

Community Board 7
Education/Youth Committee Meeting
November 13, 2020, 1:00pm

Agenda

- Discussion on infrastructure and technological issues in the schools in the CD7 district

Minutes

1. Issues with iPads -
 - a. Not available for purchase until early September.
 - b. Apple changed models of iPads, which were not yet approved by DOE which further delayed shipment of devices
 - c. Devices need to be delivered to schools and then distributed to students - devices arriving directly to students caused a lot of confusion and fear.
2. WiFi/Cellular Issues -
 - a. Families that don't have home internet were issued cellular enabled iPads - sharing of devices for multi student homes caused attendance challenges. One device being shared between multiple students.
 - b. Many areas in the district are considered "dead zones" - cellular service does not work or work well inside homes - required individual coordination with T-Mobile.
 - c. Need for WiFi for students in homes could not be greater.
3. Broader Tech Issues -
 - a. Devices should be delivered with headsets so that students are not distracted by outside noise and their virtual classrooms are not as well.
 - b. Teachers/school staff are balancing their additional hats and are now also providing tech support. There needs to be greater support for students and families who need technical assistance without burdening already stretched school staff.
 - c. School WiFi networks are inadequate and need to be upgraded to support this increased use.
4. Next Steps:
 - a. Short term -
 - i. Work with Councilmember's office to address the immediate concerns brought by administrators.
 - ii. Send a letter to DOE officials requesting a timeline on delivery of requested devices
 - iii. Create and distribute short survey for CD7 schools to identify additional needs to have specific metrics
 - b. Intermediate/long term -
 - i. Work with community partners to find ways to fill the immediate needs of schools and advocate further for greater support from our government

Minutes prepared by Julio Pena III