
Technology changing world — on maps

By Kristina Gleeson

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CEDAR RAPIDS — Goodbye, paper maps and touchable shrunken-Earth plastic globes. Hello, online maps and globes projected on a screen.

Cedar Rapids school district officials are not going to be buying more traditional maps and globes, which can easily become out of date, said Jay Marino, associate superintendent for organizational effectiveness and accountability.

Instead, they will rely on computer-based versions, including 3-D or satellite images, that change with the world around us, he said.

That is one of many technological changes coming to the Cedar Rapids schools.

Marino and Lori Bruzek, technology manager, are supporting a seven-member community committee that will oversee how Cedar Rapids schools spend their share of Linn County local-option school sales tax proceeds on technology.

Voters approved the new 1 percent sales tax Feb. 13 in Linn and Johnson counties. It will be collected for 10 years. Shoppers began paying the tax July 1.

The Cedar Rapids district will receive roughly \$144 million of the county's additional sales tax money in 10 years, using Iowa Department of Revenue 2006-07 projections. The district's more conserva-

tive estimate is \$129.5 million.

It will spend around \$20.6 million for technology, \$64.6 million for infrastructure, \$1.3 million for Kingston Stadium improvements and \$40 million on property tax abatement. There is another oversight committee for infrastructure projects and property tax relief monitoring.

The committees met for the first time June 13 as a large group. They will make sure projects match publicized plans and are done within budget and on schedule.

During their first meeting Tuesday, the technology committee was brought up to speed on open meetings law and district officials' vision for technology in the district, Marino said.

The first priority is to get new computers and printers in the district's elementary schools, work that should be finished by December.

"Before the SILO (school infrastructure local-option tax), we would have done it in two years or more. With SILO, we're going to do it in six months," Marino said. Some of the elementary computers are six or seven years old, he added.

The technology committee meets again from 3 to 5 p.m. Aug. 28 in room 260 of the Educational Service Center, 346 Second Ave. SW. The meeting is open to the public.

■ Contact the writer: (319) 398-8431 or kristina.gleeson@gazettecommunications.com