

Technology Department March 2018

E-rate and telephone costs

The e-rate filing window will have just closed March 21st by the time you read this. Our next steps will be working with our e-rate consultant, reviewing the bids for our telephone services against a rubric and awarding contracts for the 2018-19 school year. Our e-rate awards for 2018-19 will be 90% of our internet and WAN connections, 10% of our telephone and long distance costs and 85% of some needed switches to support our security cameras.

Cyber/Network Security

The 2018 META/MASS conference in Helena March 19-21 has a heavy emphasis on network and cyber security in light of the Dark Overlord attack on Columbia Falls last fall. Browning will be partnering with the Multi-State Information and Sharing Center, a non-profit that works with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) working with government organizations including school districts to establish new tools, review existing tools and monitor these systems for our cyber security efforts. This partnership comes at a cost of our time as the program is funded by DHS. Our next steps will be working on a certification called the Trusted Learning Environment that only 16 districts in the country have certified and currently a consortium of 8 school districts in Montana are actively working to establish our TLE certification. More information about the TLE will be coming in the future months.

Web Site and ADA Compliance

The new www.bps.k12.mt.us has now been live. As we presented at the last board meeting, the driving factor is to be in compliance with ADA accessibility guidelines. Part of the process of adding content will be an ever vigilant process to maintain ADA accessibility. Examples will be all PDF files such as board policies that are tagged with descriptions, images in our labor agreements with “alt” tags that describe the image to a user with screen text readers and more. Any video we may add will be closed captioned. Future items are many of our curriculum items that need ADA review, working with teachers that want to have a web presence will also be coming in the next months as well as working with those teachers that already have web sites assisting them to become ADA compliant.