

Coventry School Committee

Unanimous vote approves bid for laptops

Chromebooks will be supplied to students in Coventry at reasonable price

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COVENTRY — Through a unanimous vote by the Coventry School Committee Tuesday night, En Pointe Technologies Sales, Inc. is the company that was awarded the bid to provide C710 Chromebooks to the district at the cost of \$227.81 per device.

Coventry School Superintendent Mike Almeida said computer rooms through the district are booked months in advance because there just

aren't enough technology spaces.

Test assessment for the PARCC will also require these devices.

Educators, parents and school officials compared notes at a recent Coventry School Committee meeting as they discussed the pros and cons of integrating classrooms and supplying students with Chromebooks on a three-year plan.

The goals, in part, are to create an educational culture and learning experience that is characteristic of various models of blended learning, enhance collaboration between teach-

ers, 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, developing teachers and support staff who will embrace and integrate technology in the curriculum, and developing technology-rich classrooms.

Lynne Burke, director of educa-

tional technology and information systems, talked about how technology and the common core connect at the January 28 meeting.

"It combines communication, collaboration and creativity," she said. "We want to get our kids at a higher level of skill. We're under a lot of pressure to accomplish this and to get students ready for assessment, which is exciting and scary as hell so we have to work together and support each other and we have amazing teachers who are highly motivated."

Burke said the district has this great

opportunity to get technology in everyone's hands.

"We also have the parents in this equation," she said. "They'll want to know, 'how does this help my child learn?' We have to re-educate our community about teaching and learning what Kindergarten through 12 school is today."

School Committee Chairwoman Kathy Patenaude said what she likes so much about the devices is that when a document is shared with

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someone, there's no need to worry about what version of Microsoft Word it's being sent in.

As much as the majority of conversation was positive, some did share valid concerns such as concerns for families who don't have internet access in their homes and how students who live there will be able to complete schoolwork.

Coventry Superintendent Mike Almeida explained how the kids can do assignments when they get into school and there are other steps that can be taken to ensure those students receive the same opportunities.