



Matthew D. Thompson, Ed.D., Superintendent
Alice Anderson, Chairperson
Bill R. Morgan, Vice Chairperson

High Expectations + Compassion = Growth for Every Student

Daniel Freeman, Ed.D., Board Member
Jon Kelly Johnson, D.M.D., Board Member
Sharon Smith-Breiner, Board Member

7/24/17

Montgomery County Families,

As the district's 3-year lease on Chromebooks comes to an end in January, 2018, I know there are many questions about what will happen with Chromebooks. I want to take this opportunity to explain some information about the history of Chromebooks in Montgomery County, their current status, and the future.

History of Chromebooks in Montgomery County:

In October of 2014, the Montgomery County Board of Education approved a 3-year lease agreement that would provide 3,178 Chromebooks for students in grades 5-12. The lease agreement included an annual payment of approximately \$309,000 each year for 3 years for a total lease cost of \$927,000. At the end of the lease (January, 2018) the district must return to the leasing agency all 3,178 Chromebooks in good working order. In addition to the cost of the lease, there have been costs associated with maintenance, repair, and replacement. This increased the total amount the district has paid to more than \$1 million over the lifetime of the 3-year lease.

Current Status of Chromebooks:

Due to the time and resources needed to collect Chromebooks in preparation of having to return them according to the lease agreement, we will be distributing Chromebooks to teachers as class sets instead of handing them out to students. Students in grades 5-12 will still have one-to-one access to the Chromebooks in their core classes through the end of the first semester.

Future of Chromebooks:

Beginning approximately a year ago, we began reaching out to the leasing agency to ask what the cost would be if we wanted to "buy back" the Chromebooks and keep them instead of sending them back. The leasing agency was unable to provide a buy-back price until closer to the end of the lease due to market fluctuations and other variables. The quote we recently received was for \$281,000 to buy back all 3,178 Chromebooks. Since the expected life span of a Chromebook is four years, paying \$281,000 for Chromebooks that will be three-quarters of the way through their life cycle is not a good financial decision. However, we are reaching out to the leasing agency to see if there is any flexibility or other options.

As we move forward past January, 2018, regardless of whether we have to send the Chromebooks back or not, the Montgomery County Board of Education, administrators, and staff are committed to student use of technology. It is possible that it may take a few years to re-build our technology resources, however, we must ensure that whatever we do is sustainable both financially and programmatically. Please know we are committed to ensuring that our students remain "next generation learners."

Sincerely,

Matthew D. Thompson, EdD
Superintendent