

One Kirkwood Tools of Tomorrow

**A comprehensive plan to ensure our students have the tools necessary to learn.
Working together, we will ensure all students are prepared for success now and in their future.**

Q: Why is the district reinvesting in technology to enhance student learning?

A: The Kirkwood School District community has been a leader in supporting educational technology for many years, approving a dedicated technology fund nearly 25 years ago to support student learning. This forward-thinking commitment set a tone of high expectations, putting funds in place to eventually equip classrooms and labs with then-innovative tools for learning – video monitors and desktop computers, followed by laptop carts and interactive digital projectors. Kirkwood built on these successes in 2012, investing in our students with the purchase of one-to-one iPad minis as a personalized learning tool. Our shift to 1:1 mobile devices ensured that every student had equitable access and opportunities through technology, both at school and at home.

We live in a world that is changing rapidly and will likely reinvent itself several times during the lives of our students. Nearly every member of next year's senior class was born in the 21st century, so embracing "21st century skills" is not an option. It's their only reality. Recent estimates suggest 65% of kindergartners will someday work in careers that have yet to be invented, and many are already doing things – in and out of school – that previous generations would have thought not possible. We have a responsibility, even an obligation, to teach our kids for today *and* so they are successful in their tomorrow.

After several years of use, our current devices have grown old and are no longer meeting the changing needs of our students or teachers. We have high expectations of our students, now and in the future, and their work requires equitable access to tools that support and enhance their learning.

Q: Do other school districts have a technology plan or a one-to-one initiative?

A: Yes. All comparable districts in our region have variations of one-to-one technology in place for their students.

Q: What devices will students be using?

A: Our proposal includes different tools for different levels, responding to the varied learning needs of our students.

- Students in K-2 will use a 5th generation iPad. This device will have 32GB of memory and include a durable case.
- Students in grades 3-8 will also use a 5th generation iPad, but their devices will have 128GB of memory. This device will include a Logitech rugged case with detachable keyboard, an option requested by many students, teachers, and parents at these levels.
- High school students will use a 128GB MacBook Air laptop, along with a protective case.

Q: Were other devices considered?

A: Yes. Surveys were administered in Fall 2016, gathering valuable information about usage, strengths, challenges, and needs. Three out of four respondents supported 1:1 technology over labs or "bring your own device" solutions, and two out of three felt different devices may be needed at different levels. Several presentations were held last spring for principals, teachers, and technology specialists, providing opportunities to learn more about Chromebook and Apple products. Sample devices were used by teachers and students at KHS, both in the spring and this fall. Principals and teachers revisited these discussions in recent months, exploring these and other products, before overwhelmingly selecting the iPad for grades K-8 and the MacBook Air for high school students. Our schools have a long history with Apple products, both with students and staff, and we feel these devices are best suited to support essential skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.

Q: How is this purchasing being funded??



A: All technology purchases are funded by a dedicated technology fund, approved in 1993 as Proposition 3. This ongoing funding source is separate from the district’s operating budget, ensuring adequate infrastructure, instructional technology, and support personnel.

Q: What is the cost per student?

A: Our schools have worked hard to find the most cost-effective options for our students and staff, realizing these devices must meet the needs of students now and into the future. We have secured a three-year, 0% financing plan through Apple. Also factored into our decision-making is the residual value of each device, a guaranteed buy-back value. While we will pay for the technology over three years, we expect to keep these tools for 4-5 years.

- Each 32GB iPad and case will cost \$264 after the initial purchase price of \$344 is offset by a buy-back value of \$80 in four years. Over four years this equates to roughly 37 cents per school day, not including weekends or breaks.
- Each 128GB iPad and case/keyboard will cost \$389 after the initial price of \$484 is offset by a buy-back value of \$95 in four years. Over four years, this equates to roughly 55 cents per school day.
- Each MacBook Air and case will cost \$484 after the initial price of \$759 is offset by a buy-back value of \$275 in four years. Over four years, this equates to roughly 69 cents per school day.

Q: What are you doing with the students’ current iPads?

A: Our current iPad minis, purchased between 2012-2014, will be sold. The overall buy-back value of these devices is roughly \$425,000. These funds will be reinvested to offset costs for new devices.

Q: Will families be required to purchase insurance for these devices?

A: No. Insurance will be offered, and families who do not purchase insurance through our schools will be required to sign an agreement stating they will cover costs if there is damage or theft. Families who purchased insurance this fall (for current iPads) are covered for new devices through May (even laptops at KHS). Families who did not purchase insurance will have the opportunity to do so in January.

Q: What is Kirkwood doing to ensure students have safe and reliable access, both at school and at home?

A: It is essential that students, teachers, and parents have confidence in our wireless access and filtering systems. We recently commissioned a comprehensive WiFi study within the district as part of our commitment to improving infrastructures that impact student and teacher access to digital resources. We are also investing in a new Mobile Device Manager (MDM), which will include an in-house library of apps, personalized by course, grade, or school and readily available through the district.

All student devices will continue to access the Internet through content filters, both at school and at home. Students who do not have access to WiFi will still be able to access their work offline, syncing as appropriate when they are within range of a signal. While filters are essential to our safety plan, we also know the importance of digital citizenship and ongoing instruction to ensure the safe use of online resources and social media. This work continues to be prevalent in our classrooms and will be highlighted in our new technology plan.

Q: How will we ensure a balanced approach to learning?

A: Our teachers will use a blended learning model for instruction, using technology to enhance and amplify good instruction – not replace it. Our strategic plan emphasizing the development of the whole child, which includes but is not limited to work in digital environments.

New guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics (2016) redefine “screen time” as time spent using digital media for entertainment purposes, not on educational tasks. School-issued devices are learning tools, serving as a medium for students to engage with ideas and develop future-ready skills. Echoing the AAP report, we believe students should be taught to use technology “as a tool to create, connect, and learn.” Limits may still be necessary – on a



student-by-student basis – and we will work with families to ensure a balance in students’ digital and real-life experiences.

Q: Are the teachers getting new devices? Are they getting adequate training and support?

A: Our K-12 teachers and principals are getting new iPads, as we understand and value their essential role in the growth of our students. Ongoing training and support is included in our lease agreement, with numerous days of in-classroom coaching provided through Apple Professional Learning. We are finalizing a comprehensive plan to ensure ownership and capacity within and across schools, ensuring those closest to our students - our teachers and principals - are fully equipped and prepared to amplify student learning and the growth of future-ready skills. K-12 teachers will also receive new laptops to replace devices that are at least five years old.

Q: What have our schools learned over the last five years with 1:1 technology? How will success be measured going forward?

A: We have learned a great deal since 2012, regularly reflecting on our challenges while celebrating the many accomplishments of our students and staff. Our focus is student learning – not the specific use of technology – and it is difficult to attribute academic success to one variable in the classroom. It is fair to say, however, that not having equitable access to technology would have hindered students’ growth and their preparation for success in life.

Going forward, we are putting tools in place that will help us better measure the impact of technology investments on student learning. These will include periodic surveys (students, teachers, families), focus groups, and observational protocols.

Reflecting back and looking forward, we have identified several points that are guiding our planning:

- We believe in the power of excellent teachers, and our technology upgrades are meant to enhance and build upon good instruction, not replace it
- Ongoing professional development and support for teachers and principals will be key to students’ successful use of technology to enhance learning
- Our infrastructure (i.e. WiFi, filtering, mobile device management) requires ongoing attention if we’re to keep up with changing tools and changing needs of students
- Students at different levels may require different devices to support varied learning tasks and different expectations.

