



Why should we participate in the Classroom Connections laptop project?

The academic benefits of laptop projects are well-documented. They include the following:

- Students have improved research skills.
- Evidence points to improved student achievement.
- Students report that laptops make their school work easier and help improve the quality of their work.
- Students are more motivated to learn.
- Technology allows teachers to more easily differentiate lessons.
- Teachers find laptops useful in developing integrated lessons.
- Teachers report improved communication with their students.

How do we teach a laptop classroom differently from a traditional classroom?

The teacher in a one-to-one laptop classroom becomes more of a facilitator than a director. To get the most out of a one-to-one laptop program, teachers should focus on methods that encourage students to discover knowledge rather than imparting it through lecture. Hands-on projects, group collaboration, and multimedia presentations are common in classes where one-to-one programs are currently successful. Students should also be encouraged to help each other (and their teacher) by sharing what they find out about the subject being studied, or how they are using the laptop to research it.

How will the laptop initiative be funded?

The state will pay for one-third of the costs for 9th-12th grade students, which includes the basic software package; one-third of the cost for teachers' laptops, including the basic software package; and the initial professional development for teachers, administrators and technical support people.

Can we just provide the laptops to our seniors?

No. The program is for all students in grades 9-12.

What will the basic software package contain?

Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Publisher





What costs will the schools need to incur?

Schools will be responsible for setting up the wireless infrastructure, including wireless access points. They will be responsible for ongoing tech support, and they may have some long-term professional development costs. They also may want to purchase instructional software.

Will the laptops be purchased or leased?

The state intends to negotiate an optimal price for the laptop computers, with the final outcome being a lease/purchase agreement. The local school district will be the actual “owner” of the laptops.

What incentives will pilot schools be given?

Pilot schools will receive technical help from the state to ensure the success of the project in their school. As noted above, pilot schools will receive initial professional development training for their teachers and technical staff.

If we aren't chosen as a pilot school, can we still take advantage of the state pricing?
Yes.

Do we have to participate?

No. Districts have the choice to apply for a grant. If they choose to do so, they must demonstrate that they can meet certain criteria, including:

- Financial means to participate in the program
- Ability to implement training of staff and students
- Availability of a district technology plan
- Commitment from the school board and community

Who will be providing the laptops?

The vendor will be decided by the state through an RFP process. The state will negotiate optimal pricing for laptop computers, warranties, software and training.

The logo consists of three overlapping, stylized loops in red and black, resembling a molecular structure or a network diagram.

Classroom Connections

How much tech support do we need for the program?

This will depend on the number of laptops in your school district. There are industry standards available, and the state will work with the pilot schools on a case by case basis. Many of the state's technical recommendations are designed to help districts, so that they will not have to hire a lot of additional FTE.

What specific skills will our local technicians need?

The school's technology director will need to have many of the standard technical skills needed to properly run a computer network. Here is a list of just a few:

- Network maintenance
 - Wired
 - Wireless
- Laptop troubleshooting and repair
- Using imaging software
- Customer service skills

How do schools handle management issues of laptop computers?

Through the initial training offered by the state, teachers and technology staff will learn effective use of managing laptops in the classroom. School districts may need to adopt policies, which the state would recommend, regarding student use of the technology (i.e., limiting the use of instant messaging.)