

# FULLERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **STUDENTS**

Policy No.: **5118.1**

### **Students Laptop Choice Education Program – Page 1**

Board Adopted: **December 12, 2006**

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#### **Purpose and Intent**

With the rapid changes in technology, many students are computer savvy and either own or have access to computers. In addition, there are many students and parents who would like the opportunity of having a computer or additional opportunities to use computers in connection with the instructional program. Technology through the use of laptop computers and wireless Internet access presents a unique and innovative opportunity to provide an alternative instructional methodology. In order for such instruction to be effective, however, every student in the classroom should have equal access to a computer during the instructional year.

The District has entered into an arrangement with a nationally recognized computer manufacturer to assist parents in the acquisition of laptop computers and is willing to install a wireless network within classrooms to provide alternative instructional methodologies in addition to the traditional approach. The District developed a pilot program in the 2004-05 school year which has demonstrated that such a program may be successful with substantial community, parent and staff support.

It is the intent of this policy to provide a computer-based instructional program to be known as the Laptops for Learning Program as a District choice program in accordance with District policies 5116, 5117 and 5118, subject to the modifications contained in this policy, recognizing the unique aspects of that program. The choice program may be instituted on a schoolwide or as a school within a school on a grade or classroom basis when the classroom is organized as a cohort for reasons independent of the laptop program, such as GATE, I.B., combination classes or other specialized classes or programs. When operated on a grade or classroom basis, the program should follow the students through their career at the same school, subject to the provisions of this policy, e.g., a second grade program will become a third grade program the subsequent year. However, when students promote from sixth grade to seventh grade at a different junior high school, the program will have to be reinitiated in accordance with this policy, with the exception that those students in a sixth grade laptop program at the conclusion of the 2005-06 school year who matriculate to Ladera Vista Junior High School or Parks Junior High School, will be continued in such a program until the completion of the eighth grade year, provided that the District in its sole discretion determines that it has the necessary resources to provide that program and that should there be any vacancies in the classes provided for those students, those vacancies will be filled by random selection from volunteers, without reference to whether a volunteer intends to lease a computer, request assistance in obtaining a computer, or desires to use a school-provided computer. When students within a grade or class have moved up a year and program status follows the students, the grade or classroom of origin must achieve its own choice status in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

Established laptop programs shall continue in existence, subject to the terms and conditions of this policy. See "Continuation of the Program."

#### **Initiation of the Program**

A parent or teacher may begin the process of creating a new program or expanding an existing program by submitting a written statement of interest to the principal. Upon receipt of such statement

# FULLERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

## STUDENTS

Policy No.: 5118.1

### Students Laptop Choice Education Program – Page 2

Board Adopted: December 12, 2006

---

of interest from at least ten parents representing the same constituency or a teacher(s), or upon the principal's own initiative, the principal shall hold at least two (2) information meetings for parents and staff to discuss and explain the responsibilities and benefits of the program. The principal will also present the statement of interest or the principal's intent to apply for recognition of a program to the school site council. After meetings have been held, the principal will survey in writing the parents of all currently enrolled students who would be impacted by the proposal. The survey shall identify interest in participating in the program, including willingness to voluntarily purchase or lease a laptop computer through the District on the basis of a three-year commitment; provided that if parents choose to return the laptop and discontinue making payments before the end of the lease term, the lease shall terminate as provided in the lease/purchase agreement, and the parent shall have no continued liability for additional payments as of the day the lease is terminated. The survey shall also inform parents of the potential to borrow, at no cost other than insurance, District-owned computers if the 90% funding level is achieved, as well as the availability of financial support options for those needing assistance to lease/purchase their computers. The principal shall also determine whether other funds are available to acquire laptop computers on behalf of students such as state/federal funds available to the school apart from the District's general fund, as well as funds generated from community sources which could be made available as grants in aid or scholarships for students who cannot afford to purchase or lease a computer in accordance with District-approved standards for aid/scholarships. Applications for aid/scholarships shall be received and maintained in a confidential manner. If the principal's survey of parents/guardians shows that at least 90% of the students eligible to participate in the program will either lease their own computer through a lease/purchase agreement or through a grant/aid program – e.g., for a fifth grade of 100 students, the parent or guardian of 90 students must have checked off item 1 or 2 on the survey – the principal shall present an application for a Laptop Program to the Superintendent, with a copy to the school site council. Alternatively, if the percentage of students that will lease their own computers, through lease/purchase agreements or grants/aid, plus the percentage of students that can be assigned computers purchased with local/state/federal funds apart from the District's unrestricted funds, is at least 90%, the principal shall present an application for a Laptop Program to the Superintendent, with a copy to the school site council. (The Board in its sole discretion may waive the 90% requirement on an individual school or grade basis.) The application will further set forth a plan to ensure computer availability for those students whose families choose to borrow a computer through the District. Any school implementing the program shall provide computer availability in accordance with this policy for those students enrolled in the program whose families choose to borrow a computer through the District. School-owned computers must be made available to such students for their school related use during the entire instructional year, both at school and at home. Upon receipt of an application, the Board may approve the application, return the application to the principal with direction for modification, deny the application, or defer implementation until adequate funds or technology resources are available to the District.

### Access to the Program

Notwithstanding Policy No. 5118, those students who reside in the established geographic attendance area of the school where the program is established will be given first priority to enrollment in the program. Any student not wishing to participate in the program shall have an absolute right to transfer from the school, grade or class where the program is in place to a traditional program within the District.

# FULLERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **STUDENTS**

Policy No.: **5118.1**

### **Students Laptop Choice Education Program – Page 3**

Board Adopted: **December 12, 2006**

---

After all students residing in the established attendance area have been accommodated, any remaining capacity will be filled by District transfers in accordance with District Policies 5116 and 5117, with the exception that those students who attend on intradistrict transfer will not be required to reapply for a transfer, so long as they continue in the laptop program. If the number of transfer applications for the program exceeds the number of spaces available, the principal shall hold an impartial and random lottery in accordance with District procedures and applicable laws and regulations. Whether a family has bought or borrowed a computer, or intends to buy or borrow a computer, may not be considered when reviewing or approving transfer applications. No student residing in the established attendance area who wishes to be involved in the program shall be displaced by pupils transferring from outside the attendance area. All policy related to program computers – including, but not limited to, school-year access and usage – shall be the same for all students participating in the program, whether computers are bought or borrowed from the District. Among other things, computers shall be distributed and collected in such a manner as to afford the same school year access for all students participating in the program, and computers shall be functionally equivalent in terms of hardware, software, and technical support for all school related use for all students participating in the program. All District materials describing the Program shall include an explanation of parents' options including the option to borrow, at no cost other than insurance, a District-owned computer if sufficient support of the program is established. Students who utilize a laptop computer owned by the District will be responsible for damage or loss on the same basis as textbooks or other school property; however, a District self-funded insurance program will protect against any cost which might result from non-negligent damage or loss in an amount consistent with industry standards. Current parent cost is \$55 per year.

### **Continuation of the Program**

Once a laptop program has been established for a group of students, the program should continue in effect for that group of students as they move through their educational experience, as set forth under "Purpose and Intent" above, provided that at least 85% of the students in the program have a computer available to them as a result of a lease/purchase, grant in aid/scholarship, or through special local/state/federal funding apart from the District's unrestricted funds, the District has adequate resources to fund the program as determined by the Board of Trustees, and the educational value is validated through the evaluation process. (The Board in its sole discretion may waive the 85% requirement.) In the event that the program for any particular group is discontinued, network access will remain available for use of the leased/owned computers as part of the educational experience to the extent possible and economically feasible.

All programs shall be evaluated annually. The evaluation shall include reviewing the test scores relating to basic skills for students participating in the program, and be based upon teacher, parent and student input. An evaluation report shall be completed annually to the extent required by the Education Code.

A statistical summary of the survey showing the number of parents surveyed and the responses to each of the four questions and any evaluation reports shall be published on the District's website within fourteen (14) days of the survey or evaluation's completion.