

To: Board of Education  
Dr. Laurie Heinz, Superintendent

From: Mary Jane Warden, Director of Innovation and Instructional Technology  
Luann Kolstad, Chief School Business Official

Date: April 25, 2016

Re: Update on 2016-17 Chromebook 1:1 Plan

### **Resolution of Dell Generation 1 Chromebook Appeal**

During my Technology Update: Year-in-Review at the April 11, 2016 Board meeting, I reported on the unacceptable product performance of the Dell Generation 1 Chromebooks documented by District 64. After intense conversations with our Dell Account Manager, the Regional Vice President, and the President of Dell Sales, we have received word that Dell will exchange District 64's entire Dell Generation 1 Chromebook fleet. This amounts to replacing 2,782 units with Dell Generation 2 Chromebooks. We are extremely pleased with the company's decision to stand behind its products.

Although it cannot erase the inconvenience to students and the extra school and Tech Central staff time in handling the defective devices, we look forward to receiving the new equipment. We do not have a firm timeline yet, but are making plans for the exchange and deployment with Dell. We anticipate finishing the year with working devices, and looking forward to the start of the 2016-17 school year with an new fleet of Dell Generation 2 Chromebooks.

### **Technology Purchase for 2016-17**

In light of this unexpected infusion of new devices, we are working to realign the budget according to a new 4-year refresh cycle. Therefore, we are recommending the purchase of Dell Generation 2 Chromebooks to replace the remaining 5th grade Samsung Chromebooks to assure device dependability (addressing wireless card and other technical issues), to unify the fleet and bring consistency to the whole class of Chromebooks. This will ensure we have reliable, working Chromebooks for all students, help with keeping refresh cycles properly aligned and in sync, and pooling our support resources to support one Dell model. This purchase would be approximately \$82,500 and would be incorporated into the annual technology budget.

The issues the District has been experiencing with the Dell Generation 1 Chromebooks in Year 2 of product life has brought to light the stark reality that with Chromebooks so new to the market, there has been no history of product reliability or performance that we can put full confidence in. We are literally "growing up" with the product, just as consumers did when other new products

like iPhones or iPads came into existence. No one really knew if these products would stand the test-of-time, because we are virtually living it out in real time. With this reasoning, expecting a product like a Chromebook to last a full 4-years of wear and tear may be too ambitious to sustain. We will continue to track device issues through our help desk/asset management system to further inform us on product life span vs. device performance/durability.

Ideally, the District would like to operationalize the annual technology budget to incorporate the estimated projected allocation of \$155,000 for 550 Chromebooks (3-year refresh) and \$120,000 for 250 iPads (4-year refresh) each year. Because the entire fleet of Dell Generation 1 Chromebooks are being replaced for the 2016-17 school year, this gives the District two more years to operationalize a realistic refresh cycle for 1:1 devices, which is ample time for this planned disbursement to be integrated into a long-term sustainable budget.