

June Technology Board Report

June 19, 2008

Desktop Systems

We have deployed the iTALC freeware (open source) classroom computer management software for the technology department to be able to remotely view and support all student computers. We have additionally extended the management console to the Drafting and Design, Graphic Arts, Health Assistance, and Networking instructors, enabling them to help and support their students from their instructor computers. This software will greatly improve the opportunity and potential for computer-based classroom collaboration and instruction. Our intention is to deploy this software to every classroom instructor for the upcoming school year.

The Skills Center Computer Lab has been disassembled, to enable facilities to remove furniture and perform a deep cleaning and maintenance to the floors and room. Computer desks donated by IU5 earlier last year will be introduced into that classroom, and the systems will be re-installed with new networking through the floor in an effort to provide more usable classroom space and less obstructions from poles hanging from the ceiling.

Server Systems

Treese Communications has installed a diagnostics monitor on the Phone Server to generate some low level logging in an effort to identify what continues to disrupt phone service every couple of months.

Skills Center

Cabling was run for the Transition Center instructor office to enable a computer and phone to be installed.

Vendor

Our student information system vendor, SchoolDesX has made some strategic organizational changes to their company in effort to align their focus with future software development goals. The current position of the company is to continue to support and maintain the existing SchoolDesX platform we use for the upcoming school year. However, they cannot say how much longer in the future this will remain an option. We have requested forecasting costs for their proposed next generation software prior to 09-10 budget planning. The burden of the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) has been and will remain a significant commitment for any Student Information System (SIS) vendor, not to mention school administration. Maintaining the programming talent and assets to maintain an SIS to PIMS program in-house generally will cost more than a packaged solution, given the changes that are inevitable in both the SIS and PIMS. Our goal is to continue to ensure this functionality remains a high priority in our SIS package. SchoolDesX has been made aware of this, and we have voiced interest in them attaining the preferred PIMS vendor certification.