

F.O.I. Compliance – Subject to BOE approval at a future meeting

JOINT BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Date: April 27, 2022

Regular Meeting – REMOTE MEETING held

(To view a recording of this meeting, please visit our website www.reg4.k12.ct.us and select “Remote Meeting Recordings” under the BOARD OF EDUCATION Heading)

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION:

David Fitzgibbons, Jan Taigen, Ken Rice, Dale Bernardoni, Faith Sprigg, Rebecca Greenberg-Ellis, Stuart Johnson (joined at 7:04 p.m.), Charlene Fearon (joined at 7:06 p.m.)

DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Miriam Morrissey, Bob Ferretti, Lenore Grunko, Betsy Scholfield, Pat Maikowski, Alyson Whelan

ESSEX BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Lon Seidman, Mark Watson, Cassandra Sweet, Justin Pillion , Nancy Johnston

REGION 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Kate Sandmann, Jane Cavanaugh, Lon Seidman, Jennifer Clark, Lol Fearon (joined at 7:06 p.m.)

Also in attendance: Brian White, Superintendent; Sarah Brzozowy, Assistant Superintendent; Robert Grissom, Finance Director; Jennifer Nucci, Supervisor of Pupil Services; Pam Murphy, Director of Technology

CALL TO ORDER and Verbal Roll Call

Supervision District Committee Chair Miriam Morrissey called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

The Chairs of the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards called their respective Boards to order at 7:03 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly made and seconded the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards unanimously **VOTED** (*all members present at 7:07 p.m., which are all listed above*) to accept the consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the regular meeting of February 24, 2022.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Katie DiGianantonio of Ivoryton spoke regarding efforts by her personally, and by the Town of Essex to collect food scraps as a means of helping to combat climate change. She proposed that Region 4 schools consider one of two options; either that they start on-site composting of food scraps, or that they contract with an outside provider to collect food scraps to be taken to an appropriate location.

REPORTS AND OTHER ITEMS

Superintendent White noted that because there are a couple of information reports planned this evening, he would keep his remarks brief. He did want to welcome to the meeting two additional members of the administrative team that don't always attend these meetings. He welcomed Jennifer Nucci, Supervisor of Pupil Services who will be sharing a presentation on the possibility of expanding our Pre-K Programming and also Pam Murphy, Director Technology, who will be talking this evening about the replacement/upgrade of our phone system planned for this summer.

Superintendent White also spoke about some of the nice Valley student recognition events he was able to attend this week.

There was a time for the Board to ask questions.

Assistant Superintendent Brzozowy shared a general update on the following: Today she worked with the elementary teachers, during the afternoon Professional Development Session to finalize the new standards based report card that will be rolled out in the fall. The teachers are excited for this new initiative.

She also shared that she had recently had the opportunity to meet with teachers across many of our districts and will continue to meet with more, to get their feedback and check in with them as the year is winding down. There was a lot of constructive feedback and positive feedback now that things are beginning to return to normal.

COMMITTEE REPORTS –

Joint BOE Policy Committee Chair, Lon Seidman presented the three policy enclosures that are up for a First Reading tonight. Each Board will now have a chance to discuss these at their individual meetings throughout the month of May. Members should direct any questions and/or feedback to their individual Board's Policy Committee representative(s) for consideration at the Second Reading and possible Vote which will be held at the Joint BOE meeting scheduled for June 2nd.

The Joint BOE Finance Committee has no new update, as they had to cancel their April meeting, but they will meet again on May 6th.

Joint BOE Curriculum Committee Chair, Nancy Johnston shared that the Curriculum Committee met on March 9th and April 6th at which time they discussed a variety of topics including, among other things: the elementary K-6 standards based report cards; all of the great curriculum currently in place that supports the Social and Emotional Learning needs within the schools; the six new courses that will be requested at the high school; the well-developed calendar for Professional Development planned throughout next year; and the survey that was sent on April 4th to all school communities seeking parent and staff feedback to help guide the strategic planning process.

OTHER ITEMS

Contracts

Superintendent White shared that although the contracts that were listed on the agenda for possible vote this evening have been negotiated, the unions have been unable to complete their process to ratify the contracts in advance of this evening's meeting. Therefore, once the memberships have had a chance to vote on the negotiated contracts, they will return before the Joint BOE for vote. This is anticipated to occur at the June 02nd Joint BOE meeting.

Healthy Food Certification

Dr. Brzozowy (in lieu of Thomas Peterlik, Director of Food Services who was unable to attend this evening) presented the information and recommended language related to the Healthy Food Certification that needs to be voted on this evening, per State Statute. This is the exact same process and recommendations that have been voted on in years past. These votes are needed, yearly, to ensure the associated funding continues.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards unanimously VOTED to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to vote "yes" on implementing the healthy food option of C.G.S. Section 10-215f and approve the following motion language for the healthy food option: Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the board of education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4 Boards unanimously VOTED to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to vote "yes" to allow food and beverage exemptions and approve the following motion language: The board of education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales.

Phone System Replacement Project

Finance Director Bob Grissom and Director of Technology Pam Murphy shared a presentation on the planned phone system replacement project this summer (see attached). This will occur at every district building.

Superintendent White noted that by moving forward with this project at the end of this year, Mrs. Murphy was able to secure grant funding that will offset a large portion of the cost of this work.

There was a time for questions.

Presentation on Full Day Pre-K Proposal

Superintendent White introduced Jennifer Nucci, Supervisor of Pupil Services, who is here this evening to share a presentation that is intended to be a conversation starter around the ever increasing need for Pre-K programs within our school communities, and the possibility of expanding our Pre-K program to a full day program at some point in the future. Administration will be working over the summer to explore more options, and determine details related to the possibility of expanding our current Pre-K program to a full day program. They will plan to come back to the Joint BOE in the fall to share that information and have an expanded discussion about proposed program specifics and any budgetary implications that would need to be considered. (see attached)

PUBLIC COMMENT – No comments were made

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Next regular Joint BOE meeting – June 02, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

On motion duly made and seconded, the Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Boards of Education unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Bryan, Clerk

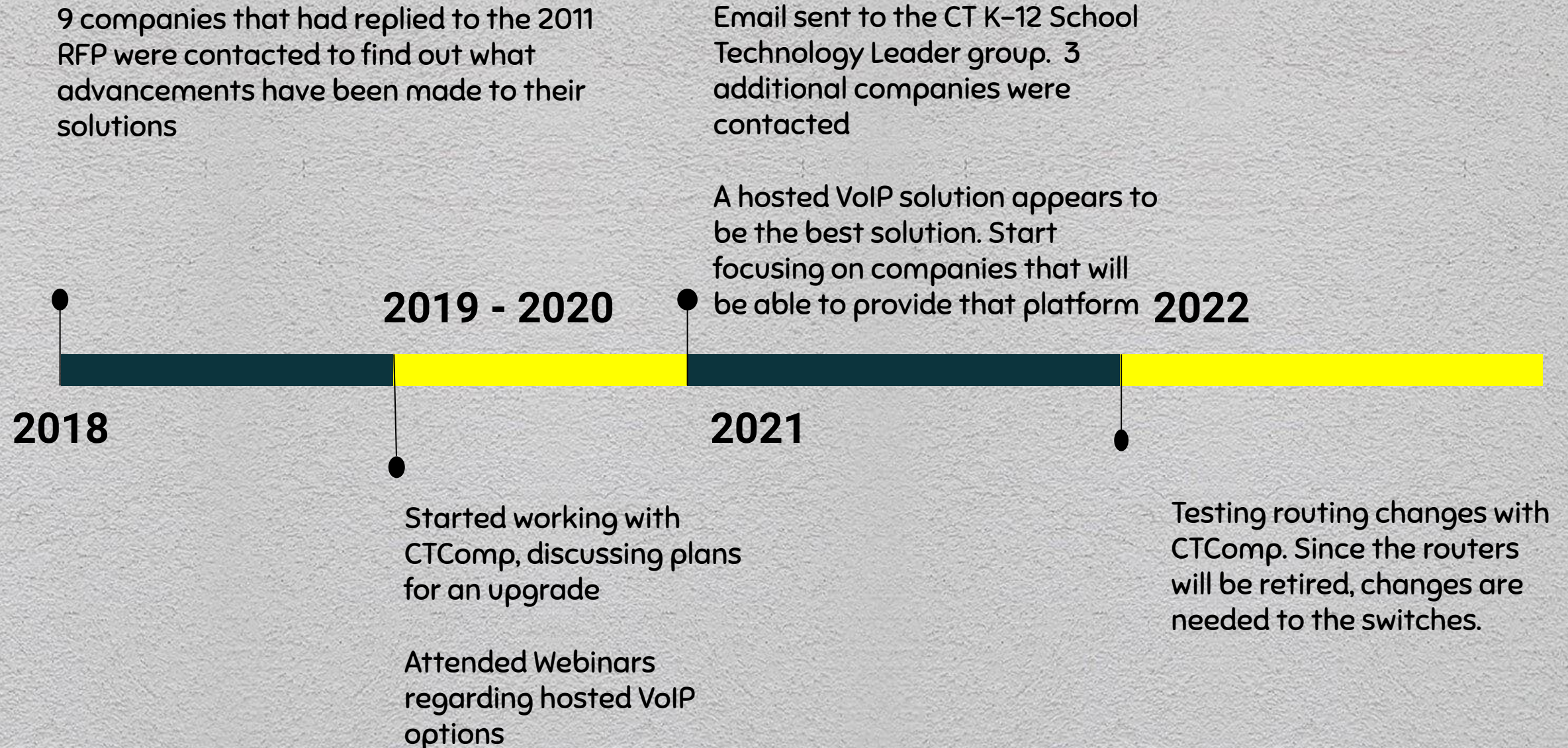


Current System



- On premise Cisco Voice over IP solution (VoIP) was purchased in July 2012 for a total cost of \$145,000.
- We implemented the Cisco Call Manager System. It consisted of:
 - 350 phones
 - 4 – 2911 routers installed at each school
 - 1 – 3945 router installed in the main data center
 - 1 Call Mgr Express application
 - 1 Unity Express application
- The install took 5 months to complete.
- The router modules will be hitting end of life at the end of 2022

Research process



PROPOSED PHONE SYSTEM

What is being proposed?

Hosted Voice over IP solution (VoIP) to replace our current on-premise VoIP.

What are some benefits to a hosted solution?

Cost Efficient - *Minimal hardware purchase required.*

Mobility - *Ability to plug phone into any internet connection and receive calls*

Eliminate Obsolescence - *Scalable infrastructure allows components to be added or deleted without having to change entire system*

Next Steps

Implementation Timeline

Date Range	Task
May 2022	Sign contract with vendor
May 2022	Schedule routing changes for July 1
May 2022 - June 2022	Move alarm systems out of current phone system
June 2022	Provide extension, DID and hunt groups to vendor
June 2022	Coding begins at the vendor site
June 2022 - July 2022	Testing begins
July 2022 - August 2022	Phones are placed in to the schools
August 2022 - Sept 2022	Training to staff members



Proposal for FULL DAY PRE-K

Current Program

- 18 students from Chester, Deep River and Essex
- Tuition expected for community students
- Inability to accept all applicants due to current structure
- 2.5 hour sessions
- 50/50 ratio of students with special needs & community students
- Adhering to the CT Early Learning Developmental Standards
- Individual tutoring for repetition and pre-teaching purposes
- Focus on language, literacy, Bridges math.

- Groups: Motor group, Community Music School, social skills groups & phonemic awareness groups.
- Playground, science or free play as time allows.
- Activities of daily living: Snack, dressing, toileting, manage belongings and self care.

Research Supports Full Day Pre-k

- ❖ Relaxed and unhurried school day
- ❖ Fewer transitions
- ❖ In-depth explorations
- ❖ Varied experiences
- ❖ Opportunities to build deeper relationships
- ❖ Stronger foundational skills in language, literacy, math
- ❖ Improved physical health and attendance
- ❖ Increased social and emotional development
- ❖ Increased parental involvement

Benefits for Region 4 Schools

- ❖ Increased opportunity to accept students that are currently on our wait list
- ❖ With current closures of early childhood programs in our region, opportunity to provide a quality program to children and families
- ❖ Opportunity to provide quality programming for all children if tuition is nonexistent
- ❖ Increased preparation for Kindergarten in all domains
- ❖ Equity to reduce the achievement gap
- ❖ Increased scores on high stakes assessments
- ❖ Increased social and emotional readiness for school
- ❖ Increased “learning to learn” skills
- ❖ Increased understanding of diversity and inclusion
- ❖ Acceptance of individual differences
- ❖ Transition to kindergarten form

TimeLine

If there is Board interest, the following may occur:

- Fall: Compare and contrast surrounding Pre-K programs with Region 4's Collaborative Preschool
- Winter: Decision making process for expansion and budgetary implications
- Spring: Potential funding for 2023-2024 Pre-K expansion