

Technology Department January 2018

Possible network improvements

Several RFP's have been submitted to USAC/E-rate for potential bids for upgrading the underground network infrastructure. Our goal would be to add bandwidth capability and upgrade 15-20 year old fiber in the ground that currently serves us today. We will not know until potential bidders start inquiry and making bids but we would be hopeful to partner costs with 85% federal e-rate funds as well as part of the \$2 million the state of Montana has set aside for these types of projects.

Cyber-Security

We attended the Technology symposium in early December where much of our cyber security risks facing school districts in Montana and across the nation were discussed. Many of the topics discussed and vulnerabilities that were presented have already had our risks reduced through state of the art firewalls that not only keep the bad guys out but scan all of our traffic for malware and virus threats. Best practice setups in our networks, especially guest network access for our visitors - yes there are protections in place in the event a visitor attempts to connect their virus laden computer to our network to keep our production networks safe.

Web Site and ADA Compliance

It's a methodical process, but we are now in the process of a design for a new district web site and will look to have a shell design ready in the next few weeks followed by our content. Everything will have review capabilities to ensure that it meets ADA guidelines and avoid the heavy hand of OCR (Office of Civil Rights). Many things requiring review before we place them back on the site include board policies, handbooks, and more. For example, something as basic as the simple graphic used on the front of a master agreement requires an "alt" tag embedded into the document so that an individual with limited sight capabilities can use the document the same as a fully sighted individual. Partnering with a web host provider well rehearsed in these issues will allow us to bring a new site on successfully in the coming weeks.