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NEWS RELEASE

Winnipeg School Division distributes 2,766 computer devices to students and families for home learning

May 5, 2020 (Winnipeg, MB) – Winnipeg School Division (WSD) is providing 2,166 Chromebooks and iPads and 600 wi-fi enabled iPads for families within the division to assist with their home learning needs.

“Most of the devices came from our existing inventory in our schools, and we are able to lend those to families with internet access in their homes,” said Tony Marchione, Acting Director of Technology.

“The remaining 600 families require both a device and internet access which we can provide through our partnership with Apple and Rogers.” Marchione said WSD purchased 600 LTE Cellular enabled Apple iPads pre-equipped with Rogers LTE wireless data. Rogers is providing this plan at no cost for the balance of the school year (until June 30, 2020).

Families will have access to technical support for the WSD provided devices through the division’s technical department. Online activity is also being filtered and monitored by GoGuardian software, similar to safety net technology used in schools.

WSD’s Indigenous Education and Newcomer Services teams assisted with prioritizing distribution of the technology.

“We’re really focused on providing the technology first to where it is most needed,” said Rob Riel, Director of Indigenous Education. “That means we have prioritized distribution in order of graduating students, high school students working on credit attainment and junior high students working on credit attainment, followed by Grades 1 to 3 and then Grades 4 to 8.” Riel said rolling out the technology based on priority doesn’t mean anybody will go without.

“We are ensuring special accommodations are made for student populations that are low-income, Indigenous, newcomer or require additional support in literacy and/or numeracy.”

Schools will begin distributing the technology to previously identified families over the next few days.

WSD was established in 1871 and currently has 79 schools, almost 33,000 students and 5,000 full-time employees. Its purpose is to provide a learning environment that fosters the growth of each student’s potential and provide equitable opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for meaningful participation in a global and diverse society.

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