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## Coventry School Committee

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# Chromebooks could be first step in plan's process

## Coventry School district hopes to expand technology with student laptops

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COVENTRY — School officials introduced the Teach, Tech 21, a concise plan for teachers to prepare students for the necessary skills for the 21st century.

"I'm so excited to be presenting this tonight," Coventry School Superintendent Mike Almeida said. "We had a whole crew of people who helped in putting this together and we went out and looked at what other districts are doing and why."

The goals, in part, are to create an educational culture and learning ex-

perience that is characteristic of various models of blended learning, enhance collaboration between teachers, students, and parents; personalize and differentiate instruction, improve student engagement and achievement and expand teaching and learning outside the classroom.

Some of the plan's objectives include integrating software, application and technology devices into teaching and learning, utilizing technology devices for testing purposes, develop teachers and support staff who will embrace and integrate technology in the curriculum and develop technology-rich classrooms.

"Students are so much more engaged when the walls are broken down," Almeida explained.

The first of many steps in the implementation process would be to determine and coordinate distribution of devices for a three-year lease cycle, which would provide Chromebooks to all teachers and for one-to-one student access in grades six through 12, and provide grade-level, shared access to Chromebooks for students in grades three through five.

Jason Martin, director of technology, explained that current technology is very spotty.

"In some areas in the schools, you

can pick it up, in other areas, you can't," he said.

Jim Murphy, network administrator, explained a Chromebook is a personal computer running the Chrome OS operating system, a web-based system. It has multi levels of security and the most popular Google products for education build in.

It was selected by the district based on technology goals and the technology committee's research and analysis of other district technology programs using the same device.

"We can spread this type of device over more of population of students," he said.

Martin said there's a while bidding process going on for the best type to get so they can fit into the students' backpacks so they won't get crushed by books.

"As far as professional development, teachers would learn, in part, how to utilize Google in Education as the primary platform for student work, sharing of documents, collaboration, storage of documents and other uses.

The three-year cycle would begin this March for all classroom teachers with 332 devices. All students in

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# Plan would give students laptops

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grades six through 12 (2,750 students) will be issued a Chromebook in September of this year as well as students in grades three through five will be issues 25 devices to share (425).

Coventry Assistant Superintendent Mike Convery explained that in September 2017, a new cycle will begin with the number of devices to be determined.

According to the numbers in the paperwork, for grades six through 12, (2,750 devices), each device costs \$249 for a total cost of \$687,472.50 at an interest rate of 11 percent.

“We’re working with the banks to see if we can even get that interest rate down more, so they cost less,” Almeida said

Every textbook company is now required to have a digital edition.

Convery said there will be a student liability and asset man-

agement plan where regular inventories and inspections will be conducted.

Lynne Burke, director if educational technology and information systems, explained that this is a great way to re-energize students.

“In addition to reading, writing and arithmetic, we’re going to add communication and technology,” she had. “Our kids, come September, will have this. Not mention the organization skills they’ll learn and it will update itself, bring students and teachers together.”

The shared sets of 25 for grades three through five will also cost \$249 per unit and a total cost of \$106,245.75 also at 11 percent interest.

Teachers will have many opportunities to learn the devices through faculty meetings, professional development days, drop-in opportunities and summer workshops.