

## Springbank Middle School

### ONE-TO-ONE INITIATIVE



To meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century learner, Grade 7 and 8's at Springbank Middle School are engaged in a one-to-one mobile learning initiative. Each student will have access to a computing device increasing student engagement and enhancing learning.

Rocky View Schools Four Year Plan states in the Strategies of Goal 4.1 – Learning environments enable the acquisition of 21<sup>st</sup> Century competencies – there will be a transition for all grade 5-12 students to a 1 to 1 format, through both personal and jurisdictional levels. Springbank Middle Schools will ask for personal laptops for grade 7 and 8 students only, to facilitate this goal.

Below is an outline of some of the preliminary work that SMS and Rocky View Staff have done to develop a potential roadmap for a one-to-one environment.

#### **What is the primary goal of this initiative?**

Springbank Middle School is known for its strong academic values and has been very successful over the years in developing students that have excelled during and after their time at the school. As the use of technology and web-based products has increased, it has resulted in a change in the way that we as individuals approach our jobs and private lives. Schooling at its essence is about training individuals to cope and succeed in society. At SMS we take the responsibility of teaching your child very seriously and to that end we desire to have all students be successful. The move to a one-to-one environment serves two purposes. Firstly it allows us to teach and practice appropriate web based skills. Secondly, it will further enhance our ability to focus on what matters most for our students, creating a learning environment that fosters critical thinking, creativity, metacognition and genuine interest in learning.

#### **How is Springbank Middle School going to support students, as they become responsible digital citizens?**

SMS staff will continue to support and respect the principles that you the parents have begun concerning appropriate use of technology. In addition, all students will be required to complete an online safety course, which is recommended by Alberta Education. Staff will also facilitate frank classroom discussions concerning appropriate behavior in a digital world. Parents will also be invited to the school to participate in special digital citizenship learning opportunities during the year.

#### **How will this project increase student access to technology?**

Every student in Grade 7 & 8 will be encouraged to bring a laptop to school. Student, who will not be able to obtain a laptop for financial or philosophical reason will have the ability to sign out a daily laptop for free.

#### **How frequently do we expect students to be using these tools?**

Computers will be used when appropriate (co-determined by teachers and students) to enrich learning. The advantage of the one-to-one system is that teachers will be able to seamlessly move from an on-line environment to other forms of teaching within a single class. This is currently very difficult to do given the challenges of booking our current sets of laptops.

#### **Are tablet devices such as iPads acceptable technology for this initiative?**

While tablets are improving at a very quick rate, these devices still have limitations with respect to software capability and compatibility. Furthermore, they are currently not aligned with the high school requirements, therefore we do not recommend purchasing one for this initiative.

#### **What laptop should I purchase? (authored by SMS tech)**

As far as specifications of laptops these days, most of them are pretty equal in terms of speed and functionality. I think that for school purposes, you should consider the weight (portability) and battery life. We don't force kids to have Mac, but that does seem to be the trend.

Most of the kids like the 13" MacBook Air as it is extremely light, powerful and the battery SHOULD last the entire school day for normal computing tasks like word processing and internet browsing. However, the MB Airs do not come with a CD/DVD drive or a wired ethernet connection. You can purchase an external DVD drive, but that can stay at home and they can install CD based software there instead of at school. Just using the built in WIFI is good enough at home and school, but you can also buy a USB to ethernet adapter from Apple as well. A MacBook Pro would be the best solution if you had concerns about the optical drive and wired ethernet connection. There are many PC Ultrabooks that are lightweight but they have not quite caught up to the MacBooks for battery life.

### **What software do I need? (authored by SMS teacher)**

You need software that will open and save: Word doc or docx files; PowerPoint ppt or pptx. Microsoft Office of course does this but so does Apple's Pages and Keynote, and for a free version compatible on both PC and Mac there is OpenOffice available online.

Students also need software to open and save PDF files this comes with every Mac and is a free download for PC users. Students also need software that will allow the creation and viewing or listening of MP3 audio and MP4 video files. This is all standard on a Mac and free PC versions are easily available online for download.

### **How will student computers be supported?**

In addition to accessing additional time of Rocky View's IT staff, we hope to find students with an interest in learning how to support Apple and PC operating systems. These students will be invited to assist with minor technical support at lunch and possibly after school. Ultimately Springbank students will be responsible for their own laptops including safe handling, warranty issues and repair.

### **How will the students be able to power/charge their units for a full days usage?**

Students will need to be proactive in charging their machines daily at home. SMS will be providing power-charging sources should they be required.

### **How will computer theft and damage be addressed?**

SMS strongly recommends parents insure their child's computer through home insurance and consider purchasing vendor offered warranties. As with all possessions brought to school, it is important for students to keep their valuables secure and safe by keeping them in their locker and under supervision. In addition, there are options that help track ownership of the laptops such as engraving. SMS will also offer a volunteer theft program that includes marking the computers with a black light pen, which is consistent with what the high school does.

### **Does SMS have the infrastructure to support the additional 150 plus laptops?**

Rocky View personnel have already increased the number of access points in the school to support the possibility of increased demand on our wireless server. We would continue to monitor the situation as the year progresses to determine if there are problem spots and then solve those issues as they arise.

**We understand that there will be questions and concerns and we want to ensure you that we are open to having constructive dialog around the use of personal operating devices at SMS.**

**Please call 403.242.4456 for more information.**