

# District 102 reviews technology options

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Correspondent

In considering its annual plan for 1992-'93, LaGrange Elementary School District 102 heard a report on the district's technology needs Monday.

Consultant Erin Sexton of Data Control and Research Ltd. presented the board with recommendations to update the administrative computer system, calling for consolidation of data bases, acquisition of various software packages and replacement or addition of certain computer units.

The report includes es-

timated costs for hardware, software, installation, training and phone charges to link the network's components.

Two options were presented for operating the system. Sexton recommends that the district utilize the township treasurer's system, which would carry a total cost of about \$60,000, about half the cost of the other option, purchasing a central processing unit and running the network in-house.

Curriculum director Paul Prell and Sexton reported on administrative and instructional technology.

The report was in response to questions raised at the June 24, 1991, board meeting. Sexton was hired to survey administrative needs and develop a plan to meet those needs. The Instructional Computing Committee has met monthly since September to address questions related to the instructional use of computers.

Sexton said there would be virtually no difference in processing speed or record security if the district used the treasurer's system. The treasurer will soon acquire a new processor with enough

power to accommodate the system, no matter how many concurrent users were on the system at any time.

Another advantage of using the existing system, according to Sexton's report, is the treasurer's willingness to assume most of the costs of the proposed software applications.

If the plan to use the treasurer's system is adopted, it is anticipated that the hardware and software could be purchased within this fiscal year and equipment installed before the close of the school (See *Options*, Page 2)

## Options

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year due to overbudgeting in several accounts. Prell presented a multiple phase plan to update instructional computer services.

The Instructional Computing Committee report concluded that future purchases of hardware should use the latest technology developed and recommends the use of computer labs for whole-class activity and use of a computer in each classroom for direct instruction and to assist teacher management.

To achieve this, Phase I of the plan proposes purchasing 20 computer set-ups to be distributed to four teachers in each building. The same number of computers would be added for the next three years until every classroom had a computer.

Phases II through IV also call for the upgrading and expansion of computer labs. Total hardware costs for all four years are estimated at \$750,000. Software, training and other expenses are estimated at about \$50,000 a year. The board was first presented with the annual plan by Superintendent Glenn Gustafson at a special meeting March 9.

At the March 23 meeting, members also heard a facility report from Wil Olson of the district's architectural firm, Arcon, based on a study of all district buildings. Further detailed reports will be heard April 13.

The annual plan is a first step to building a budget that outlines the district's needs and resources in all areas, including curriculum, personnel, staff development, enrollment and transportation.