

Board of Trustees
 Washtenaw Community College

DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE ACTION

4800 E. Huron River Drive
 Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105-4800

Subject
 Wi-Fi Redundancy Infrastructure Project

Date
 April 28, 2020

BACKGROUND

The college continues to prioritize stable/reliable computer infrastructure as a key component of our efforts to support student success. Efforts have included: website, server, network and phone availability/reliability/coverage. Our goal is 99.999% uptime. Wi-Fi reliability is a critical component of our efforts; however, to date we have experienced multiple outages of varying lengths - 11/29/19 (3hrs), 2/12/20 (45min), 2/17/20 (1hr.). Students heavily rely on Wi-Fi and can only access campus resources from their devices via Wi-Fi. Some classes/labs rely on Wi-Fi for classroom instruction. Faculty and staff also leverage wireless connectivity as appropriate for campus operations. In addition, UA, Iron Workers, and others rely heavily on reliable Wi-Fi on campus. On a related note, cellular service on campus is far less than ideal. As a result, reliable Wi-Fi is a life-safety need.

As we continue with these efforts to maintain a strong technology environment for our students, faculty and staff, the most glaring immediate need is redundancy of our Wi-Fi controllers. We only have one controller and it was end-of-life on 10/10/16. When it fails or needs security patching/updating, campus Wi-Fi goes down. It is not if, but when it will fail, and it may not always be recoverable.

Key reasons and benefits for these replacements/upgrades include:

- The current controller is 11 years old and cannot be purchased anymore.
- One controller does not provide redundancy – we need two new controllers.
- Wi-Fi controllers automate the system settings across all Wi-Fi access points (AP's).
- 64 of our access points are not compatible with the new controllers. As a result, these need to be replaced as part of this project.

New controllers and access points will provide:

- Greater reliability with new and old Wi-Fi devices (smartphones, tablets, computers, etc.).
- Provide redundancy to achieve 99.999% uptime
- Using newer wireless technology (802.11ax, Wi-Fi 6).
- Increased bandwidth within the wireless network.
- Life span is 7 years.

The college obtained a MiDeal (State of Michigan approved purchasing consortium) quote from an approved vendor, which is included in the enclosed bid summary. The college recommends that the

Wi-Fi Redundancy Infrastructure contract be awarded to CDW for an amount not to exceed \$330,000. This contract will be covered by FY20 ITS budgeted resources.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Trustees approve contracts to purchase Wi-Fi gear with CDW for an amount not to exceed \$330,000.

IF MOVED TO ACTION, A ROLL CALL VOTE WILL BE TAKEN

Prepared by: Todd Kreuger – CIO
Title: Gary Holman- Interim CIO

Recommended by: *Rose B. Bellanca, Esq.*
Rose B. Bellanca, President
