



## iPad Questions and Answers

### Where can I learn about the iPad?

As you might expect, Apple offers a wealth of information on the iPad:

<http://www.apple.com/ipad/features>

In addition, there have been many articles on the iPad in education. Here are two:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/05/education/05tablets.html>

<http://www.apple.com/education/ipad/>

Of course, you can find thousands of other resources through an online search.

### How can the district afford to purchase iPads?

At the end of the last school year, the school board and administration was presented with an opportunity to allocate some unspent funds, including a one-time lump-sum refund related to the district's utility use. To be able to receive state aid on those funds, the funds needed to be spent by the end of the fiscal year (June 30). The school board approved allocating those funds in a way that would directly benefit the students of our district and would provide all of our middle school students equal access to state-of-the-art educational technology. This iPad implementation is directly in line with the district's Information & Technology Three-Year Plan and with the district's approved 2011-12 goals. Using the iPads will help offset future district costs as more affordable electronic textbooks (e-texts) become available for use. Additionally, there are many free applications available for the iPad that will help reduce parents' expenditures for school supplies (calculator, atlas, Spanish/English dictionary, etc.).

### Why iPads?

While we have been using various technologies and devices to enhance teaching and learning for many years, we believe that new devices will help engage students in the learning process in new and creative ways. The iPad, we believe, is the most flexible, affordable, and widely supported portable device of its type.

\*It is a common tool that will meet most day-to-day school technology needs for middle school students.

\*It offers a common, reliable platform.

\*It is easy to use and support.

\*It offers a wide array of apps that are easy to learn and affordable.

We believe it is the most likely platform to begin to replace physical textbooks in the near future — in fact, some of the physical texts being used next year are likely to be replaced by digital counterparts.

Overall, we believe the iPad offers enormous benefits to learning — from reading to analysis to presentation to creative outlets to resource conservation and more. While we know iPads won't fully replace traditional computers or printed texts immediately, we are confident that students will develop new skills and interests as we continue to educate them for the world they will inherit.

### **When will students receive their iPads?**

We will distribute iPads to students to use on the first day of school. However, the iPads may not come home until the students have been thoroughly trained in their use and care.

### **May students opt out of using the iPad?**

No. We want all middle school students to be on equal footing in each class as they learn to use new technology. Parents may opt out of having an iPad to take home with a signed note returned to the office.

### **What about auxiliary equipment?**

Each school iPad will come with a protective cover, which is expected to be used at all times. In addition, students will be provided with a power cord/charger.

### **Does my student need an email account?**

At school the facilitators will help your student set up a free email account to be used for communication between teachers and students regarding school work.

### **Will the Internet be filtered on student iPads at school?**

Yes, we do have a filter at school. (Be aware that content may not be filtered while using the iPad on a home network.)

### **Am I required to have wireless Internet access at home for the iPad program?**

No, but if you have wireless Internet service at home it will make your life easier. For example, wireless service will allow students to do research, access e-texts, and communicate with others from home. (The iPad does not plug into a hard-wired Internet connection.) If you have any sort of Internet access at your home, it is generally easy to add wireless service. If students don't have Wi-Fi access at home, they can connect to the Internet at school and at many businesses, such as Barnes & Noble, Starbucks, Quiznos, and Panera. Also, many public buildings, such as libraries, have free wireless access available. The iPad models we are purchasing do not have 3G (cellular) service and therefore do not require monthly access fees.

### **Will all textbooks be available electronically?**

No. Not all textbooks are currently available and our best guess is two to three years before nearly all are available. We are evaluating our current textbooks and will make transitions to electronic versions as they become available and meet our students' needs.

### **What about novels and other books required for certain classes?**

Some novels are available electronically, and we are evaluating which titles we will support in electronic format.

### **If students' iPads are broken or missing, will they be at a disadvantage?**

If there is a problem with an iPad it should be returned to the facilitator immediately so that it can be sent for repair. Apple's turnaround time for repairs is usually three to five days. In these cases, we expect to be able to supply loaner iPads so students are not left at a disadvantage. While we will have a limited supply of loaners, we will do our best to see that they are available as needed. As long as a student's iPad has been synced to a school computer, the loaner iPad can be set up exactly like the original with no loss of data and the student can continue using the iPad as before.

### **Won't the iPad be a distraction to students, who could be playing games and surfing the Web instead of staying on task?**

We're aware of this concern, but it is something that our teachers are skilled at supervising already. We manage this same issue every day using our existing computers, and teachers have learned how to keep students on task. In addition, while this is an ongoing challenge with middle school students, it is important for them to learn to manage their technology use early.

### **Are school iPad programs common?**

As of spring 2011, there are dozens of schools that have incorporated iPads into their programs. However, we know of only a handful of schools that have implemented one-to-one programs. We are convinced that this is part of the future, and we're very excited to be among the earliest adopters of this exciting new technology.

### **Are we responsible if the iPad is damaged, lost or stolen?**

An iPad is the property of the Bangor School District on loan to a student. The district will assume the costs of repair or replacement **except** in cases of intentional damage/loss, abuse or neglect. The district may seek reimbursement through a claim filed on a homeowner comprehensive liability insurance policy.

### **What if my question isn't answered here?**

Please ask! Because this is a new program, we understand that there may be some early confusion and questions that have eluded us. We welcome input from parents, students, and staff, we can't think of everything and we're grateful for constructive criticism.