



AIKEN COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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For Immediate Release

EXPERIENCED NETWORK TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR DON PENCILLE TO LEAD THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT AS DIRECTOR

During nearly two decades spent serving the expanding technology needs of Aiken County Public Schools, Don Pencille has been at the forefront of emerging challenges and their solutions.

Following a vote Tuesday by members of the Aiken County Board of Education during a regularly scheduled meeting at Silver Bluff High School, he will expand his leadership role as the District's next Director of Technology.

Pencille currently serves as the District's Lead Network Coordinator.

"My wife and I moved here from western New York state in 1994, and she started teaching that same year," Pencille stated. "Both of our kids have come through Aiken County Public Schools. We are committed to this community, and I look forward to this new opportunity."

"This new role is the next step for me professionally. I've had the opportunity to start in an entry-level position with this organization and have moved up over the years, taking on more responsibility," he added. "Most of what we do is learned on the job as we support so many sites and locations. Because of this on-the-job training, I have really been able to see every aspect of what our Technology Department does to support the mission of our organization. As we listen to school and department needs, I look forward to helping expand our District's vision regarding technology and improving our department's capabilities."

Pencille began his career in the District in July of 2001 as a Technology Specialist. He was quickly promoted to the role of Network Specialist in 2002 and served in that capacity until March of 2014 when he was named the District's Network Coordinator. In his most recent role with the District, Pencille evaluated, designed and implemented the District's network systems. He has also been responsible for preparing and recommending operational budgets while maintaining all records, in addition to looking ahead at possible system enhancements and upgrades.

The role of technology in public education has changed dramatically in the 18 years since Pencille joined the District's technology team. He says some challenges, such as maintenance, have remained consistent while others, such as security, continue to grow in importance.

"When I started in 2001 our network was very small," Pencille commented. "I believe we had maybe 4,500 computers district-wide back then, where now we have more than 22,000. We had no wireless, and we were using T1 lines between most schools. Now, we are running one gigabyte circuits, so it's a tremendous increase in speed because everything is becoming web-based and hosted. There is not one part of the school system that doesn't require the use of technology in some way."

Pencille says the primary technology challenge facing the District is in securing its networks and computers from organized cyber-attacks and increasingly sophisticated spamming efforts.

"Our biggest challenge today is obviously security," stated Pencille.

Pencille earned a Bachelor of Science in Economics with a minor in computer science from the State University of New York at Fredonia.

"My educational background in finance and computer science and my work experience is well suited for my new role," commented Pencille. "You definitely need both sides."

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