There is an exciting school year around the corner for Masconomet with the launch of a 1:1 device initiative that will begin in September. Bringing 1:1 devices to school will be the expectation for 9th and 10th graders next year and for each entering 9th grade class in the future. Upperclassmen may bring their own devices that meet minimum requirements, as well. In the Middle School, Chromebooks will be provided to all students via classroom carts purchased with the assistance of the Masconomet Education Foundation (MEF), so Middle School students can participate in the digital environment as well. Middle School students will not bring their own devices to school.

Masconomet has been preparing for this initiative for several years. Our teachers have been developing skills and resources with secure online tools, and by building curriculum in our learning management system. Students will be exposed to the tools, project-based learning, and a variety of rich experiences to fully prepare them for college and careers in a changing world. Mobile devices will be another tool in their preparation and growth, to help them understand digital citizenship and responsibility, appropriate use of technology in problem-solving, and in accessing information. Students and teachers will have the opportunity to transform many aspects of learning through access to online resources to enrich research, writing, and collaboration with others. Students will have more capability to pursue individual interests in all subject areas. A 1:1 environment will help teachers personalize and differentiate instruction for all types of learners.

Three community forums on District Technology and 1:1 devices were held in the High School Library this school year in October, March, and May. Each forum was well attended and input from the audience was incorporated into planning for this coming September and beyond. The greatest concerns brought forth in the forums were the costs of devices and how effectively our staff would use these new resources to improve learning. We believe that these concerns have been addressed through the device selection and by years of staff development and the careful selection of digital tools that will enhance learning.

**It’s Not About the Technology, It’s About the Learning**

What steps has Masconomet taken to prepare for the effective transition to a 21st Century educational environment? This began in 2010 when we set forth our vision for a modern digital learning environment. Since then, we have:

* Implemented a new Student Information System (PowerSchool)
* Implemented a Learning Management System (Blackboard)
* Rolled out Google App accounts to all staff and students
* Equipped all faculty with laptops
* Launched a new District web site with integrated calendars, and that will soon have a parent app
* Upgraded classroom technologies including smart video projectors
* Upgraded student computer labs with specialized software and for diversified learning
* Upgraded Internet access throughout the schools
* Have moved other student resources and services to the cloud for ubiquitous access
* Provided hundreds of hours of staff development on new instructional technologies

Masco will provide Wi-Fi and Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) compliant content filtering. Students simply connect to Masco’s secure wireless network using a unique pass code, one device at a time. Students get Masco email powered by Google, files securely stored on Drive, Blackboard class materials, and the Powerschool grading portal. Other tools are available through the website, Masconomet.org, including our library catalog, MySchoolBucks lunch account, Naviance for college and career readiness, district news, athletics, parking forms, and much more.

For the new 1:1 environment, Chromebooks are the preferred device because they are the least expensive devices that meet all of the minimum specifications needed to access Masco’s curriculum. As more and more productivity tools and software work on all operating systems, choosing the Chromebook has made the most sense. These devices have been extensively tested on our network and for use with our on-line resources. Between the price point, durability, keyboard for effective writing, start up time, battery life, performance, simplicity, and the wide array of free educational apps available, the value and benefits of a Chromebook are continuing to increase.

Masco has partnered with a reseller in the area to get the lowest volume prices available on Chromebooks. These Chromebooks are durable and easily meet minimum specifications. We have also made high quality accessories available to all Masco families through an online, secure purchasing portal, powered by HP. All Masco families were invited to view products sold in the online store at the May 24th forum and are given the opportunity to make purchases online between May 23rd and June 9th with Chromebooks starting at $160. A second purchasing window may be opened in the fall. Families may choose to purchase from any source.

Masco is poised to bring the digital learning environment to the next level with the launch of this exciting 1:1 program beginning in September. We will continue to assess and refine our program as the technology landscape evolves. More information is available on Masco’s Digital Learning Page at <http://masconomet.org/digitallearning>. We are grateful that the community has supported the improvement of the Masco technology infrastructure over the last several years to make a 1:1 environment possible.

*This Masconomet School Committee story was developed with the assistance of Masco’s Director of Digital Learning, Ben Hodges, Director of Information Technology, Seth Goodman, and Technology Coordinator Ryan King*.