Over the past 12 months, Marymount College has been exploring ways that greater access to learning technology devices can be enabled for our students. Students already bring powerful technologies to school and some schools are exploring safe and secure ways that these can be used to complement the school based technologies.

Following reasonable investigation, it became apparent that multiple platforms (iPhones, Android, iPads, iPods, Windows) create many challenges for the school network and classroom management. Also, equity issues would arise as devices have varying capacity and capabilities.

Over the past 12 months, further exploration has led the school to a proposal that a pilot for iPad devices be implemented for the Year 7 cohort. This proposal has been brought before the School Board and approval from this body was granted at the May school board meeting.

An information evening was held for all Year 7 parent and caregivers on June 4th, 2013. At this event, the pilot was explained in significant detail.

We have endeavoured to capture the essence of that presentation in the following information and downloadable documents.

**Why Hand-held Technology?**
- Students already come to school with a range of technological skills and various devices. Away from the school environment, they use these seamlessly and rarely are they without instant access to the web, their own calendars and organisational apps, books, research, social networking to name but a few.
- The experience in school is often a stark contrast and can often be frustrating as there is not the capacity for 1:1 but rather laptops are booked for particular times of the day.
- The Australian Curriculum is being developed for the present digital world. Students and educators need increasingly greater access to technology in order to fully access curriculum.
- School, system and national ‘portals’ are now being used by schools to access learning opportunities such as international libraries, museums and art galleries with opportunities to take virtual tours and access their resources.
Our vision as a College is to plan for the future and prepare our students for success and a sense of advantage in the 21st Century. Our vision as a place of learning will - and needs to - evolve as change and new technologies dictate.

In 2013, we see enormous benefit in our students having access to their own hand-held device that is connected at home and at school.

Great time and care has been spent investigating many implementation models that schools have used to roll out similar technology. These range from school supplied (changing the fee structure to accommodate) all the way to student (family) owned devices that the student has for personal use at home and at school. Recent trends and consistent feedback has indicated schools are centring their focus around an investment in a solid wireless network, high-speed cabling, data storage and online security / filtration. This replaces an ageing model of school-centred support and consistent device repair.

In addition to this, schools and technology providers overwhelmingly report that when the device is owned by the student (family), there is far greater sense of ownership, care and consideration for the device.

The pilot is aimed to commence with our current Year 7 cohort towards the beginning of Term 3. This has been supported by the School Board with an understanding that some families will need to be supported in this pilot.

We wish to engage and embrace our parent community in this pilot, therefore if you have any further questions that haven’t been answered in the subsequent documents, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours in learning.

Matt Richards  
Leader of eLearning

Greg Parker  
Principal

Thursday 6th June, 2013