

LAPTOP: HS SCHOOL SUPPLY 2018 -19

Once upon a time, Unity Christian School, like all schools, had a room called a “computer lab.” But, technology went mobile, and Unity Christian followed suit, purchasing a computers on wheels (COW’s), which are a laptop plug in cart. But, low and behold, technology hasn’t slow down; the ongoing technological explosion, with its web-based tools and resources, has changed the landscape of learning. Students now have at their fingertips unlimited access to digital content, resources, experts, databases and communities of interest.

The time has arrived for Unity Christian School to further adapt it’s technological strategy to meet it’s mission and vision to deepen student learning, while also developing digital literacy, fluency and citizenship in students that will prepare them for the high tech world in which they will live, learn and work.

Much of the progress to date in the effective uses of technology has been with school-owned devices. However, our school owned devices are aging and have experienced much wear and tear and damage. It has only been within the last few years that we have attempted to leverage for learning the devices that enter the school in the backpacks of students.

Rather than invest in devices at the high school level, Unity Christian has invested into the schools network and increased the amount of bandwidth required to support our educational program. The shift from investments in devices to investments in network infrastructure and bandwidth, combined with the increased number of devices available to students for learning, translates into increased access.

A personally owned device is just that – personal. The student who owns it typically invests time, thought and energy in customizing the device, in setting it up to optimize communication, productivity and learning. A student with a personal device takes greater care and attention to maintaining it. As a result, the student is typically quite proficient with the device and will use it anytime, anywhere to learn. Increasingly, students are using Google Docs and Slides and saving all of their work in the Cloud. Such devices, in the hands of every student, afford seamless learning opportunities that bridge the formal learning in schools, with the informal, outside of classrooms and schools.

A look across the province indicates that the schools that are currently using a “Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD) model have done so with great success. These schools reported that students with a personal device were more engaged and invested in their own learning. In addition, they found that a personal device facilitated inclusion, increasing the success of

all students.

Therefore, we are strongly encouraging high school students to obtain a personal laptop that they can use for the duration of their high school career.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Van Muyen', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Matt Van Muyen

Interim System Principal