

Greg Martin, Director of Technology
Administration Service Center
28W250 St. Charles Road
West Chicago, IL 6018
(630) 876-7800
www.benjamin25.org



TO: Board of Education
Dr. McGill
FROM: Greg Martin, Director of Technology
DATE: April 17, 2026
RE: Server Infrastructure Refresh Recommendation

BACKGROUND

The district's current server infrastructure is approaching the end of its expected five-year lifecycle and was scheduled for replacement during Summer 2026 as part of the established technology replacement plan. This lifecycle approach ensures that critical systems remain reliable, supported, and capable of meeting operational demands.

Under normal conditions, the replacement process includes obtaining a budgetary quote, securing Board approval, and then proceeding with procurement, planning, and implementation. Typically, a single quote is sufficient to support this process, with minor updates if necessary prior to purchase.

Current market conditions have significantly disrupted this process. Ongoing supply constraints and rising global demand, particularly for AI data center expansion, have led to limited hardware availability and substantial price volatility. A recent requote for the originally planned server hardware resulted in an approximate doubling of cost, making previously obtained pricing unreliable for decision-making.

To maintain continuity of operations, support on the existing server infrastructure has been extended through March 2027. However, due to extended lead times for hardware procurement and deployment, the servers must be replaced no later than that timeframe.

SUMMARY.

The district is actively evaluating alternative hardware vendors and configurations to identify a solution that meets performance, reliability, and budget requirements. Due to rapidly changing pricing and availability, it is not feasible to obtain a fixed quote and delay action pending Board approval, as costs and timelines may change significantly during that period.

This situation requires a more flexible approach to procurement while remaining within the parameters of the approved technology budget and established replacement cycle.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

The administration recommends that the Board of Education approve the district to proceed with the server infrastructure refresh project within the approved technology budget once a suitable and cost-effective solution is identified. This approval will allow the district to act promptly when viable options become available, ensuring the replacement of critical infrastructure prior to March 2027 and maintaining system reliability and support for district operations.