbyist.

Board members were in agreement about continuing the ad-hoc committee to meet with the borough assembly ad-hoc committee on a regular basis, as well as on the lapse fund ordinance.

The District's attendance policies were of concern to the Board. Superintendent Lewis agreed the entire attendance program had to be revamped. A couple of board members requested a list of absences by school location. Student attendance was a complex issue and involved many aspects of a bigger issue, but there were some students who just did not attend school. There had to be significant consequences for not attending school and meaningful incentives for students to stay in school. The superintendent indicated the administration was revising the entire attendance program to bring back a draft program to the Board for consideration. The District had an obligation to do everything they could possibly do to get kids to come to school every day and be engaged. Each student had a story and it was important to reach them. There were certain things the District had power and control over to get students to school, but there was also an obligation on parents to get students to school.

The Board briefly reviewed the results of the Board's July 2010 retreat and would take time at a future meeting to review them in depth. There were many things going on in the District including the joint meeting with the assembly on the bond request; hiring of principals; the legislative session; and budget concerns. The District would be sending 50-60 people to Las Vegas for a PLC conference during the week of the June regular meeting. The Board was in consensus to move the June meeting to June 22-24. There was also a need to schedule a couple of work sessions to work on board priorities. Board members would be available to meet during the day on Friday, June 24.

The Anchorage School District was coordinating board training in late May or early June. Board members expressed interest in attending depending on costs and schedules. Superintendent Lewis would let them know Fairbanks might be interested depending on final dates and times.

Superintendent Lewis announced TerraNova science was not a mandatory requirement and asked about the Board's interest in continuing to administer it in the District. Some board members felt it might be good to reduce the number of assessment tests in the District. Some felt the entire assessment program had to be reviewed before a decision could be made. Superintendent Lewis would gather information on the District's assessments, including financial considerations.

Other Discussion

None

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Submitted by Sharon Tuttle, executive assistant to the Board of Education.