April 2018

Technology

Kendall Eley
Academic Dean

In January of this year, I sent this video to you explaining our technology plans for the future. We have been able to make several decisions about improvements for next year, and as we draw to the end of the school year, I want to give you an update.

New Devices for Grades 8-12
All students in grades 8-12 will be issued a 2-in-1 laptop designed specifically for students. The Atlas is built in the United States in conjunction with Microsoft and Intel Education. The internal components are designed to balance storage and processing speed, as well as battery life. The devices will be purchased by the school. Because of certain software that will be required for management, student owned devices will not be allowed. All middle and high school faculty will also be provided with this device.

New Software
In conjunction with the new devices, students will be introduced to new software. Students and teachers will be able to utilize Microsoft Teams for communication and sharing files and will use Microsoft OneNote for notetaking and organization. This software is integrated with all other Microsoft products such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint and will assist in preparing students to be effective communicators and collaborators in the Digital Age.

We will also have new monitoring and management software for the devices to assist both the classroom teacher and the technology department. Teachers will have the ability to monitor and modify student behavior in real-time on the device during normal school hours. No one will have the ability to monitor activity real-time outside of normal school hours. Teachers will have the ability to allow or disallow any feature on the device of the students in their classroom to provide a distraction free environment, to provide a secure assessment device, or to ensure that all students are engaged with a specific website or application. Our IT department will have the ability to manage and monitor all devices to ensure that software is updated properly and to provide additional software to devices as the need arises.

Technology Fee
Students in grades 8-12 will be charged a technology fee of $325 per year in conjunction with this program. This is a slight increase ($30) from previous years. This money is used to provide more than the device that students have. In order to provide students with all of the resources necessary for this program to benefit the education process, we must provide subscriptions for software, business class wireless access points, enterprise class network switching infrastructure and adequate internet bandwidth. Adequate support staff is also an additional cost. Part of the technology fee is used to ensure that these resources are available.

Grades Pre-K through 7
We do plan to implement more technology in all grades in the coming years. This device and use will be appropriate for the grade and developmental level of the students. Technology is a tool for education. We do not foresee the expectations that all learning occurs with use of technology.

Grades 6 and 7 will be issued the same devices as grades 8-12 beginning in the school year 2019-2020.

Next school year, we will evaluate what technology is needed and the proper implementation for students in lower school.

Educational Impact
In my initial video message in January, I mentioned that as a school we have identified three areas of focus. We plan to (1) Provide students with the training needed to effectively use technology on their chosen path after Prince Avenue, (2) Provide students with 21st Century Skills & Digital Citizenship to prepare them for the technological world they live in, and (3) Provide a Transformative Education Environment for students and teachers. These are the first steps in achieving these goals. I believe that these changes will better equip our students to learn while they are at Prince and prepare them for success as they leave here.