

FORT THOMAS

I N D E P E N D E N T S C H O O L S

April 29, 2014

Dear Parents,

As you know, the Fort Thomas Independent School District is committed to providing a world-class learning experience for all students which fosters **creativity, curiosity and innovation**. One of our district vision statements asserts that we expect both our teachers and students to utilize technology in transformative ways to enhance student achievement and make real-world global connections. With that thought in mind, I am excited to share with you that on April 12, the Fort Thomas Board of Education approved plans to move forward with a major instructional technology initiative. The **Fort Thomas Digital Conversion Plan** is specifically meant to ensure that we effectively leverage technology as an instructional tool in order to better prepare our students for 21st century success.

Over the course of the next two school years, Highlands Middle School in 2014-15, followed by Highlands High School in 2015-16, will move to a one-to-one student to computer learning environment. In August 2014, all HMS students will be issued an Apple MacBook Air that they will be able to take home each night. We are currently reviewing digital instructional resources including electronic textbooks, which will greatly reduce our dependence on printed hardback textbooks and paper copies in general. Thus, students will have far less to carry back and forth to and from school each day. Perhaps more importantly, having technology available to each student in each classroom where learning is taking place will enable us to more effectively utilize it as a real-time instructional tool, providing students with the most up-to-date information and learning opportunities that would not be available otherwise.

We recognize the responsibilities which are inherent with this initiative. I assure you that we will be diligent in ensuring that students utilize these devices for the intended purpose. Responsible use and proper digital citizenship will be a priority. In addition, we will take steps to filter access to inappropriate content and work closely with parents as partners in the learning process in order to encourage appropriate student use at home.

We do anticipate assessing a student technology fee for use of the laptop. While the exact amount has yet to be established, I do not anticipate it being more than \$75 per year. This is quite a bargain for students to be provided with a brand new, state-of-the-art laptop. All technology fees will be utilized to provide service on any broken devices and/or replace those which may be lost or stolen.

Over the course of the next several weeks more information will be forthcoming regarding this initiative. We have added a section entitled **Fort Thomas Schools Digital Conversion Plan** to our district website to house information as it becomes available. Currently, you can find the PowerPoint presentation we shared with both the Board and the HMS faculty which provides a more detailed overview of this entire initiative.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Gene Kirchner
Superintendent