MERSD Remote Learning Technology Update

School Committee 10/6/20

Remote Learning Technology

K-2 Technology

- iPads
  - Zoom
  - Seesaw

Grades 3-5 Technology

- Chromebooks
  - Zoom
  - Google Classroom

Grades 6-12 Technology

- Chromebooks (6-8)
- BYOD (9-12)
  - Zoom
  - Google Classroom

Technology Support Infrastructure

- Parents/Students:
  - External Helpdesk, 7:30 am - 5:00 pm
  - Email: MERSDhelp@axiscomputernetworks.com
  - Phone: (978) 463-2112

- Teachers/Staff:
  - Internal help desk: 4 FTE
    - 2 tech team, 1 contracted, 1 tech integrator
    - Allows for building-based support

Help Desk Summary

- 213 external Help Desk tickets through Friday, 10/2
  - 1st week: average 30 new tickets/day
  - 2nd week: average 8 new tickets/day
  - Past week – average 6 new tickets/day

- Feedback:
  - Same day communications
  - FAQ documents
  - Positive reviews of contract staff
  - Some technology issues persist

- Internal tickets:
  - New hardware and software rollout
  - Zoom meetings configurations/settings
  - Routine on-site issues (printing, network, etc.)

Most Common Challenges/Solutions

- Difficulty logging onto Zoom related to:
  - Traffic at Zoom, use of multiple devices w/same Zoom account, and Zoom/Google account interaction
  - Help Desk has protocol for this , can require multiple log in attempts

- Audio/video lag or glitches related to:
  - Home Internet: bandwidth, distance to router, number of devices at home, and non-school Internet uses at home (e.g. other video streaming)
  - Device resources (CPU, memory) being overtaxed by Zoom and other uses
    - Chromebooks and other home devices
  - Solutions include:
    - Home networking adjustments
    - Zoom and Chromebook software updates
    - Muting microphones when not speaking
    - Help Desk also showing parents how to clear cache prior to rebooting, closing other browser windows, which can free up resources
- Internet:
  - Small number of families with unreliable Internet - offering prepaid hotspots
  This is a work in progress for MERSD (and all remote districts)
  - we are continuing to assess and adapt!

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