

PEIHSF Semi-Annual Meeting
“Technology in Education” Discussion Summary – October 15, 2013

Overall Vision

There was general consensus that there is no evidence of a clear vision for how technology should be implemented and used in education in PEI.

There are limited dollars but investments don't seem to follow a clear plan to make the most effective use of technology in education.

For example, there was a discussion around the 800 new computers that were announced and deployed recently to schools. The feedback from teachers has been that since those new computers were downgraded to XP they are slower than the old computers they replaced. Many parents commented that there are other technologies that may be much more effective in education, for example tablets.

There was the shared concern, that Teachers and Principals are not being consulted when these types of decisions are made.

There were questions, and a request to clarify, the roles that the different provincial organizations play in the planning and implementation of technology in schools in PEI.

Smart Boards

There was general support for Smart Boards as educational technology in classrooms, however there was concern around the training being provided to teachers, as some teachers make great use of the Smart Boards while others don't seem to be as proficient.

Several parents questioned why Smart Boards were given to some High Schools and only Projectors were given to some Elementary Schools, since taking into account their type of interaction and typical use it seems it should have been the other way around.

Robotics and Coding

A consistent theme was the concern over the type of skills needed by our students to thrive in a technology based economy.

There was interest in exploring engaging technologies that teach 21st century skills while children play. There was mention of new initiatives like the Raspberry Pi and the Lego WeDo Robotics kits that allow children from 6 to 11 years old to get familiar with basic engineering and computer skills while being creative and building with Lego.

We were told that this type of input should be provided to the Minister's Advisory Committee on CIT, so the PEIHSF representative will bring it forward to the Committee.

Wireless Internet Access

Some parents expressed the need for WiFi to allow High School students to be able to conduct research and participate in guided online activities as part of their classes to better prepare them for the future.

It was mentioned that having WiFi would allow schools to explore the model of Bring Your Own Device, given that students' devices are sometimes more advanced than what the school could provide.

Other parents expressed concern about access to the Internet but others indicated that many students already have it on their own mobile devices.

The schools Internet filters seem to block more sites than necessary, and it was mentioned that links to educational sites provided by areas within the Education department to schools cannot be accessed at the schools due to these filters.