
From: Smyser, Sandra - SSC
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2020 4:23 PM
To: BOE <BOE@psdschools.org>
Subject: Technology Purchase

Board,

As the Board is aware, PSD staff are planning for a variety of possible educational environments for the 2020-21 school year, including the possibility of hybrid and remote learning environments. In the event that hybrid or remote learning is necessary due to health conditions during the 2020-21 school year, we are taking the steps necessary to ensure that all of our students have equitable access to technology and have internet connectivity.

One of these steps is to purchase devices for our students in Kindergarten through second grade. PSD currently has a 1:1 laptop program in place for grades 3 through 12 that is supported by the 2010 Mill Levy Override. At this time, we do not have 1:1 devices in place for children in grades K through 2. We also understand that there are students who need alternative technology solutions to ensure that they do not fall behind in school. We have worked with our Language, Culture, and Equity, Integrated Services, and Early Childhood teams to identify the best solutions to support these students.

To address these needs and ensure continuity of learning in any learning environment in which we may find ourselves next year due to COVID-19, we are planning to utilize General Fund Reserves designated for district needs in response to COVID-19 to purchase enough devices to ensure that all PSD students will have access to technology during the 2020-21 school year. We, therefore, plan to purchase 6,000 touch Chromebooks for our K-2 students. This number has been determined based on expected student count projections for the 2020-21 school year.

and includes a reserve of devices to be purchased for use as replacements when repairs are necessary. We anticipate that these Chromebooks will have a six year life span. The cost of this K-2 device purchase is \$1,909,300. We will also be purchasing 280 laptop carts to store and charge these devices when they are in school buildings. In addition to this district-wide Chromebook purchase, we are purchasing 1,696 iPads for students who have specific needs that are best supported by this type of device.

We are also aware that we have students who have no access to internet at home. To address this need, we are planning to purchase 1,150 MiFi internet devices, which will allow students to remain connected to their schools and the PSD community in the event that we are operating in a hybrid or remote learning environment. The total cost for these internet (MiFi) devices is \$289,000 for 1 year of service.

Please see the attached spreadsheet that provides line-item level detail regarding these planned purchases.

We recognize that these purchases are in excess of \$250,000 and as such typically require Board of Education approval per Policy DJB. In this unusual year and given the high demand and urgency for acquiring these devices to meet our students' needs, we plan to move forward with these purchases as soon as possible, beginning the week of July 6. We will bring the purchases to the Board for formal approval at the first August Board of Education meeting, but believe it is imperative to take steps to procure this technology now so that we can have it ready for our students when the school year begins. Under District Policy DJB, there is an emergency exception that states that any responsible district official can make necessary purchases as long as those purchases fit within the definition of emergency as outlined in the policy. In this case, the Executive Director of Finance has reviewed this purchase plan and believes that this constitutes an urgent need. Please note, as well, that the district intends to utilize the same vendors for this purchase as used for the technology refresh purchase that was approved by the Board in the spring of 2020.

Should the Board of Education have questions or concerns about this process, please let me know as soon as possible.

Sandra

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