

March 1, 2016

Dear Parents,

The Rib Lake School District is excited to announce the launch of its Personalized Digital Learning Program!

Last month, grades K-2 classrooms received iPads for student use. The devices supplement the Chromebooks that have been shared throughout the district for the past two years. Starting this month, students in grades 5 and 6 will be provided with Chromebooks for in-school use. Next fall, students in grades 4th - 12th will be assigned their own Chromebooks. The Chromebooks will be theirs to use as long as they are registered students of the school district. Not be left out, students in grade 3 will benefit from shared Chromebooks with an almost 1 to 1 assignment in the fall.

Our teachers are, and will remain, the most important resource for students. Nothing can replace student-teacher interaction and instruction. The Chromebooks and iPads will simply be a tool that accelerates personalized learning, providing both teachers and students with instructional tools that extend learning beyond the classroom walls, inspiring what we call the 4C's: Collaboration, Cooperation, Critical Thinking, and Communication.

The Information Technology Committee, made up of teachers and school board members, have been planning for this project for over three years, starting with the upgrade to the district's technology infrastructure back in 2013 followed by research and continued professional development related to personalized learning and technology integration. Additionally, the team has researched multiple school districts currently participating in a personalized learning approach with technology. These districts have found their students to be more engaged in learning because they are able to learn at their own pace. Two of the tenets of Personalized Learning is 'voice and choice'. Teachers shared that students have less late or missing assignments and these same students advance because they are choosing how they learn and demonstrate what they've learned. As a result, there is an increase in student collaboration inside and outside of the classroom, and overall improved classroom engagement, discussion and decision-making.

We want the same for our Rib Lake students. Our goals are to:

1. **Enhance, expand, and accelerate learning.** Digital technology allows students to interact with the world in ways that traditional textbooks and curriculum alone cannot. It also allows students to learn 24/7 (anytime, anywhere).
2. **Provide personalized instruction.** Blended learning, digital textbooks, curriculum materials, and apps that allow students to progress at a rate suited to their personal abilities and provide students with a variety of instructional tools allowing the student to learn in a way that best meets their individualized needs.

- 3. Improve student collaboration and engagement.** Digital collaboration tools help students easily share information and ideas with their peers. Research shows students are more engaged in learning, and sharing what they have learned, when they are given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge using creative and collaborative apps. Research also indicates that students, in a virtual environment, collaborate more frequently and with a more diverse set of peers than in a standard classroom.

We are constructing a 1 to 1 Chromebook/Personalized Learning website that will provide parents and students with information necessary to become more familiar with what this new, 21st century, personalized learning environment will look like. We encourage you to explore this site and the variety of tools available to students. On this website you will also find a compiled list of frequently asked questions to help answer concerns you may have about this program (list website).

We are excited to continue to expand our personalized learning environment and feel that the Digital Personalized Learning program will assist in this process, providing instructional tools personalized for the individual needs of each student.

Sincerely,

Lori A. Manion
Superintendent