

School System to Implement Chromebook Initiative in January

From staff reports

Technology-based education is taking a giant step in Scott County classrooms as school officials plan to provide Chromebooks to each student in third through 12th grade.

The program officially kicks off in January and school personnel are excited about the prospects that the new resource called the 1:1 Chromebook Initiative brings to Scott County students.

There are very few jobs available today that do not require a computer background and school officials believe the new initiative gives county youngsters an advantage in the future.

"With access to a

Chromebook and the ability to connect via a wireless environment, students and teachers will actively participate in the consumption and production of media, build and contribute towards social networks, and be active participants in developing ideas that can be utilized to solve complex problems," explained Debby Brickey, Scott County Technology Coordinator. "The Chromebook serves as a tool to advance these 21st Century Skills."

The system has updated its internet infrastructure to handle the increased wireless traffic.

Scott County Division Superintendent John Ferguson explained the decision

to implement the new program would not financially impact county resources because funds will be reallocated to purchase the Chromebooks.

"Through the Virginia Public School Authority (VPSA) Educational Technology Notes, we are able to purchase these laptops for use in the classroom, for Standards of Learning testing and for student use at home," he noted.

Currently these funds have been used for computer labs but with the addition of the new 1:1 Chromebook Initiative, the system will no longer rely on limited space in crowded computer labs.

Beginning in the second semester of the current school year,



Helping to implement Scott County Schools' 1:1 Chromebook Initiative better known as the "Google Gang" are (front) Tabitha Bales, Amber Ketron, Shawna Vermillion, Betsy Bledsoe, (back) Debby Brickey, Patrick Johnson, Joey Kilbourne, Adam Tipton and Chris Harmon.

every child enrolled in eighth through 12th grade at Gate City High School, Gate City Mid-

dle School, Rye Cove High School and Twin Springs High School will be given a Chrome-

book. Students will be allowed to use the device during the school

See GOOGLE page 2

GOOGLE

From page 1

day and take it home each evening.

Brickey said teachers have been trained on the devices and are ready to begin the new initiative.

"This program will open new doors for each teacher's professional development, collaboration and communication," she stated.

Prior to distribution, Brickey said the school system will inventory devices and connect them to the county's Google domain. Their Google domain, <scott-schools.org>, was established in September 2016. Since that time, they have been transitioning email and productivity tools for student use to this domain.

School officials are currently working on policies for the Chromebook Initiative, which will be formally adopted by the Scott County School Board.

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of articles about the implementation of the new 1:1 Chromebook Initiative in Scott County Public Schools.