

**LAS VIRGENES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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**LAS VIRGENES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING  
October 25, 2019**

**Present:**

Jim Klein, CTO  
Dallas Lawrence, Board Member  
Lesli Stein, Board Member  
Dan Stepenosky, Superintendent  
Clara Finneran, Assistant Superintendent  
Tina Johnson, District Media Coordinator  
Kim Varonin, Tech Mentor AHS  
Ethan Castillo, AHS Student  
Craig Hochhaus, LVEA

Meeting called to order at 2:05 PM

Mr. Klein Shared the following updates:

**Welcome and Review**

- **Accomplishments**
  - Upgraded wireless infrastructure at 2 schools. Redistributed wireless equipment to remaining sites, in order to increase capacity. Upgrades ongoing.
  - Deployed 1,750 touchscreen laptops at elementary and middle schools
  - Distributed 2,000 new-er devices to high schools
  - Implemented multiple curriculum related applications due to new adoptions
  - Added Aeries data synchronization tools for many curriculum-related applications
  - Replaced copiers district-wide and implemented copy/print management
  
- **Challenges**
  - Hardware issues with Acers
    - Mr Klein shared that the majority of newly purchased machines had a hardware problem that required Acer to develop and release a firmware update. That update took some time and delayed the deployment of new

devices by a few weeks. He also shared that the district will be evaluating alternate vendors prior to future purchases.

- Ms Varonin shared that the Acers at the high schools were slow and unreliable, when compared to laptops that students were bringing from home. Mr Klein acknowledged that the devices are slower, due to their low cost, and that slow internet performance affects them in a greater way. He also shared that recent improvements in internet speed at both high schools and the addition of higher capacity access points should improve their performance significantly.
- Charter internet performance
  - Mr Klein shared that Charter internet connections to the high schools had been misconfigured by Charter Communications over the summer while reconfiguring their network. Rather than each site having 1 Gb of internet bandwidth, both sites were sharing 1 Gb of traffic, creating traffic jams and slowing their internet access. The issue was challenging to identify and the tech team worked with Charter for several weeks to get it addressed. Charter was resistant to accept our assessment and slow to respond, which resulted in extended resolution time, however the issue was resolved as of last week.
- Curriculum application growing pains
  - Mr Klein shared that with the significant increase in digital curriculum and resources, maintenance of student/teacher logins and rosters has become increasingly difficult. In order to reduce the time required to ready these systems at the beginning of the year, and improve accuracy and reliability of these applications, the tech team has implemented Google and Clever syncing of these systems directly with Aeries. Mr Klein shared that there were some unforeseen challenges created with these changes, partially due to lack of staff and communication, which created some growing pains and caused some frustration with some applications. He shared that the situation has improved dramatically since the beginning of the year and that he expects significant benefits for teachers and students in the coming years.
- Copier configuration/performance challenges
  - Mr Klein shared challenges with the short timeline to deploy new copiers and printing systems, and that issues with performance were causing quite a bit of frustration among teachers. Ms Varonin shared AHS examples and perspectives of the challenges and that teachers were extremely frustrated with slow print times, unreliable printers, slower print speeds, and lines at the copiers. Mr Klein shared that the tech team worked with Papercut and Canon to improve print speeds, and is testing ANY print queues at the two high schools, which would allow staff to pick up their print jobs at any printer on campus. He shared that if these queues worked well, the tech team would roll them out to all school sites.

## Education Technology Support

- Mr Klein shared the typical activities related to education technology support that the media specialist team and school site mentors have traditionally provided, including:
  - Curriculum application integration and support
  - Rostering/troubleshooting
  - Coordinate, organize and lead training
  - Coaching and modeling
  - Communications
  - Curriculum development and integration
  - Additional resources and tools
  - Research
- Mr Klein then shared that financial challenges and staff changes have necessitated a rethink of the prior district-centric model to a more site-centric model, where tech mentors take a greater role. He shared that he met with key staff and existing mentors from all schools to discuss this strategy and develop a plan. The team shared that they believed such a plan was possible, however that it presented a number of requirements and challenges. Mr Klein stated that the team is working to develop a plan to address these challenges, and that he hopes to begin recruiting mentors for the new program, to be rolled out as soon as possible after the holiday break.

## BYO and Equity at the High Schools

- Mr Klein shared that there has been growing concern over equity at our two high schools, as the majority of students now bring their own laptops, which are typically significantly more powerful than those the schools loan out. Issues include:
  - Perception of Acers
  - Device performance differences can make it challenging for teachers
  - Worry about a culture of “Haves” and “Have nots”
  - Concerns over internet at home
- Mr Klein shared the financial challenges associated with increasing the capacity of district laptops would make that option extremely difficult. He also shared that high school teachers believe that there are a small number of students who may not have internet access at home. The committee discussed some possible ways to identify these students and share low cost internet options with the families.

## District Communications

- Mr Klein shared that the district has been exploring options for a new communications platform to replace Blackboard. Mr Klein shared that there are other platforms that provide more functionality at a similar cost and would address many of the pain points LVUSD has with its current platform, including:
  - Faster and easier communications
  - Engagement tracking
  - Automatic voice and translation
  - Direct integration with Aeries

- Mr Klein shared that his team will continue to evaluate a possible change at the end of this school year.

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 PM