

Spring Independent School District

Bond Steering Committee Minutes

Tuesday, July 12, 2016

The third meeting of the Bond Steering Committee was held on Tuesday, July 12, 2016, in the Boardroom at the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, at 16717 Ella Blvd, Houston, TX 77090. The meeting's focus was on technology, how it supports student learning, and the district's needs in that area.

Attendees

Bond Steering Committee Members Present: 35

Call to Order

At approximately 6:05 p.m., Spring ISD Chief Communications Officer Tiffany Davila-Dunne began the meeting and introduced Superintendent Dr. Rodney Watson, who briefly welcomed participants and thanked them for attending.

Agenda

- **Meeting Overview and Objectives**
 - Ms. Dunne informed attendees on the steering committee schedule, then briefly explained the objectives and plans for the three remaining meetings.
 - The potential bond capacity was also reviewed and Ms. Dunne shared that the district is seeking the maximum amount of funding (\$30 million) to fund the district's technology needs and support a 21st century learning environment.
 - She explained that a demographic study, facility assessment and a technology audit were conducted to assess overall district needs. The information was used to develop the proposed technology elements.

- **Creating 21st Century Learning Environments (Presented by Assistant Superintendent, Special Projects Lauren Topek)**
 - Dr. Topek gave an overview of the research done to assess the district's standing in the area of technology including surveying a focus group of teachers from all levels, members of the ACE committee, librarians and campus principals. The focus group meetings were conducted during spring 2016.
 - She explained that the potential technology elements can be separated into two categories:
 - Core Technology (improved connectivity, enhanced infrastructure, new telephone system)
 - Instructional Technology (enhanced projection systems, devices for instruction, devices for students, and other classroom technology).
 - She also introduced the night's presenters (Fred Brenz, Susan Pelezo and Kimberly Russell) who would explain the district's needs and challenges.

- **Potential Technology Elements (presented by Director of Secondary Professional Learning Susan Pelezo).**
 - Discussion questions were posed to attendees: "What should our classrooms look like?" and "How do you use technology?"

- Attendees answered with various aspects of technology: communication, email, marketing, texting, training (webcast and videos).
- Ms. Pelezo then conducted a group interaction by separating attendees into three groups: Create, Collaborate and Communicate.
- Each group described how they used technology in their daily lives. The groups shared their responses:
 - Create group examples: writing, developing presentations, new software and coding.
 - Collaborate group examples: scheduling, planning and communicating.
 - Communicate group examples: face to face, political ideas, meetings, and social media.

Ms. Pelezo explained that our students need to be active users in the world of technology.

She stated that implementing newer technology will help students get a hands-on experience of the real world by creating digital portfolios, prototypes and experiments.

She also demonstrated via Google Docs how technology can be used to collect information collaboratively.

The district's primary goal is to have students "Future Ready" with technology being the vehicle.

Classroom Technology Integration (presented by Director of Secondary Social Studies Kimberly Russell).

Ms. Russell explained that technology improvements and additional technology exposure will help students to become college ready and also help students with challenges through improved access to data and information.

She explained that we are in the digital age and need to take advantage of creating a curriculum that will make each student an empowered learner, digital citizen, global collaborator and creative communicator.

The district has many layers of the curriculum; however, technology adds to the rigor and engagement of the lessons. A sample integrated curriculum plan was shared.

The function of technology in the curriculum allows students to experience and access things and information without leaving their classroom.

Ms. Russell demonstrated this by conducting a video call (via Google Hangouts) with Dr. Jennifer Warford (Director of Elementary Social Studies) who was on vacation in Florida.

Our Current Reality (presented by Director of Infrastructure Fred Brenz)

Mr. Brenz gave an overview of the current state (aging technology) and the ideal state (relevant technology) of the district.

He also explained that the district's decade-old technology would no longer support the 21st century tools and growth.

An attendee posed the question, "What happens if we don't make changes to current practices?" Mr. Brenz answered that a great example was that the district's telephone system was down the entire day. Although they were working to repair it, his team was aware that something needed to be done immediately to remedy the issue.

- **Potential Technology Elements**

- Mr. Brenz presented potential technology elements in two categories:
 - Core Technology Elements
 - Instructional Technology Elements
- Mr. Brenz explained how the two categories connect in improving the district's overall state of technology.

- Core Technology is the foundation to provide a more equitable and stable environment (behind the scenes).
- Meanwhile, Instructional Technology is what is needed to engage students (tablets, computer replacement, video recording, etc.).
- The recommendation for the full amount of technology funding was also reiterated by Mr. Brenz.
- **Wrap-up and Questions**
 - A number of additional questions were posed by committee members for further consideration, including:
 - A question about why Spring ISD's tax rate is one of the area's highest?
 - Immediate answer: 20 years ago the district was growing by 10% in student enrollment. A bond in 2005 was not passed but in 2007 a bond was passed. A recession hit in 2008, and the district with the 2007 bond was able to build new elementary schools, which increased the district's debt.
 - A request for additional details to be shared with the committee so they can better understand the specific technology needs under consideration.
 - A participant asked for details related to the 2007 bond. Chief Davila-Dunne shared an overview of that bond from a community mailout. It included details of the bond proposal.
 - A participant also requested an overview of the spending. Davila-Dunne promised to provide additional details at the next meeting.
 - A follow-up question about the valuation of the Exxon property and how that ongoing case will affect bond funding was posed. Ms. Ann Westbrooks reiterated the district's position.
 - A question about prioritizing certain potential bond elements (e.g., police command center, new middle school) was posed. The answer reminded participants that everything could not be accomplished within the allotted budget.
 - In wrapping up the evening's discussion, Chief Communications Officer Tiffany Davila-Dunne reiterated the importance of consuming information in the digital age and creating an environment supportive of student growth and learning. She reminded participants that it was important to mirror workplace and college learning environments.
 - Committee members were encouraged to reach out with follow-up questions (e.g., via email or the "elevate" communications tool on the district website).
 - The meeting schedule was briefly revisited and committee members were reminded of the meeting on Thursday, July 14, 2016.

Adjournment

After final thanks were offered to attendees, the meeting ended at 7:54 p.m.