Thorny Issue: One-to-One Initiatives

The school district is seeking a one-to-one initiative. This means that each student would have their own technology device. For this particular initiative, there have been mixed reviews on it. On the positive side, using this initiative schools have seen an increase in attendance, increased engagement, and reduced behavior referrals. (Holcomb, 2009) On the opposite end of the spectrum, there are negatives to one-to-one initiatives. These include "resistance from teachers, logistical and technical problems, and escalating maintenance costs." (Hu, 2007) Some teachers are reluctant to use technology and when so many people are using them at one time, the servers in schools can be slowed way down. Additionally, it can get very expensive to keep up with the costs of the devices.

Position:

When deciding if the school should take on the initiative, the pros and cons needed to be looked at. After carefully considering both sides, I think it is important that we move ahead with implementing one-to-one devices, as there are more positive aspects than negative. The world we live in is immersed in technology, and there is no reason schools shouldn't be the same way. To prepare students for the future, they need to be able to use technology. What is particularly helpful, is the gains we can have in our school because "after three years, low-income students in the laptop schools displayed the same levels of technology proficiency as wealthier students" (Goodwin, 2011) Everyone at the school will be able to improve their proficiency in technology. It is important to allow all students a chance at success, which this initiative does. Students will also improve their test scores because "it was found that students in the 1:1 program earned

significantly higher test scores and grades for writing, English-language arts, mathematics, and overall grade point averages than students in non-1:1 programs." (Holcomb, 2009)

Advice:

This plan of going one-to-one will not happen overnight. It will take time, and we want you to know, that as parents, this implementation will be gradual. There is a few reasons for this. The first, is that if we want our students to succeed in using this new technology, we need to get the teachers up to date first. Once the teachers get acquainted with the technology, it will help improve their teaching. In fact, "70% of teachers surveyed reported that the laptops helped them to more effectively meet their curriculum goals and individualize their curriculum to meet particular student needs." (Holcomb, 2009) At our district, we want every child to have the best education. Teachers will be able to have differentiation and individualization in their units based on your child's needs. Another great aspect is the type of work students will have. We want to challenge them and help them reach their full potential. This is possible because "technology immersion schools experience somewhat more intellectually demanding work." (Shapely, 2009)

We expect this plan to take five years to be running smoothly and have every student in the district using a device. For the first two years, there will be extensive professional development for the teachers. They will be completely prepared to incorporate and use the technology effectively. The third and fourth year will be about getting more devices in the students hands as well as them getting use to using them on a daily basis. By the fifth year, every student will be using a device. I understand that there also needs to be funds, as this can get expensive. The district will be redoing the budget to clear up some money for this, and we will also be holding fundraisers as well as getting as much grant money as we can. While five

years may seem like a lot, it is what is necessary to make this change successful for every

teacher and student in our district.

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