

School board looks at mobile technology

Written by Deb Egenberger
Friday, 16 October 2009 20:07 -

District still pursuing One-to-One Initiative.

Brady school board members got a taste of the updated technology that the district's students are using during a presentation by advanced computer students at Monday night's regular monthly meeting.

High school students showed off several pieces of mobile technology hardware the district has acquired since January 2008.

Among items the students demonstrated were a Smart board, laptops, iPods, Kindles and the newest piece, a Polycom.

The Polycom is a portable camera, television and computer unit used to send and receive distance learning courses from anywhere in the building.

"This really makes more classes available for small schools like ours without having to hire another teacher," said superintendent Bill Porter.

Technology coordinator Robbi McKenney told the board all of the equipment has been purchased using grant funds.

She said short of the One-to-One Initiative to provide laptops to all students, the district is doing well integrating the latest technology into classrooms.

High school junior Kristen Boden said the use of mobile technology in the classrooms helps get students more involved in learning.

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“Because it’s more interactive, we’re more likely to participate in class,” she said.

McKenney told the board the next step is providing all students with e-mail accounts through the free ePals network.

McKenney said all e-mail accounts are filtered through her and will be used for educational purposes.

Porter said the district is still diligently working to find funds for the One-to-One Initiative.

In other business, school board members:

appointed principal Jerry Wallace as the district’s attendance officer.

tabled the purchase of a rubber mat to put under player chairs in the new gymnasium until more bids could be received. The only price received was from the Bigger, Faster, Stronger company in Utah for \$334 plus \$195 shipping.

awarded a bid of \$1,000 to Gerald Hannon for a 1990 bus. Four sealed bids were received for the excess property ranging from \$500 to \$1,000.

awarded a bid of \$101 to Tommy Palmer for a 3-year-old popcorn popper. One other bid for \$60 was received.

approved the school’s connection to the Nebraska eTranscript Initiative through Docufide at no cost to the district. The move makes it possible for electronic transfer of student transcripts to colleges and universities.

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voted to allow Dee Thompson to receive 20% of tuition payments received by the school for dual credit English courses. Thompson teaches college English and creative writing for high school and college credit. North Platte Community College returns a portion of the tuition paid for the college credit to the district.

approved on first reading board policy revisions that deal with support staff work agreements.

set the 2010 graduation date for Saturday, May 8.

reviewed a letter of apology from McPherson County Public School for an incident that involved bus vandalism following Brady's football and volleyball games at Tryon in September.

heard from Porter that the Brady district was the second highest taxed district in the state last fiscal year behind Prague. Porter said the construction bond and the qualified capital purpose undertaking bond are what pushed the district's taxes so high.

learned meal numbers are up for the hot lunch program. So far the program is covering its own costs.

agreed to allow officials to change the date for the school Christmas program from Tuesday, Dec. 15, to Friday, Dec. 18, to accommodate a required elementary training program.