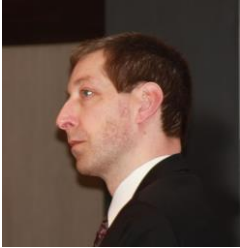


# Chippewa Valley awards tech infrastructure, call box contract

## Board also responds to resident concerns near Sequoyah

- By Nicole Tuttle For MediaNews Group
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On Oct. 21, Chippewa Valley Schools Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations Scott Sederlund recommended that the district's board of education approve the award of virtual server infrastructure, voice equipment and call boxes to Sentinel Inc. NICOLE TUTTLE FOR THE MACOMB DAILY



On Oct. 21, Chippewa Valley Schools Superintendent Ron Roberts discussed the importance of technology upgrades in the district. The district's board of education approved the award of a contract to Sentinel, Inc. for virtual server infrastructure, voice equipment and call boxes. PHOTO COURTESY OF CHIPPEWA VALLEY SCHOOLS

### **NICOLE TUTTLE FOR THE MACOMB DAILY**

On Oct. 21, the Chippewa Valley Schools Board of Education awarded a contract for virtual server infrastructure, voice equipment and call boxes during a regular meeting at the administration building in Clinton Township.

Call boxes used in schools throughout the Chippewa Valley district could be replaced this winter, due to a recent school decision to award a technology and safety contract.

On Oct. 21, the Chippewa Valley Schools Board of Education met at the district's administration building in Clinton Township to award a contract to Sentinel, Inc. The contract totaling \$755,046 encompasses virtual server infrastructure, voice equipment and call boxes.

"This project includes all hardware and software to migrate approximately 125 district virtual and physical servers from the current converged infrastructure or vBlock to a new hyperconverged infrastructure," Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations Scott Sederlund said. "The bid also includes the purchase of new building call boxes plus the replacement of several older model phones and critical voice over IP software to operate the phones systems and the e-911 service districtwide."

Sederlund added pricing for the project was reviewed and approved by the technology services department and technology subcommittee. Funding comes from the 2018 bond. Voters approved the \$97 million bond issue in November 2018. Billed as a "Safe Schools, Strong Schools" proposal, it called for financing updated security and technology in district buildings as well as infrastructure improvements.

Trustee Frank Bednard said that he was part of a subcommittee with Secretary Laura Cardamone and Treasurer George Sobah regarding the equipment, which he described as "an excellent system for our future needs to build on."

Post-meeting, Superintendent Ron Roberts said the servers affect operations districtwide, including security cameras.

"Well the bond was really, it was safe schools and technology also was a big part of the bond. So this fits with the technology component of the bond," Roberts said. "But it does help us keep the schools safe because they run everything."

Sarah Monnier-White, the district's director for technology, said post-meeting the bid was divided into the three district parts of VSI, call boxes and phones. The new server infrastructure will allow the district to move servers off the vBlock and provide better student computer performance until those systems are replaced further along in the bond process, according to Monnier-White.

"The VSI is part of larger infrastructure upgrades included in the bond to provide equitable and reliable computer access throughout the district. It's more about the technology part of the bond than safety. But the VSI is one part of the infrastructure that forms the backbone of our network and allows students to use computers as part of their learning," Monnier-White said.

Call boxes help control who enters buildings and are related to student safety. Monnier-White said 41 boxes will be replaced in buildings districtwide, with one additional call box being added at Ottawa Elementary School in Clinton Township.

"The timeline is not yet established. Once a bid is approved by the board we can meet with the integrators to begin planning. I would estimate the call boxes would be installed by January," Monnier-White said.

Phone replacements are tied in with the call boxes, as these are primarily office phones with video capabilities that allow office staff to see who is at a school door and open it remotely. The updated models offer additional features, Monnier-White said.

"Our phone system is IP or internet based. Phones connect and communicate via internet drops. We also maintain a minimum of two traditional phone lines at each building," Monnier-White said. "This redundancy ensures that if the internet goes down we have emergency communication lines at each building. One portion of the bid provides for the maintenance and upkeep of these emergency lines."

The board also heard concerns from local residents regarding an access road near Sequoyah Elementary School. The school is located on 24 Mile Road, east of Romeo Plank in Macomb Township. Resident concerns included speeds used on the access road, despite the 15 mile per hour speed limit, and signage. Resident requests included more speed bumps in the area in addition to the ones the district has already added, increased signage and potentially radar speed signs.

Bednard said that concerns about the access road have been ongoing for a few years, and that the board is open to suggestions and seeking a resolution. However, he added that he was unsure if there would be a mutual resolution that would please all parties.

"We all know that that road, it has to be left open. It is a public safety concern for our community, who also pay for that road," Bednard said. "I believe our school property was there first, before the subdivision was in."

Roberts said he would share with the board a report from the Transportation Improvement Association (TIA) of the access road done last summer. The access road is private but open from 24 Mile Road to the school, as the only way to get to the school from the north is by using this road. Roberts explained after the meeting the TIA spent a week setting up traffic counters and doing aerial shots of the area, and suggesting changes regarding signs and speed limits.

"It is our road. There are some suggestions made by the Traffic Improvement Association that we can do which are not that difficult but the traffic report that was done is, the results of it are not alarming," Roberts said.

In addition, on Oct. 21 the board approved a revised board policy regarding the prohibition of referral or assistance. The policy was revised to comply with current law according to Roberts. The policy is regarding the State School Aid Act and Revised School Code, which required the board of education to adopt a disciplinary policy.

The policy applies to school officials, members of governing boards or employees who refer students for abortions or assist students in obtaining abortions, and who are not the parent or legal guardian of the pupil. The policy indicates that the superintendent or designee shall conduct an investigation using due process procedures. If it is determined that someone subject to the policy violated it, penalties will be those as provided by law, board policy and applicable collective bargaining agreement provisions, according to the policy.