Digital Learning @ GHS

Why a focus on digital learning?

*Exemplary technology-using teachers are defined as those who employ technology in learner-centered, constructivist environments as opposed to traditional teacher-directed environments. In general, a constructivist learning environment engages students in authentic, collaborative tasks, based on their interests. **Within this type of environment, technology is used as a tool to support learners' engagement with the content, ultimately prompting them to use higher-level thinking skills** (Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, & York, 2006).*

School Digital Learning Vision

- Effective use of ICT is an essential component of the 21st century classroom and catering for the learning needs of our current students.
- Effective use of ICT allows us to provide a much richer, more challenging and engaging learning environment.
- The information "tool" (hardware, software, etc) will change over time, the underlying skills and learning are the most important thing.
- The DER program has come to an end with no replacement in sight.
- Students increasingly need access to personal digital technologies and the school has a role in ensuring this technology is used effectively in learning.
- We needed to start somewhere and decided on a focus on year 7, 2015.
- There will also be a faculty focus in HSIE across all years 7 – 10.
- There has been a significant financial commitment from the school towards this initiative of $246,316 towards school Chromebook devices, data projectors, networking infrastructure, support personnel and teacher professional learning
- We have engaged Scott and Nerida from "Think3" to help us through this process and have come up with an optimal solution that will provide the access to technology and learning experiences in a collaborative environment. We have also managed to do this in the most cost-effective manner.

How will students access Digital Learning?

- All year 7 students access Google Apps for Education through Chromebook computers.
- Students purchase the computer at their own cost and have ownership of the device.
- Some "pool" devices will be maintained by the school for short term loan only, for lessons where required.
- Some class sets of Chromebooks available for other year groups.
- All school PC computer labs able to run Google Apps for Education so students can access their files from anywhere in the school.
- Only approved devices allowed to access school network. All devices need to be commissioned onto the network with appropriate software by school technical support personnel.
- Student files will be stored online in the "cloud" on their own Google Drive. Students will be able to access their work from home or anywhere with access to the Internet. They can even access their files from a PC or other device that runs the Google Chrome Browser.
- Teachers will be able to communicate, send files and provide feedback online. Students can work collaboratively and send and receive work online. All this can be managed by the teacher using tools such as Hapara teacher dashboard and the Chrome Management Console.

When will Digital Learning begin at Grafton High School?

- The portal for parents to purchase a Chromebook is already open:

  https://www.jbeducation.com.au/byod and enter the school code: **GRAHS2015**

- The portal is open until 16th March, after which, all orders will be processed and delivered to the school.
- Parents have until end of term 1 to pay the setup connection fee for Chromebooks.
- The school will commission all devices with appropriate software and school network access over holidays.
- All devices will be issued to students on the first day back of term 2. Students will participate in a Chromebook "Boot Camp" on that day, where they will learn to use their new devices.
- Teachers will begin using Chromebooks as part of Digital Learning units term 2.

What do parents/carers need to do for their child to be able to maximise this opportunity?

- Parents need to purchase a Chromebook device for their child
- A limited number of short term loan devices will be available on a period-by-period basis
- Parents will need to pay a setup fee to connect the device to the school network. This fee covers the cost of the student licence to the Hapara and Chrome management software of $60. This cost covers 3 years of licensing for the device. There is no charge for salaries for staff to perform the connection (this is being paid for by the school).
- Students wishing to bring their own non-Chromebook device will need to pay a setup fee of $80, to cover the above license and additional time to setup and deploy software and connect individual devices to the school network.
- Students need to bring their device to school every day and are responsible for its care. It is strongly advised that parents purchase a protective case for the device.
- Students do not need to have Internet access at home, they have limited ability to still work offline and then sync their files back when they reconnect at school.

What are the Minimum Requirements?

- Students must complete and sign the school Acceptable Use Policy before any device will be connected to the network.
- We prefer that students connect with a Google Chromebook of minimum 11.6 inch screen and wireless 5GHz "n" connection
- Other devices must be able to run the Chrome browser and have a minimum 11.6 inch screen and wireless 5GHz "n" connection with at least 6 hours battery life. Note that some devices will not operate all applications and we discourage their use, such as Apple I-Pads and Android tablets, for example.