April 2025 - Technology Board Report
*Sam Rigby - IT Director*

Strategic Partnerships

Through strategic partnerships with BBBSD and BBRCTE, our school district sustains two full-time IT staff members despite our small size, ensuring robust, in-house technology support. A paid support contract with BBBSD allows us to manage their IT infrastructure, generating revenue that offsets our staffing costs, while funding from BBRCTE directly supports our IT personnel. Without these partnerships, we would face the unsustainable choice of reducing staff or outsourcing IT services. I firmly believe that maintaining internal IT expertise is superior to third-party contracting, as it fosters greater control, responsiveness, and alignment with our district's unique needs. Plus, our IT crew's rapport with students and staff helps resolve tech challenges with a familiar, friendly touch.

Zoom Tools

Our district relies on Zoom for video communication, phone services, and online classes. One of our larger and more variable Zoom expenses has been cloud storage for recordings of classes, tutoring sessions, and select meetings. Keeping these recordings for 30 days costs $100 per month, while extending to 60 days jumps to around $300 per month. To address this, our IT team has developed a custom web tool, currently in beta testing, that transfers these recordings to a storage option at a significantly lower cost. This in-house solution allows us to retain recordings longer for future use and makes them easier for students and staff to access.
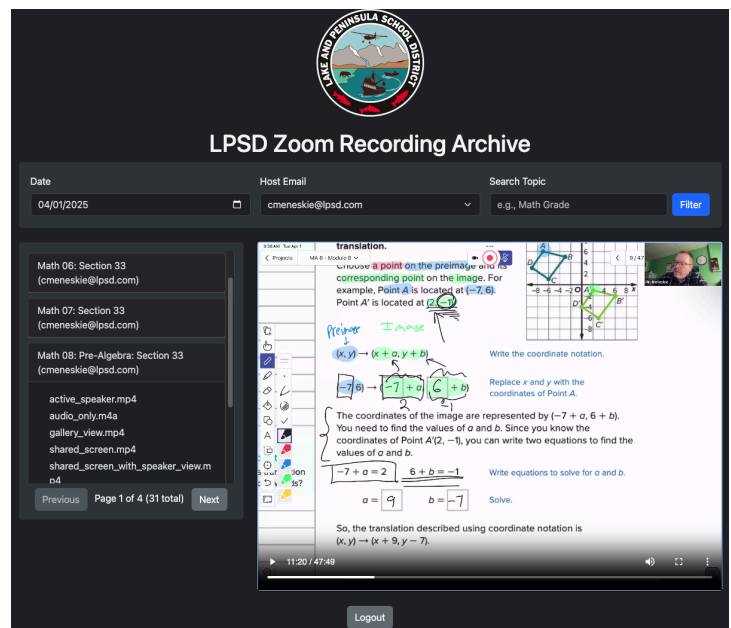
Cybersecurity Focus of the Month

This month's cybersecurity focus is Endpoint Protection, prompted by a recent increase in malware and Potentially Unwanted Programs (PUPs) that our traditional antivirus tools struggle to detect or quickly address. To strengthen our defenses, we've consolidated several Windows and Mac workstation management tools into two comprehensive platforms, reducing costs while adding advanced security features we previously lacked. Notably, we're deploying Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) to computers accessing our financial database or handling extensive student and personnel records. EDR enhances our antivirus efforts by offering both active and passive monitoring to identify and respond to threats more effectively.

State Testing Success

This year's digital state testing went well, with fewer internet-related glitches than we've seen before, highlighting the effectiveness of our network improvements and internet stability. While we're pleased with this outcome, we're also encouraging schools to report software issues earlier. This gives our team more time to address potential problems and ensure devices are ready to go on the first day of testing.