

[The Heavy Lifting](#): Infusion and Aftermath



The overwhelming good news in our school system is this year's much needed course correction in technology refreshment and upgrades. The architect of this 5-year deal is county manager John Langdon.

His plan has received initial nods of approval from both the Board of Education and the funding agent, the Board of County Commissioners.

Although most did not see this coming, I am convinced that it would not have come to pass had not schools participated so actively in the technology planning and hardware acquisition request processes. School Media and Technology Advisory Committees furnished [well-conceived plans](#), school personnel and families [lobbied for support](#) of those plans, and the county has responded.

For the next five years, we may not have to politic so hard for assets. We are getting what we are getting . . . and it ain't shabby. That doesn't mean though that we are off the hook.

The deal that was struck supports the thorough long-range planning of our department and translates into the following technology assets this school year:

- 1475 computers, about half of which are laptops
- Productivity software for those computers
- 264 data projectors, with an additional 132 to follow next year
- 5 servers including one for centralized e-mail
- Wireless canopies at 10 schools, with the remaining schools to follow next year
- A double-shot of printers

Carteret County Government is the purchasing agent for this year's technology infusion. All purchase requests are scrutinized, scrubbed and [put out for competitive bids](#) by the county.

I have already communicated several project updates to principals, media coordinators, and instructional tech facilitators. The updates include an overall project timeline for the year and a school-specific one pager. The one-pager lists projected new assets, deployment guidance, and projected timelines as relates to specific schools.

Copies of those documents have been shared with our superintendent, our purchasing gurus, our director of technical support, and the finance director for the county government.

Striking this deal and following it through are no small tasks. The extreme communication required for good politics is significant. The accountability is rigid. Now we are getting into the RFP process with a solid team of school and county officials. The logistics are nothing short of complicated. Ordering, installing, mounting, moving electricity, and shuffling old inventory toward surplus will be crushing.

But all of that will pale in contrast to what comes after.

We will no longer be able to say we have so much old technology. We will no longer be able to say we have to spend most of our time keeping the old stuff running. We will not be able to say as vehemently that we don't have enough modern computers for students. We will ultimately have to figure out how to allow students to bring their own devices from home and connect securely to our wireless networks.

In short, once the procurement and implementation stages are complete, we will have to address how these 21st century tools are going to impact 21st century teaching and learning for 100% of our teachers and students.

And that's when the heavy lifting begins.