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FEATURED

Kingston schools join state computer lab initiative

By William J. Kemble news@freemanonline.com 19 hrs ago



KINGSTON, N.Y. — The Board of Education has agreed to participate in Science Lab Initiative II, a state program that will provide \$20,000 in equipment to each of the Kingston school district's seven elementary schools.

At a Board of Education meeting Thursday, officials said the program will be administered by the Benjamin Center at SUNY New Paltz.

"Last year we had a similar resolution for the middle schools," district Superintendent Paul Padalino said.

The district's two middle schools last year each received \$50,000 for equipment to be used in conjunction with science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs.

"Now (state Assemblyman Kevin Cahill, D-Kingston) has arranged ... to do STEM labs in our elementary schools as well," Padalino said. "This is in addition to the money that we received last year for the same purpose. So, we're going to have (kindergarten through eighth grade) STEM labs in our school buildings."

Under the board's resolution, SUNY New Paltz, which will review district proposals for programs,

will maintain ownership of the equipment.

"We have to put together a plan working with the Benjamin Center out of SUNY New Paltz," Padalino said.

Officials were able to put the middle school equipment in place for the current school year.

"We bought some new computers, virtual reality items related to programming," Padalino said. "We're just in the infancy of implementing it. We're using it in support of a lot of the other things that we're doing in science, math, and even social studies and English classes."

Padalino said the evolution of computers and their integration with programs have provided ways to engage students with learning that were not possible when equipment was simply a monitor on a desk.

"There's some programs out there where you can do virtual dissections," he said. "So you are doing the dissection without the formaldehyde smell."

SUNY New Paltz, in a press release last month, announced that funding would be available to the Ellenville, Highland, New Paltz, Onteora, Red Hook, Rhinebeck, Rondout Valley, Wallkill and Saugerties school districts, as well as Kingston.

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