Dear Families,

Pentucket Middle and High Schools have recently been exploring alternatives to put more supportive learning technology into students and teachers hands. We currently have a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) system in place in grades 7-12 that allows students to register their own laptops, tablets, and phone devices on the school network. We are excited to announce an opportunity for students to expand their access to our BYOD program through a PRSD Chromebook partnership with Dell.

For those who may not know, a Chromebook is very similar to a laptop with few internal moving parts. It is cloud based and runs the Google Chrome Operating System (OS) which has significant educational resources. Many teachers in the district are already using Google Classroom. PRSD is moving to Google Education IT solutions and all students already have a Google documents account. Dell will now offer it’s education Chromebook model to Pentucket families at a substantial discount when purchased through a dedicated PRSD Dell portal. The Chromebook arrives to you optimized to run on the Middle and High School networks. A major benefit to families purchasing the Chromebook is that it is also fully functional at home on a wifi connection and anyone with a Google account can use the Chromebook. This program is similar to successful partnerships Dell has with colleges and universities. While the investment is not insignificant, it is realistic to expect a Chromebook to last 5 or more years with minimal maintenance required.

While anyone in the PRSD community can take advantage of this Dell offer, at school the Chromebooks will only function on the Middle and High School networks at this time. Our IT department has begun an upgrade to our district network that is starting at the secondary level, with district-wide implementation the ultimate goal. This past year, IT has been working hard to procure funding under the E-Rate program (E-Rate is a federally funded program designed to assist schools with obtaining affordable internet access. Recently, the program was expanded to include assistance with obtaining suitable in-school wifi access.) We have submitted our plans for internet access upgrades (Category 1) and wifi / network infrastructure replacement (Category 2). We have already received the good news that our Category 1 request has been granted. The result is a 3 fold increase in internet access speed at each school - more than enough to support our future internal / wifi growth. For more information about the E-Rate program, please visit https://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/e-rate-schools-libraries-usf-program

We hope you will consider how a Chromebook could enhance your child’s educational experience. While we hope that many will take advantage of this opportunity, it certainly is not a requirement. This is rather an alternative way to increase technology use in teaching and learning. To assist with questions you may have there are resources available on the high school and middle school websites (FAQ page, Chromebook literature, and a link to the portal on the school website for your reference - please note that the cnet video reviews a touchscreen Chromebook - this feature is not available on the PRSD offered model).

PRHS - http://prhs.prsd.org/
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Sincerely,

Jonathan Seymour  Ken Kelley  Dennis Buck
Principal           Principal          IT Director
PRHS                PRMS             PRSD