

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

In upgrading computers throughout the system, Perkins County Schools has purchased 18 iPads for the K-2 classrooms.

The iPads were shown to school board members by the schools' technology expert Chris Mestl during their regular monthly meeting on Nov. 14.

The 18 newly purchased iPads cost just under \$600 each.

According to Superintendent Tobin Buchanan, the district's next laptop purchase will allow for the older machines to be passed down into elementary grades, making the school a third through 12th grade one-to-one laptop initiative.

A desktop lab, which numbers approximately 45 desktop computers has been maintained at the middle school and elementary for students who have not had laptops.

Buchanan said it was decided by the school improvement and tech committee to purchase the new iPads instead of buying any more desktop machines.

New iPads with touch screen technology that younger students really enjoy can be placed in the primary classrooms.

The district will avoid the purchase of over 40 desktop machines that cost approximately \$1,200 each.

The overall computer upgrade is a combination of district money and a REAP grant—federal grants for rural schools designated for technology.

"We continue to look for the most economic and beneficial solutions available to be progressive in our commitment to integrating technology in the classroom," said Buchanan.

In Other Business

- Perkins County Schools recently purchased some after-market seat belt restraints for use on three of the district's buses.

The belts will enable certain students who require a car seat restraining system to safely ride the buses. They are interchangeable as needed.

- K-2 special ed teacher Dana Frieberg addressed the board and described an outline of her goals for expanding the school's services in enrichment activities with the students.

When she was hired to replace the former spec ed instructor at the elementary, part of her time was contracted toward this goal.

"We are starting slowly at the elementary with strengthening our program and hope to see it expand," said Superintendent Buchanan.

- The board members heard a presentation on phase II of the high school's heating and air project from Ron Paul of Siemens. Buchanan said it is expected that the board will formally approve the design and price for the project at the December board meeting.

- High School Principal Dean Friedel presented a report to the board that included the results of parent teacher conferences, announcement of an upcoming sportmanship summit in Gering, absenteeism, and inappropriate dancing at a recent function, which will be monitored closely in the future.

There are 118 students enrolled at Perkins County High School.

- According to Terry Prante, elementary and middle school principal, parent teacher conferences were well attended at both of the schools. Ninety-seven percent of elementary parents attended conferences. Fifty-seven percent of the parents attended middle school parent

teacher conferences.

Prante presented the bus and van transportation figures to the board for October. There were 14,554 miles covered during 20 school days that month.

There are 160 students enrolled in kindergarten through fifth at the elementary in Grant and 85 in middle school at Madrid for a total of 245 K-8 students.