

March 21, 2013

Dear Parents and Students,

On March 19, Western's School Board approved a recommendation for a 1:1 Technology Initiative for the 2013-2014 school year.

This 1:1 Technology Initiative will put an iPad in the hands of each of our students in grades K-12 this coming school year. After visits to other schools who have implemented similar technology, hearing and attending various presentations and conferences, reviewing our parent, staff, student surveys, and after several Technology Team discussions, the following recommendation was made to our School Board.

- To implement 1:1 Technology for the 2013-2014 school year for all students in grades K-12
- Device Choice – iPads
 - Grades K-2 (iPad Mini)
 - Grades 3-12 (iPad 4 – 16g)
 - Why iPads
 - Light weight with no moving parts
 - Easy maintenance
 - Instant on
 - Quick charge time
 - Long battery charge and life
 - Multiple tasks but simple
 - Consumption/communication/production tool
 - Apps and the availability to download resources allows usage without the internet
 - Apple is a leader in educational resources
- All students will take their device home

The cost of this 1:1 Technology Initiative will be shared from several sources, one being Textbook/Supply Fees. Our principals have worked to reduce our current Textbook/Supply Fees so that the impact of the rental fee for the iPad will be minimal. The reductions are the result of eliminating the Student Handbook/Agenda Book and making it available on-line, eliminating the current technology fee, reducing current supply fees by planning more through the iPads, and eliminating certain textbook fees. While the rental for the iPad Mini will be \$50 and the iPad 4 will be \$75, the approximate increases over our current 2012-2013 textbook and supply fees will be the following:

- Kindergarten - \$29 increase
- Grade 1 - \$21 increase
- Grade 2 - \$9 increase
- Grade 3 – \$28.50 increase

- Grade 4 - \$31 increase
- Grade 5 – \$35.80 increase
- Grade 6 - \$1.50 increase
- Grade 7 - \$5.75 increase
- Grade 8 - \$0 increase
- Grades 9-12 – \$45 increase (may be less depending on courses)

These increases may be reduced further as we move forward and incorporate more digital resources.

The remaining balance of the 1:1 Technology Initiative will be paid for from our Capital Projects Fund, Rainy Day Fund and a Common School Fund. This will cover the remaining cost of the device, apps, insurance (deductible, in case of damage will be the responsibility of the parent/student), cases, and the necessary hardware and software to control the devices.

This Technology Initiative is supported by our Strategic Plan to enhance student learning and the vision that students will develop the skills needed to compete in a technologically changing world. Additionally, the survey results from parents, students, and staff showed that the availability and use of technology during the school day was limited. We believe this 1:1 Technology Initiative will:

- Improve learning outcomes of students
- Immerse our students in the digital world
- Give an equal opportunity to all students
- Prepare our students for the digital world
- Provide a powerful resource/tool to teachers and students

Our expectations for implementation for the 2013-2014 school year include reading, writing, and research for the students and substitution, adaptation and innovation for the staff. We also understand that while technology is important in the world we live in, it is a tool to enhance learning and is not intended to replace the teacher or the instruction he or she provides.

The possibilities that this 1:1 Technology Initiative offers for our students and staff is exciting and will only grow as we continue to grow. Additional information will be provided and informational meetings will be scheduled as we get closer to the fall. If you have any questions regarding this initiative, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Randy McCracken