District Priorities for 2012-13
Kathy Ellison distributed a chart of the priorities for elementary, middle school, high school and the district for 2012-13. Over all levels there is a focus on closing the achievement gap, technology, Common Core State Standards, and extending the International Baccalaureate program. Other priorities for each level include elementary – full day kindergarten, middle school – closing Central and Writing Across the Content Areas (WACA), New Tech Program; high school – WACA, 5 year IB DP evaluation, and New Tech Program.

New Tech Program
Kathy Ellison introduced the district’s exploration of the New Tech Program at Midland Public Schools, and introduced the members of the New Tech Planning Committee: Pam Kastl, Penny Miller-Nelson, and Randy Schaedig. Janet Greif is also a member of the Planning Committee, but could not attend due to another obligation.

Penny Miller-Nelson provided a review of the key pillars of a New Tech program:

1. Teaching That Engages - Project Based Learning (PBL) creates life-long learners when curriculum is relevant, contextual, creative, and shared. PBL promotes the attainment of 21st Century Skills such as collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, communication, and reflection.

2. Technology That Enables - Embedded, web-based tools and technology enrich the learning experience and keep everyone connected. All classes have a one-to-one computing ratio.

3. Culture That Empowers - Facilitators (teachers) and learners (students) own the learning experience which creates a culture of trust, respect, and responsibility.

Penny described the events leading to the investigation of a New Tech Program as an option for our students who need this type of environment for successful learning. Her summary included researching program success, attributes of the program, locations of our visits, and how many people have participated in these visits. She also recapped the reflections following these visits.

Randy Schaedig presented to the group a 2012-2013 Process Map that captures the key dates and benchmarks the Planning Committee has identified for the potential implementation of a New Tech Program to begin in the fall of 2013.
Pam Kastl then discussed **Why New Tech for Midland Public Schools?**

New Tech Program will create another option for learners that will:
- Increase student engagement through the use of Project Based Learning.
- Provide students with a small school environment in which Trust, Respect and Responsibility are emphasized.
- Focus on 21\(^{st}\) Century Skill development that is essential for students’ success after high school.
- Utilize business and community partners to increase the relevance of student learning and projects.
- Focus on STEM content and skills.
- Provides an opportunity to compare a project based learning to our current structures.

Committee members expressed appreciation to the planning committee for the in-depth summary of the New Tech Program. Mr. Ellinger facilitated committee discussion of the impact and financial issues during the last segment of the meeting.

Next CaSS meeting: September 18, 5:00 p.m., Administration Center, Room 9