



Excellence in Education

## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** 14 June 2011  
**To:** Board of Trustees  
**From:** Tim Monds, Superintendent  
**Originator:** Emilie Keane, Associate Superintendent-Learning Services  
**Resource:** Tracy Newton, Manager of Technology  
**Subject:** **Information Technology Department Report**

---

**Recommendation:**

That the Board of Trustees receives as information the Information Technology Department Report as presented at the Regular Meeting of 14 June 2011.

Administration would be pleased to respond to questions.

*Emilie Keane*

EK:jlf



# Information Technology Report

2010 – 2011

Prepared by Tracy Newton, Manager of Technology

14 June, 2011

It's been another good year for delivering IT services to PSD70 staff and students. It's also been exciting to see how technology is being used to support instruction as well as helping business functions become more efficient.

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW...

- As technology is forever changing, IT staff are constantly researching and learning about new products and better ways of delivering IT services to staff and students. The IT staff attended various PD sessions and courses this past year, as well as self paced learning on Microsoft Server 2008, SharePoint Server 2007 (collaboration software), server virtualization, wireless technology and general network support.
- The ***Innovative Classroom Technology Funding*** from Alberta Education is a three year funding project with the goal of ensuring all Grade 1 to 12 classrooms are equipped with an instructional (teacher) computer and data projection device (digital projector and/or electronic whiteboard). We have reached that goal and any remaining funding can now be used for additional classroom technologies such as student laptops, classroom sound amplification systems, student response systems, visual digital presenters, assistive technologies and classroom software.
- January and February were extra busy months for IT as we worked with the administration and staff of SGCHS to establish a pilot “WiFi” wireless network, enabling students and staff to *bring your own device* (BYOD) to school and connect to the Internet. We enlisted the services of an outside vendor, ACSI from Calgary, to help us plan, test and implement a sound and secure WiFi network that will meet the growing needs of PSD70 into the future. There were many systems put into place, infrastructure wise, to make it all happen behind the scenes. Now that the testing is over and SGCHS has been successfully using the WiFi system, we will be moving forward with preparations to install the rest of the equipment. This will make it possible for all schools to have this new “WiFi” access enabling any staff or student as well as guests from outside of PSD70 to *bring your own device* and connect to the Internet.
- The **Help Desk** logged a total of 7060 tickets between March 2010 and March 2011, which is up 18% over the previous year. This is not surprising as we have been growing by 200+ computers each year for the past five years. The highest month for calls was September with 982 tickets recorded. Our monthly ticket average was 588 tickets. The highest percentage of calls dealt with software issues at 39% and hardware issues accounted for 25% of support tickets. Issues with network accounts remained at 27% and Students Achieve/Maplewood accounted for only 6% (a drop of 2% over the previous year). We currently are supporting 3200+ computers throughout the system with laptops accounting for 50% and growing.

## LOOKING AHEAD...

- **Microsoft's Windows 7, Internet Explorer 8 and Office 2007**

The current standards for PSD70 desktops and laptops are Microsoft's Windows XP *operating system*, Internet Explorer 7 for a *web browser* and Office 2007 for a *productivity suite*. In January, 2011, we started transitioning to Microsoft's latest operating system, **Windows 7** for all new computers. Along with Windows 7, we have been installing **Internet Explorer 8**. Windows 7 has been a solid upgrade and the user's learning curve has been minimal. Currently, 85% of all our computers use "XP", 10% have "Windows 7" and the remaining 5% are servers.

- **Network bandwidth expansion**

After analyzing our bandwidth constraints over the past year, even though we doubled our Internet bandwidth two years ago, we may need to revisit this again as we are consistently using an average of 80% of our Internet bandwidth on a daily basis. As the Division continues to "go to the cloud" more and more, our current Internet bandwidth does not give the Division the room to grow for the future. A minimum 50% increase in bandwidth is needed to meet the expanding demand for Internet needs of the Division.

- **Division's new "WiFi" wireless network**

After completing the successful WiFi network "pilot" at SGCHS, we will begin rolling this same solution out to all schools in the Division starting with MCHS in May/June, 2011. The plan then is to start in September 2011 rolling out to the middle schools first, then all K-9 schools followed by all early years schools with all schools being completed by June 2012. It's important to note we will essentially have two separate wireless networks to manage; PSD70-**WLAN** (used only for *PSD70* owned devices) and PSD70-**WiFi** (used only for *personally* owned devices).

- **Discovery Education streaming media (video) servers**

Schools have received their streaming media servers preloaded with content from Discovery Education. We chose to have a server at each school to better stream video content *locally*, ultimately giving the students a better viewing experience.

Projects planned in the coming year for IT;

1. **Replacement of older school and business servers.** We replace (evergreen) servers every 5 years and that time has come again. As the network continues to grow in sophistication and complexity, there is the ongoing maintenance and enhancement of our network infrastructure. This includes servers, network monitoring devices, backups, numerous software applications and databases all requiring continuous education and training for IT personnel in order to fully support the staff and students with leading edge technology.
2. **Installation of WiFi network at 20 schools.** This will require a significant time commitment from the IT department (all schools completed by June 2012).
3. **Completion of smaller network projects** that were started but have yet to be finished.