



# **SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT**

**DATE:** May 17, 2021  
**FROM:** Dr. Brent Jones, Superintendent  
**LEAD STAFF:** Rob Gannon, Deputy Superintendent

**For Introduction:** June 23, 2021  
**For Action:** July 7, 2021

## **1. TITLE**

Approval of purchase of new computers for certificated staff.

## **2. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this board action is to approve the purchase of new computers for teachers for distribution starting November 2021.

## **3. RECOMMENDED MOTION**

I move that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to execute purchase orders through RFP No. 06792 with Dell for a total amount of not to exceed \$7,900,000, with Washington State Sales Tax, over fiscal year 2021-2022 in the form of the draft purchase orders attached to the Board Action Report, with any minor additions, deletions, and modifications deemed necessary by the Superintendent, and to take any necessary actions to implement the purchase orders.

## **4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- a. **Background** In October 2017, the District provided laptops to certificated staff. This was a significant change because prior to this, certificated staff were provided desktop computers. Now the laptops are four years old and need to be replaced, in line with the district's laptop refresh life cycle. The new models offer more memory, a faster processor, a better battery, and include warranty coverage on the batteries.

Having laptops has changed the way teachers prepare their lessons, collaborate with colleagues, and teach students. Providing mobile solutions for our teachers brings us in line with common practice and allows our teachers access to collaboration tools essential to meet student needs. The laptops were crucial to have during the pandemic because teachers were able to use the built-in camera and microphone on the laptops to help conduct remote learning with Microsoft Teams. It is important to keep providing staff laptops to allow for the greater freedom, flexibility, and functionality they allow for teaching students in person or remotely.

- b. **Alternatives** Do not approve this motion. This is not recommended because the teacher laptops will start failing. The older laptops are slower, less powerful, and do not hold a charge for long, which makes them much less flexible to use in a classroom.

- c. **Research** RFP No. 06792 was published to the public, which secured volume pricing for the purchase of Dell computers. We have identified a better, more powerful device, which has been positively reviewed by several certificated staff. We will confirm this prior to finalizing the orders in late summer.

**5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE**

Fiscal impact to this action will be the one-time cost for the purchase of Dell laptops for a total of \$7,900,000.

The revenue source for this motion is BEX V.

Expenditure:  One-time  Annual  Multi-Year  N/A

Revenue:  One-time  Annual  Multi-Year  N/A

**6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

The certificated Digital Learning Specialists are reviewing the new models now and are very pleased with the upgrade in functionality and power over the previous models. We have more test units on order to have other certificated staff try out before we place our order. Additionally, we briefed the Information Resources Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC) on this BAR at their meeting on May 24, and they were supportive of the device refresh.

**7. EQUITY ANALYSIS**

Providing every teacher a new computer helps meet the Strategic Plan of the district, Every Student, Every Classroom, Every Day; as well as the district’s mission: Seattle Public Schools is committed to ensuring equitable access, closing the opportunity gaps and excellence in education for every student. This action also aligns with the Strategic Plan Goal #2: Improve systems district wide to support academic outcomes and meet students’ needs.

The selection of projects in the BTA and BEX programs were designed to provide equitable access to school’s resources across the city. As the district planned, it looked at needs through an equity lens to determine which projects should be prioritized.

## **8. STUDENT BENEFIT**

Explicit and implicit benefits to students as a result of providing functional mobile devices to teachers include improved instructional quality, increased teacher collaboration, equity of resources, and ultimately improved student achievement.

### **Instruction**

As teachers leverage the greater power and larger disk and memory of the new laptops, they will have greater ability to more efficiently craft engaging and responsive lessons in ways that more closely mirror the 21st century workplace. The new laptop has the capacity to connect remotely to presentation stations allowing teachers to visually address on-the-fly questions and model collaborative problem solving. With the longer battery life teachers can move about the classroom to more closely observe student progress. These real-time observations facilitate a responsive feedback loop to students and families and provide critical information for lesson planning.

### **Teacher Collaboration and Professional Development**

Opportunities for increased collaboration amongst colleagues is a major benefit to teachers and students. Laptops are a valuable tool to enhance professional learning opportunities in a variety of settings. Teachers will be able to bring their device, replete with digital professional materials, to their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and staff meetings. They can share work samples and calibrate grading procedures, resulting in equitable assessment practices across sections. In addition, teachers can efficiently share and discuss concepts learned during out-of-district professional development experiences. Laptops increase opportunities for real-time access and sharing of information amongst teachers, enabling effective and responsive lesson planning. Additionally, as a community using the same device, teachers will support one another as they become more fluent with their use of the laptop and district tools such as Office 365, Seesaw, and Schoology.

### **Equity**

Because the district intends to provide the same device model to every full-time certificated staff member, organized support, training, and professional development in the context of curriculum, assessment, and instruction can be consistent and provide an equitable foundation for growth resulting in elevated student learning. The teacher devices that have been purchased more recently for new teachers or to replace broken devices will be collected and refurbished for the use of Instructional Assistants since these are still very serviceable devices.

### **Student Achievement & Eliminating the Opportunity Gap**

By providing teachers with technology-based resources, networks, and supports, our district can continue to address the opportunity gap affecting students of color. With the technical foundation of the district's move to digital MTSS tools, the teacher device enables effective analysis of student data, access to digital curriculum and tracking interventions. The combination of these opportunities can strengthen teachers' ability to make instructional decisions and interact in professional learning contexts, resulting in improved teacher practice with an eye toward closing the opportunity gap.

**9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY**

Contract initial value or amendment value exceeds applicable threshold (Policy No. 6220)

Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)

Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy

Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract

Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter

Board Policy No. \_\_\_\_\_, [TITLE], provides the Board shall approve this item

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. POLICY IMPLICATION**

Per Board Policy No. 6220, Procurement, a contract over \$1,000,000 must be brought before the Board for approval.

**11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

This motion was discussed at the Operations Committee meeting on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Committee reviewed the motion and moved the item forward with a recommendation for approval by the full Board.

**12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Upon approval of this motion, functionality and usability needs will be finalized and purchase orders will be executed to begin the procurement process. Depending on supply chain availability, we anticipate teachers will begin to receive their new computers in November 2021.

**13. ATTACHMENTS**

N/A