

DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY AND MEDIA SERVICES
Wilmette Public Schools

INFORMATION ITEM

Date: May 20, 2013

To: Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

From: Adam Denenberg
Director of Technology and Media Services

Subject: Proposed Highcrest iPad Pilot Program

Pilot Overview

Consideration of a one-to-one (1:1) pilot is part of the 2013-2014 District 39 CONNECTED Strategic Plan. As a result of this, CRC studied 1:1 learning environments and is now recommending a district pilot. Knowing CRC was researching this topic, technology teachers formed a Professional Growth Network (PGN) task force for incubating a 2013-2014 pilot. Administrators and curriculum coordinators also participated in this PGN task force.

The CRC review of literature, case studies, and survey data highlighted the following student benefits associated with 1:1 learning environments:

- Transforming students from consumers of information to creators of content
- Increasing student engagement and ownership in learning
- Providing access to “anytime learning”
- Supporting the requirements of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCSS) and the National Education Technology Standards (NETS)
- Promoting the District 39 CONNECTED Strategic Plan

During the past two school years professional development has been offered on iPad apps, accessibility features, and teaching with 1:1 devices. Additionally, teachers at every school have been checking out iPad carts to use with their students. In anticipation of a potential 2013-2014 pilot, more professional development was established to help teachers focus on the identified student benefits in a 1:1 learning environment. This professional development included training on general iPad usage and features. Also, opportunities for iPad apps and activities were identified during a review of the curriculum maps and the Common Core Learning Standards. In addition, an online learning management system (LMS) has been adopted to support instruction. This system allows students to use an iPad

to collaborate, complete and submit electronic assignments and assessments, and a way for students to receive timely teacher feedback.

Further details for this learning initiative will be presented in a June Board of Education Report. Aspects to be reviewed include the structure of this program, staff development, cost, student and parent resources, mechanisms for feedback, and a discussion of expansion of 1:1 learning environments if the pilot is successful.

Recommended 6th Grade Pilot Program

The pilot program is being recommended for one sixth grade house at Highcrest Middle School next school year. This decision was made due to three factors: teacher readiness, continued device usage from sixth through eighth grade, and a projected three-year useful product life span. The three-year timeframe accounts for optimal battery performance, hardware and software support, and device relevancy in the fast-paced technology world. In this pilot program each student involved would receive a district iPad for use at school and home. This small pilot would provide information regarding cost, including the technical support needed to manage the program, the rate of broken or lost devices, the core set of apps, and any necessary peripheral devices such as keyboards or a stylus. Valuable parent, teacher, and student feedback will also be collected. All of this information will be used to help determine if a 1:1 program is appropriate for District 39, and if so, how it will be designed. For these reasons, one sixth grade house (about 100-120 students) containing 4 teachers plus 1 learning behavior specialist have been selected for this pilot. These teachers have been involved in the incubation and preparation of this program. They have also made site visits to other 1:1 schools, and are receiving regular professional development.

Survey of Technology Fees

CRC research revealed that most districts charge a technology or insurance fee. In addition, fees have been found to increase student responsibility for the care of their device. In most cases students keep the device upon the completion of the program. New Trier High School is offering parents the opportunity to purchase the iPad for \$350 and to keep the device when the purchase is complete. They are also offering families the opportunity to lease/purchase the iPad over three years at a cost of \$180/year. Ranges of technology fees in other surveyed districts, including New Trier sender schools, were from \$30-\$180 per year.

Recommended Technology Pilot Program Fee

In the proposed pilot, District 39 will be purchasing a \$479 iPad, a \$40-\$80 protective case, as well as a core set of apps. As this is a pilot program, the long term-fee structure is not yet known. Other factors to be considered in the pilot year would be the necessity of a keyboard and stylus, the quality of the protective case, as well as refining the list of core apps. A detailed cost analysis will be conducted during the pilot year and presented to the Board of Education.

For next year a student fee in the range of \$55-\$75 is being recommended. This amount would create a self-insurance program to cover lost and damaged devices as well as create a personal responsibility incentive for students. This spring before scheduling is completed, fifth grade parents will be given a chance to “opt-out” of the sixth grade pilot and not be placed on the designated sixth grade house.

With work from the CRC and the technology PGN task force, District 39 is prepared to conduct a small 1:1 pilot next year. More details will be shared at the June Board of Education Meeting.

**Recommended for presentation
To the Board of Education**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond E. Lechner". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D., Superintendent