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Atchison High School to Learn Through iPads

Atchison High school students will replace their textbooks with iPad technology moving forward with their learning.

The USD 409 school board voted unanimously last (Monday) night to accept the one to one iPad initiative for their 535 students in the nine through 12 system, as well as the alternative school.

District Technology Director Donna Knoll has been working to this day of culmination for at least five years.

Knoll RT: :22 OC: "...whole initiative."

The annual budget for technology upgrades is 98 thousand dollars.

During her presentation, Knoll cited an example of the current Biology textbook used in the high school costing 81 dollars and 49 cents a book, compared to the downloadable application of the same book on the iPad for 14 99.

Knoll wants to purchase the top line of technology for the next four years and hopes to have the iPad3, which has a rumored March release date, in instructors' hands by the summer and students' hands by Labor Day.

She also cited the recent announcement by Apple to partner with textbook distributors as an additional means of savings for the district.

The board also continued discussion on whether they should bring a bond proposal to voters.

Board members and officials took a tour of spots of the high school that would be in need of those potential bond monies.

They were given the pitch by Principal Forrest Covey.

Covey first took us to the basement of the high school looking at the family and consumer science room, which he said has constricted class space and outdated items.

He expressed more concern with the art room, which he says posts a negative environment and has hazards.

COVEY ART RT: :45 OC: "...well ventilated."

Everyone then went through the now enclosed walkway from the school to the eight classroom modular unit that was installed in 1990.

Nearly 40 thousand dollars in minor repairs have occurred since, but Covey says there's a growing list of major repairs.

COVEY MODULAR RT: :35 OC: "...those problems."

Covey adds that since the modular unit came from a military base, the bathroom stalls are disproportionate, with only one female stall compared to three urinals and two stalls for the males.

Later in the meeting, the board heard from Springsted's Tom Calico, who presented scenarios for payment on bonds if a seven, five and three million dollar bond were passed by voters, as well as a

scenario if state aid for common ed is taken away by the legislature during this year's session.

In other action, following a 15 minute executive session, the board terminated the contract of bus driver Cherrie Coady, accepted the retirement resignations of longtime Atchison High School science teachers Rod Heffley and Walt Hare effective the end of the school year, as well as the resignation of 8th grade team leader Lindsay Hodapp.

The board also hired Andrew Purdy as Assistant Middle School Basketball Coach and Anna Weaver as Middle School 8th grade team leader.

The board also recognized Assistant Middle School Principal Chris Case upon being named the state's KAMSA Assistant Middle School principal of the year.