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Schooled in technology

Teachers pleased with district pilot programs

By Geoff Moore
Correspondent

Teachers in the district have reported enthusiastically on the progress and impact of recently introduced mathematical and science pilot projects for curriculum and technology integration.

Begun in May, the pilot's purpose is to develop understanding and to endorse the benefits to children of using technology to learn curriculum subjects. The committee also discussed demonstrating the pilots to the Finance Committee in support of the district's \$224,000 capital request for new technology equipment for fiscal 2008.

At the School Committee meeting Oct. 19, Assistant Superintendent Paul Naso de-

scribed how the various projects involve 10 teachers who volunteered from both Lincoln and Hanscom schools, together with the curriculum and technology specialist and continuing assistance from Fresh-Pond Educational consultants. He said that key process steps included defining learning expectations and identifying subject area technology applications. The teams looked for opportunities with a significant learning process contribution and where they had previously experienced difficulties. Other steps included developing pilot lessons and peer review, followed by peer observation of lessons and the results.

The mathematic project involves teachers and students
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Mall plans are revised

By Cheryl Lecesse
Staff Writer

Check out the newest revision to the plan for the Mall at Lincoln Station's expansion and you'll notice a number of changes — or, more appropriately, non-changes.

Since the Planning Board's public hearing on the proposal last month, Mall proponents have gone back to the drawing board to make changes that accommodate concerns expressed by both town officials and residents, especially those of Lincoln Woods.

Selectman Gary Taylor and Planning Board Chairman Ken Hurd outlined these changes, which in many cases preserve the status quo, at the selectmen's meeting Monday night.

"The Planning Board is committed to having this benefit the town as much as it benefits Donelan's or the RLF," Hurd said of the proposal. "Our focus is, it's going to benefit everybody."

The newest version of the plan keeps the parking lot by the bank in a circular format, and keeps the ATM imbedded in the building's outer wall.

"Two weeks ago we asked to consider approaching parking stage effort," Hurd said.

If the parking area by the bank configured, trees that provided between the Mall and Lincoln would be cut down, he said. In Planning Board asked the RLF the parking lot the way it is make changes if time shows parking is needed.

"It's a strange configuration, of the current lot by the bank
Ma



Teachers happy with technology pilot program

Technology, from Page 1
from kindergarten to seventh-grade. Teacher Becky Easton described the kindergarten project as "very ambitious," but also a wonderful opportunity to collaborate with colleagues and to answer several instructional and developmental questions on the appropriate use of technology for this age group. As an example, she pointed out that some children have yet to

learn to recognize letters, a skill required to navigate a keyboard, which made logging in and responding to program prompts a stretch. She added that once they had overcome these and other difficulties associated with recent hardware and software upgrades, the children were excited and engaged in using a computer program for number recognition and grouping. In the pilot, this had

replaced manual compilation of a counting book using paper and glue. Easton described plans to invite parents to school see the work, in place of sending the book home with students.

The sixth-grade science projects, which is less advanced having started after the mathematics projects, is seeking to use technology and internet available content to simulate the earth's tectonic plate movement and to replace student's manually produced flipbooks. Teacher Janice Fairchild described how such a process eliminated three days of class

activity in making the books and gave an opportunity for further enrichment of subject matter. In another example, she showed how students are using a spreadsheet to capture earthquake and volcano data, such as continent and oceans location and seismic scale on a daily basis. Students then used graphing and charting software for analysis, made possible only by the use of the technology tools.

When asked by the committee what was required for continued use and extension beyond pilots, teachers in attendance said that they needed

a time allowance to develop the appropriate curriculum and to learn the technology themselves, together with continued specialist support and the provision of upgrades to hardware and infrastructure to make it work reliably.

Naso said that the next steps were for the mathematics and science projects to report to colleagues in November and to begin a humanities pilot project in late winter. He thanked the teachers participating in the pilot project for making a serious commitment to their projects and a significant contribution to the knowledge and understanding of technology integration in the Lincoln Public Schools.

The pilots are a key recommendation from the report entitled "Lincoln Public Schools Technology Plan: 2006-2011" produced by the Technology Steering Committee and Fresh-Pond Education consultants.

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