



One Superintendent's Perspective on Using Technology at the Governance Level...

By Ron Saunders, Superintendent, Barrow County Schools, Georgia

Technology has helped not only our Board, but also my staff. The Board uses their laptops to view system information. We have given each board member email addresses and made those addresses public. They receive a good number of emails from citizens; therefore, communication has increased. My staff members realize that information must be given to the Board members via attachments and, thus, they become more organized and efficient. The result (of going from a paper to a paperless agenda system) has been very encouraging and positive. We also share our board agenda with the public both on our website and at the actual board meeting. We have live projection on two screens in the Board of Education meeting room so the audience can follow along with the Board as they go through the agenda. This keeps everyone focused on the events as presented. I believe that the technology has helped our Board of Education to not only be more efficient in technology, but also more focused on the agenda of the school system.

It helps that our Board of Education can access the information in our database to look at our test scores and how our students are achieving. They have always been a good "curriculum" Board of Education, but this enables them to assess and access more data that deals with the achievement of the students in which they serve. We often have Board of Education meetings that deal primarily with AYP and State and Local Curriculum. It is far easier to present this information using updated technology than to hand out results with paper. We are still evaluating the direct relationship with the Board and technology and achievement scores of students, but I feel comfortable in stating that I can see a direct relationship between what my Board of Education has done these last couple of years with technology and what achievement improvement scores we are seeing districtwide.