

Technology Department Board Report
March 26, 2025

Audio Quality for Live Streamed Board Meetings:

Sound quality for streaming of board meetings has been poor, using only pre-existing equipment. Venue changes for highly attended meetings further exacerbates this issue, as the alternative sites have different levels of “built-in” audio available to them, none of which are well-suited to capture more than one or two persons addressing the board or audience.

We have seen moderate improvements from using a noise-canceling filter on the capture device, and have recently adjusted the gooseneck microphones in the board room to the max level we can set without distorting sound. Those microphones enhance audio for the seated audience, but should also boost what the streaming microphones pick up as well. If this does improve sound quality, that will still be limited to just the board room - alternate sites cannot take advantage of this. These are the extent of the “no-cost” improvements we can make with our existing setup.

I consulted with several vendors and other districts at the recent Kentucky Society for Technology in Education conference, and have included the consensus recommendation for a microphone solution for your review:

IPEVO Vocal Hub (microphones) - <https://us.ipevo.com/pages/vocal-hub>

IPEVO Totem 180 (180 degree camera) - <https://us.ipevo.com/pages/totem-180>

This solution is highly portable, which would help when holding meetings at alternate sites, but the Vocal Hub is approximately \$3750. The camera is only \$300 and would be more portable and easier to set up than the current camera. A price quote is attached to this report, along with analytics for the past 15 months of streaming data, showing how many concurrent “live” views each meeting has, as well as how many clicks they have received afterwards. Please note that 1-2 of the live views are tech staff monitoring the stream.

Next Steps:

- IPEVO offers a 30 day demo if the board wishes to further consider investing in audio improvements.
- We can explore upgrades to the audio infrastructure (amplifier, mixer, audio cabling) in the board room, but those might not be any less expensive, and will not be portable.

Telephone Services - Cost Reduction Opportunity

A recent opportunity to reduce costs has arisen through the possibility of switching our phone provider from the current legacy copper PRI lines from Altafiber to a more modern, SIP trunk from Zayo, the new state-contracted internet provider to all K12 schools. Districts have been encouraged to move away from PRI lines as telecom providers themselves seek to phase those out and they become increasingly harder to maintain.

It is best to describe the district as having phone services (the lines coming into the buildings, basically) and a phone system (the handsets and other hardware and software needed to route incoming calls throughout our schools. We would be changing just the incoming phone service, while continuing to use the existing phone “system”, which still has some life in it.

It is anticipated that we can lower our overall phone costs by several hundred dollars per month by making this change.