



NORTHWOOD SCHOOL

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Home of the Lakers

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Assistant Principal

September 16, 2014

Dear Grade 7 & 8 Students, Families and Teachers,

The purpose of this letter is to update all of you on the long awaited and much anticipated netbook distribution for students in grades 7 and 8. We are close to being able to begin the actual process of dispensing netbooks to each student but before we are able to do that, we have to finalize some very important policies and procedures to ensure this netbook roll-out is conducted appropriately. The Northwood School Board has very generously supported the expenditure of thousands of dollars for us to be able to empower students to learn and grow technologically in this data-driven world. The 7/8 Netbook Project has been over a year in the making and will allow our students to explore endless learning opportunities through the use of this technology and we all can look forward to that.

I want to explain where we were/are and what progress has been made towards putting procedures in place in reference to developing the necessary School Board Policies and reference forms for review by the Board to support this project. The Policy Committee has met twice on these policies recently and has another meeting scheduled for this Wednesday. While the draft from January 2014 was appropriate, there are many other reference forms that need to be finished and presented to the Board. We have investigated what other districts are doing that have 1:1 programs for computers. We also have gathered and reviewed information from the MLTI initiative in Maine. The Policy Committee is currently putting the final pieces together so all students and parents will have much needed information and answers to frequently asked questions.

Our hope is to present our final package to the Board for review at our next meeting, which is this Thursday, September 18, 2014. What we are seeking to do in advance of that is complete the imaging of the units, 125 in total, and prepare them for use this week. We anticipate doing a "soft roll-out" of the netbooks for use in classes this week. We will use that time within the first few days of use to be able to work out any logistical issues and ensure that all devices are working properly in hand for students and they have the necessary software installed. We will securely store them in the school and charge them all in the evenings for use the next day for all grade 7/8b students during this phase. Once the final paperwork is completed and approved, we will invite all grade 7/8 students and families to a Parent/Student Netbook Information Session. We expect to have the Technology Director, the Assistant Superintendent and myself available to answer questions as we present the information we have regarding distribution and use of the netbooks outside of school.

Our intention is that we do all that we can to ensure the success of the 7/8 Netbook Take Home Program and the financial protection for the district and the families of students using the netbooks. Being thoughtful and thorough in the implementation of this program is important. There are not many districts in this state that are doing this and we want it to be successful. We will continue to keep you informed as we work through the internal and external netbook roll-out. We appreciate your patience through this important phase of our process.

Respectfully yours,

Wendy P. Despres

The mission of Northwood School is to inspire students to be lifelong learners. As a community we are committed to providing a safe, challenging environment that encourages all students to aspire to excellence.