



Dear Families,

At last week's meeting, the Board of Education heard an exciting update on Phase II of the Technology Bond. The highlight of this update was a discussion on launching a one-to-one (1:1) program in the fall. The Board of Education was very supportive of this concept and will be voting on the purchase of devices at an upcoming meeting.

Under this plan, students in grades 6 - 12 would receive a Google Chromebook to use at both school and home during the school year. At the conclusion of the school year, the devices would be returned, cleaned and updated and then reissued to students at the start of the next school year. Students will receive the same device year to year. We will also increase student devices in grades 3 - 5 to create a 1:1 environment in the classroom; however, our elementary students will not take their devices home.

With this long-term investment, we are striving to enhance teaching and learning by fostering a culture of student engagement. Through our research, collaboration with other districts who have launched similar models, and our own experiences, we have found a 1:1 model provides personalized learning opportunities, increases ownership of learning, expands access to learning beyond the classroom, strengthens collaboration within and outside of school, and prepares students for real-world experiences.

With Phase I of the technology bond complete, our teachers and schools have become accustomed to using devices to support and enhance their instruction. As we move into Phase II of the bond, the requests for additional classroom devices outnumbered our student enrollment. This caused us to pause and begin evaluating the possibility of implementing a 1:1 program.

To ensure the safety of our students, our content filter and monitoring system will be installed on each device. This will block inappropriate material, monitor device use, and alert us to any questionable material being viewed at home and at school. This is the same system that we currently use on the devices in our buildings and student email accounts. As part of this process, we are developing a student/parent handbook outlining appropriate use. Families will be required to review the handbook and sign a new technology use form.

With regards to payment and care for the device, there are two options: Option 1) An annual insurance premium of \$20, with a family maximum premium of \$60. Additionally, there will be an

incident deductible charged for damage to a student's device. Families that qualify for free and reduced lunch can apply for a premium waiver; however, they will still be responsible for the incident deductible; Option 2) Families pay a refundable deposit of \$200 for each child's device and any repair costs will be deducted from the deposit.

As we roll out this new and exciting opportunity, we want to take time to ensure that students, families, and teachers are comfortable with it. As such, at the middle and high school levels, devices will not be issued at the start of the school year. Rather, we will take the first few weeks of school to ensure that everyone understands the expectations prior to issuing devices. At the elementary level, the new devices will be installed in classrooms over the summer.

I recognize that when launching something new, we will not be able to answer all of your questions in one communication. As we move through this process, you will receive periodic updates from me and your child's school. We have also created a 1:1 website, which you can find at <https://goo.gl/QHzibX>. On the website, you will find additional information on our 1:1 program, including a draft of our "Student Chromebook Care & Usage Handbook", an FAQ, and a copy of the presentation that was given to the Board of Education. Additionally, there is a [form](#) on the website that can be used to submit questions.

Thank you for your partnership in your child's education.

Sincerely,

Erin. J MacGregor
Superintendent
Howell Public Schools