
Welcome to the 1:1 Initiative at Sherwood Middle School

May 6, 2014

Dear 4th Grade Parents and Guardians,

We look forward to welcoming you and your 4th grader to the 1:1 program at Sherwood Middle School!

As we complete our second full year of implementation, we continue to see promising results and innovative practices accelerating due to this initiative:

- Our students have access to the vast array of educational resources and tools that are now available, and in a 1:1 environment they have the capacity to use these tools when they are needed—at the point of learning.
- Our students are better able to effectively communicate their thoughts and understandings through a wide range of professional looking products that are representative of the type of work they will be expected to produce in this digital age.
- Our students are using a number of electronic organizational tools such as organizer, calendar, and task list that help them to better organize themselves across the different subject areas.
- Our students are able to collaboratively work in a digital environment by accessing shared documents in Google Drive both at school and at home.
- Our students are able to access electronic textbooks in mathematics, saving the district money and lightening the load in students' backpacks.

To see some of the work Shrewsbury students are currently doing with iPads, click this link:

<http://safeshare.tv/w/pdtIvOualq>

During the first two years of implementation, we have learned a great deal about how to better support 5th grade students in developing the strong digital citizenship skills that are needed to maximize the value of a personal electronic device in an educational environment. As a result of this learning, we have instituted a “Gradual Release of Responsibility” model around those aspects of the technology that 5th grade students have had the greatest difficulty managing:

- Building administrators may restrict access to features and apps, including but not limited to Camera, Facetime, Email, Messages in the event of student misuse.
- Fifth grade students will not be allowed to have games on their iPads. As they move through the grade levels this will eventually transition to a family decision.
- For the first 2 months of school, 5th grade students will not be able to access the *Messages* and *Facetime* apps on their iPads. After this time period, school administrators will be assessing student readiness and make a determination as to when this feature be made available to students. Once this determination is made, turning on access to this tool will be a family decision, provided a student does not make choices that interfere with other students’ learning.
- For the first 2 months of school, 5th grade students will not be able to use the camera features on the iPad. After the first 2 months of school, the camera will be enabled for all students. Any individual who does not use the camera in the appropriate manner will be subject to our Acceptable Use Policy.
- The App Store will be turned on only during specific time intervals as needed by the teachers and will be unavailable outside of school hours.
- During the school year, students will be taught a digital citizenship curriculum and expectations for responsible use of the resources listed above will be emphasized.
- Students will be asked NOT to bring their iPads on the first day of school. They will start bringing the devices on **Wednesday, August 27th**.
- The distribution of the iPads will be combined with a mandatory orientation for both parents and students around the purpose of this program and expectations for appropriate digital citizenship.

On **Thursday, May 15th**, you will be receiving a detailed communication around the different options available to incoming 5th grade students to participate in the 1:1 program as well as information around how to register for one of these options. When you register for an option, you will also be asked to choose your summer orientation/distribution session, sign off on the acceptable use policy, and agree to our liability policy. As part of this communication, families will also be provided with a link to an electronic form where they can request additional information about any aspect of this program. Questions submitted on this form will receive a personal response. In order to make the whole process work it is essential that families go on-line to select their choices by **Friday, June 13th**.

We look forward to working with you and your students as we continue our efforts to provide all of our students with an educational experience that leaves them strongly prepared for the demands of a 21st century global environment.

Warm Regards,

Mary Beth Banios
Assistant Superintendent of Schools