

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2014

Dear Parents and Caregivers,



## **Digitally Enhanced Learning for Year 13, 2015**

Mount Hutt College is delighted to introduce a new BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) programme that will have all students in Year 13, 2015 strongly encouraged to bring their own computer to school. The BYOD programme will allow each student to have access to their own computer to complete work both during lessons and at home.

Our experience with our current BYOD programmes this year and extensive research show:

- That we need to prepare our students for future tertiary study and the work environment.
- There are increased opportunities for collaborative learning.
- It increases access to a huge range of electronic resources, which help enhance learning.
- Engagement and motivation of students is increased.
- There are a number of pedagogical benefits: (a) the NZ Curriculum specifically references the value of eLearning and (b) international research shows the benefits of eLearning for students.
- It is important to attract quality teachers who want to teach in a 'digital classroom'.
- Students exist in a largely 'digital world' outside of school, but school is often a non-digital world. This programme has potential to increase engagement in learning as they use the tools they are most familiar with to facilitate learning.

Our school infrastructure has been improved which includes a specialist, reliable BYOD wireless network that is accessible through-out the school.

### **Recommended devices**

The choice of the device will largely be up to families although there are minimum specifications that all devices must have based on the current Year 8 trial:

- Screen size – larger than an iPad mini
- Wireless capable
- Battery that can last at least 6 hours
- Headphone jack
- Microsoft Office package is necessary for senior students
- Ability to run Flash player is an advantage
- Laptops are regarded as more appropriate at senior school level, especially in regards to note taking and the use of an effective keyboard.
- The Windows based devices have been easier to use in the classroom

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Students may already have a device that will be suitable. We are in the process of setting up a partnership with a Christchurch based company, Cyclone. They will provide information and purchasing options for recommended devices as well as providing additional software, warranty and accidental damage insurance. We are also looking at providing payment options through Cyclone that will enable weekly payments on purchases. As it is important for all students in Year 9 to have access to a suitable device, our school will look into providing financial assistance and rental if required. You are under no obligation to purchase from Cyclone. More information will follow regarding device choice. A parent evening will also be organised with Cyclone where devices can be trialled and questions asked of the experts.

### **eLearning in the classroom**

The amount that students will use their devices will differ from class to class and teacher to teacher. Some subjects lend themselves to using a computer more naturally than others. All Year 13 teachers in 2015 will have been provided considerable professional development and implementation time to allow them to feel confident in teaching a class where students have a computer each. Our expectation is that the students will use their computers more often than not.

### **Points to note**

We are currently negotiating Office 365 for our school. This will allow our students to install the Microsoft Office package free of charge. So at this stage hold off on purchasing this yourself.

Insurance and warranties for the computers will be the responsibility of families. We will provide access to lockable lockers so that computers will be safe onsite. Locks can be rented through the office at minimal charge.

Students will be responsible for bringing their computers to school every day, fully charged. They will also need to be committed to learning how to use their computer in their own time, so that they are ready to use it as a tool for learning when in lessons.

Internet filtering will be provided through the Ministry of Education's N4L (Network for Learning) platform.

Planning is underway for an online orientation programme that all Year 13 students will be required to complete at the start of 2015. The goal of this is to help students to manage their computers responsibly, learn how to store files in a logical way so that they can locate and retrieve them when required.

IT help will be provided both at school and through Cyclone if required.

We would like some information returned from each family so that we can begin further planning and preparation. Please fill in and return the attached form by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September. If you require further information please make contact.

Yours sincerely,

John Schreurs  
Principal  
Mount Hutt College

## Digitally Enhanced Learning Year 13, 2015



Please complete this form and return to the Mount Hutt College office by **Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2015**. Students are encouraged to complete this form themselves, detailing their own experiences with technology.

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's names: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact email: \_\_\_\_\_

What experiences have you had of Digital technologies?

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Do you currently have a digital device that could be used at school? If yes, what device?

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Are you interested in further information on the following: (please tick)

- Purchasing through Cyclone
- Weekly payments
- Financial assistance and/or rental
- Parent/student information evening run by Cyclone and MHC

Any other questions:

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Thank you

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