



September 3, 2021

Dear Whitman-Hanson Families,

This is a follow-up letter to the Chromebook agreement and informational sheets recently sent home with students. The intent is to answer common questions we have received and alleviate concerns related to the new 1:1 Chromebook Initiative.

There are two competing initiatives that school districts can adopt which are '1:1' (One to One) or 'BYOD' (bring your own device). With BYOD, school districts permit students to bring their own personally owned electronic devices to class. With 1:1, the school districts equip students with the necessary electronic devices that allow them to access digital course materials. There are pros and cons to each option and the decision is driven by the unique factors of each district.

After carefully reviewing both options, the District Leadership Team, comprised of various levels of stakeholders throughout the District, selected the 1:1 option and incorporated it into the current district strategic plan. The plan was then presented to and officially adopted by the WHRSO School Committee on January 13, 2021.

There are multiple benefits of adopting a 1:1 initiative such as cost, equality, compatibility, security, maintenance, and support.

- **Cost** - Since the district is providing devices to students there are no up-front costs incurred by families. Families do not have to purchase their own devices for students to participate.
- **Equality** - Uniform integration of technology eliminates digital inequality. Every student is provided a Chromebook with the same functionality and specifications as everyone else. There is no worry about who does or doesn't have a device or type of device.
- **Compatibility** – Standardization of devices ensures application compatibility. Applications may not be universal across all platforms which could cause issues with BYOD users.
- **Security** – With 1:1, devices are enrolled in an MDM (Mobile Device Management) solution. This allows the District to manage policies and settings on the devices since they are owned and controlled by the District. In contrast, with BYOD, devices are personal property and managed by their owners. There are no assurances as to whether the latest security updates are installed, anti-virus protection present, and devices configured for best practices.
- **Maintenance/Support:** The District has an in-house Technology department with a full-time staff that assists faculty and students. By adopting 1:1, the department is better equipped to provide support since all devices are maintained and managed in-house.

While the district does respect personal choice and understands if you decide to opt-out of the 1:1 initiative, please note the following:

1. It is your responsibility to provide an adequate device compatible with the district's network and digital education platforms.
 - Acceptable devices are Chromebooks and laptops.
 - Tablets or mobile devices are not compatible with the districts online learning platform.
 - Equipment must be up-to-date with security.
 - Fully patched operating systems
 - Active anti-virus protection
2. District technology staff will have limited capabilities when supporting personal devices.
3. There are no classroom sets available for use for students in grades 3-12.
 - All district owned Chromebooks were used to meet the needs of the 1:1 initiative.
 - Only K-2 classrooms will have classroom sets moving forward.

Lastly, we are aware of privacy concerns related to the GoGuardian filtering solution used by the District for content filtering and classroom management. An informational sheet was provided that outlines the solution as well as features and functionality. We want to ensure you are aware the solution was adopted to ensure compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Two requirements are:

1. Internet safety policies must include monitoring the online activities of minors
2. According to the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response.

This solution is tied to the student google login and not specific to district-issued Chromebooks. Notwithstanding your decision to participate in the 1:1 initiative, we are required to comply with these federal acts and will continue content filtering and monitoring regardless of the device being used.

Enclosed please find answers to Frequently Asked Questions. If you still have questions or concerns please email chromebooks@whrsd.org.