

Horry County Board of Education

Technology Committee

Technology Committee Meeting Minutes Monday, April 29, 2019 Minutes

Board Members Present:

Janice Morreale, Technology Committee Chairwomen
David Cox, Technology Committee Member
Ray Winters, Technology Committee Member
Sherri Todd, Technology Committee Member

Ken Richardson, Board Chairman
Shanda Allen
Helen Smith
Chris Hardwick
Neil James

Staff Members Present:

Dr. Rick Maxey, Superintendent
Velna Allen
Mary Anderson
Lisa Bourcier
Daryl Brown
Margo Cox
John Gardner

Kenny Generette
Mark Koll
Mark Wolfe

Media Present:

Katie Powell - My Horry News

Others Present:

As required by SC Law 30-4-80, local news media were informed of the date, time, place, and agenda of this meeting. Copies of the agenda were posted at the District Office and distributed to schools for posting.

Review and Approval of Agenda

Mr. Winters moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Todd seconded the motion. All voted in favor of approving the agenda. Motion passed.

Review and Approval of Minutes

Mr. Winters moved to accept the minutes of April 9, 2019, as presented. Ms. Todd seconded the motion; all voted in favor. Motion passed.

Technology Devices Update

Ms. Velna Allen updated the Committee on device breakage for the current school year. As of April 24th, the broken or cracked screens for iPads were 57 for 3rd and 4th grade, 78 for 5th grade, with a total of 135. This total includes all elementary schools. At the middle school level there were 760 issues reported with Chromebooks. Out of the 760 reported, 375 were battery related due to allowing the battery to completely drain. When a battery of a Chromebook is not used, and is allowed to completely drain, it will need to be replaced. We have reached out to our teachers and our tech contacts and provided them with directions to prevent this from happening over the summer. There were 267 laptops for 9th through 12th grade reported with cracked or broken screens.

Discussion

Mr. Winters asked if the chargers for the middle school devices would allow the battery to drain, and then automatically recharge. Mr. Winters stated that we would want to avoid the memory affect that would only allow them to be charged past a certain point once they were allowed to drain. Mr. Winters asked about the capacity of the chargers that would be used this summer, and if they would need to be monitored.

Ms. Allen stated that they were the same changers, but would not need to be monitored because we have new information that we did not have last year. If we fully charge the device, and then put it into sleep mode, it will not allow the battery to completely drain.

Ms. Allen also reminded the committee that the reported breakage for this time of year may not be completely accurate, as sometimes students are reluctant to report breakage until the end of the school year.

Mr. Winters stated that it was comforting to hear the numbers reported, and were probably 3 times less than breakage reported in the past. Mr. Winters stated that even if the numbers doubled at the end of the year, it would still be a fraction of what was reported in the past.

Ms. Allen report that the current 5th grade iPads can be upgraded to the next operating system one more time for the next school year with no issues.

Ms. Allen informed the committee that after reaching out to our Apple contact to inquire about the next iPad that would be released, they were told that Apple keeps information very close, and are very reluctant to release any information. The Apple contact stated they guarantee that Apple always tries to have the next release to be bigger and better.

Mr. Winters stated that he was concerned about what might be coming next is that the 9.7" iPad which is the current device that they are selling for students now to utilize technology that is already 3 years old. My concerns are not that it would be useable today, but given what our current refresh cycle is, it could prevent us from updating at that time, because the technology is already 3 years old. I don't want us to have a device that when it's time to refresh, it will already be six years old, and is outside of Apple's window of update cycles. Is it possible to get in touch with our Apple contact to see what they could offer that would be one up from the 9.7" iPad without going to the iPad Pro?

Ms. Allen stated that Apple suggest a three year refresh cycle although our board approved a four year refresh.

Ms. Morreale asked about the possibility of doing a refresh for the 2019-2020 school year since we told the principals we would, and then develop a plan to get grades 3, 4 and 5 back on the same device.

Mr. Winters stated that his main concern was being able to update in the future.

Ms. Allen stated that although she understood Mr. Winters concerns, she felt that because we told the principals that we would do a refresh, and that it has also been published, and for that reason the Technology Department was recommending that we do the refresh now, allowing us to make plans for the next device.

Mr. Winters asked if it were possible to speak with our Apple contact to see if they could offer a device that would be one grade up from the 9.7" iPad without going to the iPad Pro.

Ms. Morreale stated that if they did not have a new device to offer, we would stay with the 9.7" iPad and push out for future refresh to keep in line with grades 3 and 4.

Dr. Maxey stated that he wanted to clarify that the plan was to purchase the new device for the 5th grade but delay the refresh for the 5th grade until we refresh the 3rd and 4th grade, so that all grades have the same device and the same refresh cycle.

Ms. Allen stated that technically, we would hold the new 5th grade device for 5 years instead of four.

Ms. Morreale confirmed and asked Dr. Maxey if that would be ok with him.

Dr. Maxey stated that he had the same concerns as Mr. Winters and did not want us to own a device and before we get to the 5th year, it becomes obsolete. I just want to be sure that at the end of 5 years, we have the possibility of upgrading.

Dr. Maxey confirmed that the plan was to check to see if a new device was available, and if not, we would refresh 5th grade and may possibly need to move up the 3rd and 4th grade to get them in sync with the 5th grade.

Adjourn

Motion was moved to adjourn, and met with a second; all voted in favor. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Margo Cox
Administrative Asst. – Student Services

Approved: _____