

Eye On The Board

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Board Highlights August 28, 2007

Digi on way out; district to seek new info system

Digitronics closes in on the end of its challenge to faculty, staff and in-house computer techs. The 15-year-old information system can't produce required state reports, interface with Windows or handle additional applications. The antiquated Digitronics is to make way for a more modern information system with expanded capacity and the ability to interface with Windows. The estimated cost of replacement -- \$1.3 million.

The process of replacing the system is just beginning, according to Associate Superintendent **Tim Vanoli**.

Vanoli outlined replacement steps, telling trustees that an ad hoc committee of district personnel will evaluate available information systems and recommend a successor to Digi from among one of a dozen state-approved systems. Ideally, the committee will consist of six to eight members representing differing interests and needs, he said.

Digi's inadequacies are the driving force behind the costly and time-consuming conversion. The state education system requires reports and data beyond Digi's abilities. Similar more modern information systems allow state colleges and universities to share information.

In addition to sharing information with the state and colleges, a new system could make room for on-line attendance and grading, Vanoli said.

While expanded capacity might appeal to faculty and staff, the district officials say a more modern system will be more efficient to operate and allow information services to be consolidated into one department.

Transition to the new system is expected to be completed by June 2009, according to Vanoli's report.

State budget okay; district drops debt, purchases property

The state budget looks like business as usual, but a recent move by the district swelled its coffers by about \$500,000 and increased its real estate holdings.

The governor signed the 2007-2008 budget making few cuts in education, funding categorically programs and setting a 4.53 percent COLA, according to Associated Superintendent **James Earhart**.

"There's nothing taken away," said Earhart of the state's budget. In fact, he added, there's a 4.7 percent increase for nutrition programs.

The financial boost for the local budget came when the district paid in full its loan on the adult school. In July, officials handed over more than \$5 million to close out the debt.

The annual payments on the adult school cost the district \$263,000 from the general fund and another \$280,000 from developer fees. With the loan paid that money will become available on an annual basis, said Earhart.

"It frees up a half a million dollars," he said.

In addition, Earhart told trustees that the elimination of the debt could give the district a better bond rating if it seeks a bond measure in the future.

At an earlier meeting, trustees unanimously approved the adult school pay off and gave their okay to the purchase of a nearby property. The district paid outright for the house next door to its offices on Alisal Street, according to budget analyst **Cindy Fellows**.

The 1600 square foot home listed at \$649,000. Fellows said the district paid \$540,000 to acquire the property.

The purchase gives the district much needed office space at a lower cost, according to the chief business officer. It would cost the district about \$200,000 to fix up a portable for office use. The house offers considerable more office space than a portable, he said.

Earhart said the plan is to turn the house into offices for the Special Education Services. Currently, he said, the Special Ed department is scattered over several buildings, making work difficult for families and staff.

It remains for the city to rezone the property to allow for the conversion to office space.

CLAD is a must under Williams

Teachers lacking CLAD certificates can apply for an emergency – one year only – CLAD certificate.

Under the Williams Act any teacher with even only one English Language Learner in class is required to have CLAD. The law, then, effectively makes CLAD certification a requirement for employment.

Currently, only 20 teachers in the district lack the certification, according to Associate Superintendent **Alejandro Hogan**.

The Monterey County Office of Education checks for proper credentials and certificates during its Williams Assignment Monitoring Review. The recent MCOE report of compliance with Williams noted the teachers without CLAD and three others without the credential for their assignment.

Hogan said the misassigned teachers were reassigned.

Policies

(First reading)

BP 5119 – Students Expelled from Other Districts

BP 6142.91 – Reading/Language Arts Instruction

BP 6145.2 – Athletic Competition

BP 6164.4 – Identification and Evaluation of Individuals for Special Education

BP 6164.41 – Children with Disabilities Enrolled by their Parents in Private School

BP 6190 – Evaluation of the Instructional Program