

W-P purchases iPads for high school, largely with grant funds

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Tuesday, 26 November 2013 18:20 -



Wauneta-Palisade high school students, such as Tom McGraw, are taking advantage of the iPads provided to them by the Wauneta-Palisade schools. (Christi Christner | The Wauneta Breeze)

By Christi Christner

The Wauneta Breeze

When the 2013-14 school year kicked off everything was normal. Students went to school and teachers taught Monday through Friday from 7:45 a.m. MT to 3:00 p.m. MT. However, there was one exciting thing that was missing and added to a students' list of supplies provided by the school.

W-P purchases iPads for high school, largely with grant funds

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Tuesday, 26 November 2013 18:20 -

Wauneta-Palisade High School made the decision to buy new Apple iPads for every high school student and teacher.

REAP money makes purchase possible

Each year, Wauneta receives money from the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP). This money is given to rural districts that lack the personnel and resources to compete for Federal competitive grants.

This beneficial contribution is usually used to buy the school technical items.

This year Wauneta received \$13,216. With this money, the administration decided to buy iPads for all high school students. "Approximately 90 percent of the iPads were provided with grants," explained W-P Superintendent Randy Geier.

During the last school year, 2012-2013, the junior class was given iPads as a trial. This caused a lot of excitement among students and talk of everyone getting iPads.

Jill Hurtt, W-P's Student Council Technology Coordinator and Media Specialist, was the first to get an iPad.

"I usually take it to different conferences to take notes and such," Hurtt says.

W-P purchases iPads for high school, largely with grant funds

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Tuesday, 26 November 2013 18:20 -

Many different uses

Last year, the junior class had its text books downloaded onto the iPads.

“It is still a possibility, to have an eBook text book, but it is up to the teacher. I for one, would go down that road if I were to use them in my classroom,” says Hurtt about one of the ways the iPads can be used.

“I believe the long range plan in the educational field will eliminate text books. Some of our teachers are currently utilizing on-line access instead of a text book, explains Geier.

This year, some seniors are using their iPads to download a free graphing calculator for College Algebra, saving the students a substantial expense.

“One senior spent a whopping two dollars and has a real graphing calculator on his iPad,” Hurtt said.

The iPads can also help Special Education students or anyone who might struggle with reading or concepts.

If a student struggles with reading, they can download a specific eBook and listen to the audio version.

Students who struggle with math can go to educational web sites, like Kahn Academy, that give step-by-step instructions.

In different English classes, iPads are now being used instead of slow, time consuming computers.

W-P purchases iPads for high school, largely with grant funds

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Tuesday, 26 November 2013 18:20 -

Students in English classes take weekly vocabulary tests on the website Townsendpress and write two journal entries on a website called Edmodo.

Rather than making a trip to a computer lab, waiting to log onto a computer then signing into a website, students have downloaded the apps for these websites and have them immediately available for use.

Not only does this save students time, but often their work. There were many occasions when computers would crash which meant whatever that student had been working on would be either deleted or erased.

Benefits outweigh the risks

With this advancement in technology come both good and bad results.

Although students can use this amazing opportunity to further themselves academically, iPads can also become a big distraction during classes.

There are apps available for anything and anyone.

This means a student could be playing games or watching TV shows during class instead of actually paying attention or doing work.

Aaron Behrends, the computer guru of Wauneta-Palisade, has control over all iPads. Behrends

W-P purchases iPads for high school, largely with grant funds

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Tuesday, 26 November 2013 18:20 -

can track each iPad by GPS and can tell exactly where the user and iPad is.

He also has the power to see what websites students have visited while using their iPads.

As of now, students are allowed to download items or delete anything that hasn't been put onto their tablet by the school.

"I feel the iPads have already had a positive impact on student learning. Students have instant access to information with the iPads. Several colleges issue iPads for classes and the students do their assignments on-line instead of the traditional hard copy," said Geier.

Before any student was given their I-Pad, both a parent or legal guardian and student had to sign a user's agreement.

This agreement said that they would not visit any pornographic websites and use the iPad in other irresponsible ways. No one other than the owner of the iPad is allowed to use it.

School keeping up with technology age

With all good things there are always bad things. If the iPads are used responsibly and educationally they will help advance Wauneta-Palisade's education system.

W-P purchases iPads for high school, largely with grant funds

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Tuesday, 26 November 2013 18:20 -

Education continues to become more technology reliant and schools must keep up with the times.

iPads are just one more step to help students further their education.