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About Us

Ponaganset High School offers a full array of academic and Advanced Placement courses with a deep commitment to developing the whole child. Our Career and Tech Readiness programs are designed to address the whole child.

The schools sits on 100+ acres and features cutting-edge facilities and equipment. We provide a collaborative, relevant, and personalized education supported by 1:1 technology that purposefully prepares students for college and careers.

Ponaganset is fully accredited by NEASC and is a member of the League of Innovative Schools.

Present Technology

The Technology Department is currently the primary source for technical support in the Foster-Glocester Regional Schools. The Technology Department provides hardware support for both learning-based instructional technology as well as administrative technology that includes computers, printers, network equipment and telephone systems. The Technology Department also provides software support for our Windows Active Directory environment, Google Suites, Microsoft Office 365, learning management system and a student information system. The district technology staff consists of a technology director, a database manager, a network technician and a computer technician. We have two offices, one located at Ponaganset High School and one at Ponaganset Middle School.

Our current infrastructure consists of two Virtual Server Environments for networking, printing, hosting some applications and some file storage. The switch closets are composed of Cisco switches for wired computers. The middle and high schools are fully configured with wireless access points to facilitate wireless computing in all locations. Systems are backed up on a daily basis to an internal NAS device and to a cloud based system.

Our students are engaged in a 1:1 program which features Windows 10 laptops at the high school and chromebooks at the middle school. Devices are refreshed for every new class as it enters the building. So for example, 9th grade students receive new laptops and 6th grade students receive new chromebooks. A robust student help desk exists at each location to repair devices and monitor student needs.

We continue to maintain high-end computer labs to support our career and tech readiness program. These are high-end computers capable of running the lasted in CAD or imaging software. They are installed with the latest Windows Operating System, very fast processors, high end graphics cards and over 16 Gigabytes of memory. Currently there are 170 computers in 7 computer labs capable of higher computing capacity.

Every classroom is equipped with a projector. Teachers also have a windows laptop or chromebook depending on their needs. In addition, our middle school has 6 Promethean boards set up in common team areas. The high school has some wireless projecting and the hope is to extend that as technology permits.

Our libraries utilize Follett Destiny for their library management software. Our schools are also a member of RILINK - Rhode Island Information Network for Kids. RILINK is a cooperative effort by Rhode Island school libraries to share their resources through an interactive, web-based catalog of library materials. This membership allows our students access too many thousands of books at other RILINK libraries.

Our student information system (SIS) Aspen X2 is by Follett Software. Aspen X2 is web-based and is used by our staff for enrollment, report cards and attendance. Portal accounts are available for parents and students to check on their report cards and attendance. The system is hosted for us by Follett.

The district uses a learning management system, Canvas, to facilitate instruction. It is used to host assignments, give quizzes, maintain a gradebook and host curriculum. All teachers and students have a login and the system is available 24x7 in a hosted environment.

The district uses the G-Suite series of apps for email, document sharing, creating forms and on line learning through Google hangouts. Recently Microsoft Office 365 was added at the high school to also facilitate the online sharing of documents.

The district maintains a web site through website provider SchoolMessenger. We have several staff members that maintain the site with up-to-date information for parents and visitors to the site. SchoolMessenger is also responsible for our school notification system which includes phone, email and text alerts for emergencies and events of interest to the community.

Foster-Glocester’s network infrastructure consists of a Wide Area Network (WAN) connection to the Internet through our Internet Service Provider (ISP) OSHEAN and COX. Internet filtering is handled by webfilters such as iBoss which is hosted at OSHEAN and Go Guardian which is an add-on for chromebooks. Our Local Area Network (LAN) consists of Cisco networking equipment for approximately 1500 devices.

The district’s telephone system is hosted at Cox and the switches and phones are provided as part of our annual costs. Selected staff also have mobile smart telephones so that they can be available as required.

We are in the processing of updating our MTSS system for better student supports. Currently administrators and MTSS support personal are provided with daily updates on students at risk. STARR testing is also used to review student performance.

Numerous software packages have been added to assist teachers in developing a robust curriculum. These include but are not limited to WeVideo, ProFormative Assessment, Soundtrap and Kami.

**Our Goal**

Our goal in the coming years is to continue to provide technology in the hands of our users. To that end we will continue to refresh our virtual server environment, switches and wireless access points. We continue to refresh all student windows laptops every summer with a new operating system and over 50 applications. Over the past year we have moved to a hybrid model using Windows Active Directory and Azure.

Our goal is to continue to host certain applications in the cloud to ensure their availability 7x24. These include such core programs as email, the learning management system, a new financial system and the student information system.

Goals for Using Telecommunications and Information Technology

**Professional Development Strategy**

We strive to offer high quality professional development that supports technology integration to improve student performance. We currently have an i21 team which facilitates technology training at the middle and the high school. We have software systems in place to monitor faculty requests for help and coaching in the classroom. We have added a new website dedicated to technology coaching. Blended learning and Lighthouse classrooms have been a focus of much of our recent training.

Teachers may request coaching, training or new software. All requests pass through the i21 team which meets on a regular basis and helps move the teachers’ agenda forward.

Our goal is to continue with training to support technology and to help teachers create a personal learning experience for every student. In recent years we have partnered with the Highlander Institute on training and that relationship is expected to continue.

**Needs Assessment**

**Telecom Services**

All Foster-Glocester Schools presently share a 40 Megabit Internet connection. Our interschool network connection for Ponaganset Middle School is 80 Megabit, and Ponaganset High School has a 150 Megabit connection. These interschool connections, also called

RITEAF (Rhode Island Telecommunications for Education Access Fund) lines, allow our schools to communicate with each other without utilizing our Internet connection’s bandwidth. Our schools network and bandwidth usage is monitored regularly. If additional bandwidth is needed, a request is made for that increase on our yearly Bandwidth Request Form to RIDE.

**Hardware**

**Wireless Infrastructure**

All our schools have wireless capability through a Cisco wireless 802.11 a/b/g network connecting to Cisco Meraki wireless access points. All classrooms and most hallways have WAPs installed in them.

**Networking Equipment**

We currently use Cisco switched to maintain our network We have recently retired some of our switches as we’ve moved to more wireless connections and a hosted telecom solution. This has given us some cost savings and also provided us with more spare switches. We are looking at replacing our network equipment for school year 2018-19.

**Phone System**

Our phone system was outsourced to Cox in 2017. The vendor supplies the phones and switches to use the equipment. We plan to review our contract for school year 2018-19 to see if this model continues to be productive for us. We additionally have a speaker and bell system from Informacast. This is a mix of IP based speakers in classrooms and analog speakers in the classroom. This system will also be reviewed when the phone system contract is reviewed to see if it still meets our needs.

**Servers and Storage**

Our current VM storage environment was replaced in summer 2017. We plan to replace the front-end hosting environments on a schedule over the next 3 years. We have moved much of our storage and applications to the cloud to minimize our storage and server needs.

**Computers**

Every staff member and student has a computer or chromebook. Most are mobile computing devices like laptops to allow them to move freely. There are some desktops still on admin staff desks and in computer labs. All computers for teachers and staff were updated in last 18 months.

**Printers**

Most of our printing is done in central locations through leased copiers/printers. There still remains some local printing for confidential materials. As we’ve moved to a 1:1 computing environment and online learning management system, our printing needs have diminished. But it is our goal to become as paperless as possible.

**Goals**:

We expect to continue to refresh our infrastructure equipment over the next 3 years. This will include Cisco switches and the servers used to host our VMs. We will continue to identify software options for cloud computing where it makes sense for our end-users. In conjunction with our i21 team, we will continue to identify software that makes sense in the classroom and we will increase our ability to monitor and support student achievement.

**Evaluation Processes**

Our evaluation process for networking technology includes conversations with the key stakeholders in the district, including administrators in central office, the technology team, key teachers and staff and outside vendors who help us learn current technologies. We actively engage with other districts to hear of new technologies that might benefit our community.