

# MINUTES OF THE DIVISION TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the Division Technology Advisory Committee was held on Monday, October 20, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. in the School Board Office.

Mr. Rickey W. Parker, Assistant Superintendent for Information Technology, called the meeting to order and introductions followed.

The following members of the committee were in attendance:

Rickey W. Parker, Assistant Superintendent for Information Technology  
Lamar Jeter, Analyst  
Cathy Scolpini, Lead Instructional Technology Resource Teacher  
Darrell B. Wilkerson, Lead Technician  
Ann Cassada, Director of Secondary Education  
Dr. Lillian Holland, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction  
Clarke Scott, Director of Middle Education  
Nancy Towler, Director of Elementary Education  
Nathan Lumpkins, Assistant Principal, Chatham High  
Melanie Wade, Teacher, Chatham High  
Patricia Porter, Teacher, Dan River Middle  
Patricia Wilkerson, Administrative Assistant  
Valerie Dawson, Teacher, Gretna Middle  
Robin Holley, Administrative Assistant, Gretna Middle  
Cynthia Allen, Teacher Aide, John L. Hurt, Jr. Elementary  
Joan Davis, Bus Driver, Southside Elementary  
Andrea Johnson, School Nurse, Stony Mill Elementary  
Kendra Hardy, Teacher, Tunstall High  
Deloise Harris, Teacher, Union Hall Elementary.

The following members of the committee were not in attendance:

Jimmie Tickle, Principal, Career and Technical Center  
Dr. Brad Bryant, Director of Career and Technical Education  
Ellen Bass, Parent, Community Representative, Dan River High.

Mr. Parker presented an overview of the Pittsylvania County Schools Technology Plan of 2009-2012 required by the Department of Education for each school division. The local plan must be consistent with the State and the purpose is to bring broadband into each classroom. The funds received for our locality are about \$570,000.00 for the present school year. The primary purpose of the funding is to put computers in the classroom. The middle schools integration has been the primary focus of purchasing for the present. Peripherals such as smart boards, projectors, etc., are required to be purchased with local matching funds provided by the Board of Supervisors in the amount of \$108,800.00 for the present school session. The Technology Plan

is an ongoing process for the committee. The State provides funds for staffing in only two areas which consist of the nine instructional technology resource teachers and the technicians (one per 1,000 students). Funding is short for the extras. In the future, we are hoping the State will loosen up on the funds in the plan.

Mrs. Scolpini presented a power point presentation discussing the technology integration-gap/needs:

- Availability of computers for student use
- Availability of classroom technology
- Adequate technology training for teachers and administrators
- Availability of broadband internet access to homes of teachers and students.

Mrs. Scolpini stated that we have one of the most secure systems in the State.

Mr. Parker presented the following topics of Connectivity and Infrastructure-Needs:

- Fiber connection to Tunstall region
- Secure wireless internet access within schools
- Efficiency in video, voice and data networks
- Need for fault-tolerant, easily maintained servers
- Access to necessary software to facilitate transition between classroom and lab

Mr. Parker shared with the committee that he addressed the School Board relative to the project to build the network to the school system. The School Board agreed to provide each of the five regions with the same service. At the present, the service has been provided with the exception of the Tunstall area. The staff is presently working to accomplish this goal by purchasing fiber connection for Tunstall in the core network from the City of Danville and using only the microwave as a backup. The cost to provide this service consists of approximately \$48,000 to \$50,000 up front with a monthly fee of \$1,700.00 per month. Sixty-three percent of this is paid from erate funds. Mr. Parker built a consortium with Danville City and Pittsylvania County to buy broadband in bulk which cut the costs in half. This is very inexpensive compared to other costs to school system. This is a secure system to our network. Plans are to install voice over IP to provide better phone service without the phone lines and removing the phone lines with reserve use of 911 purposes only. This will eliminate calling the office and the lines being busy.

Dr. Holland questioned the lines, and Mr. Clarke Scott stated that in the event of an emergency situation this would be a better communication system.

Mr. Parker stated that a small pilot project is being planned to decide what we can and cannot do on this project.

Mrs. Scolpini presented the information on educational applications/instruction. This area is working hand in hand with the instructional department. What has been purchased for the

division level has been purchased for every school in applicable levels. Some individual schools have purchased software themselves to meet their needs to prepare for the SOLs. There is proof of a 40 percent improvement with the use of virtualization software on the SOLs. There are many excellent programs available to be used to help meet the SOLs, and even meeting the AYP. Maybe the State will release some of the funds to let us go in the direction necessary. Our accountability is really the SOLs and how we are spending the funds, and meeting the State criteria. We have to have a technology plan approved in order to have erate funding.

Mr. Parker stated that the survey given to the high school teachers requested more labs. A plan was adopted to provide a multi-purpose classroom in the renovation of the new high schools. A flat table design is planned to be used in many of the classrooms rather than laptops. This eliminates the carts, power cords and other items that cause problems. Full 100 MB connection will be available for every laptop. This will prevent the system from dying in the middle of SOL testing. This project is being worked on by Mr. Johnson with the process to begin in November. This is an excellent flexible system for a teacher interested in using the lab.

Mrs. Scolpini presented a video clip to the committee concerning the new student-based program to be implemented for the coming school session. It is an innovative system. The program is called "Power School" and "Power Teacher." It is a community web-based system. You can access the program from home, with documents to parents with grades and data. It will be necessary to make the system secure for only parent use.

Mrs. Scolpini discussed the Internet Safety Plan. The plan has been approved by the State and will be provided on line for the rest of State to view.

Mr. Parker complimented Mrs. Scolpini regarding the plan and the State recognized the outstanding work on the project.

Mr. Parker opened the floor to the committee for questions at the close of the meeting. There were no comments from the members. He encouraged the individuals to email him regarding any issues discussed today.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.