

Notification from: **Algonquin Regional School District - Neary Elementary School (NES)**

Dear 4th Grade Parents,

As promised, I am attaching both the PowerPoint presentation and a summary of the presentation and the questions and answers from last week's 4th grade parent meeting. Since that meeting, two other questions have come up, one about how this project got started, and another about the choice of 4th grade to begin.

First of all, as you probably know from my email to 3rd grade parents last June, this project was originally initiated by the district technology advisory committee, a committee consisting of teachers, administrators, and parents that met throughout last year to review the use of technology in the school system and advise on further technology implementation. More specifics were discussed by the Southborough School Committee last spring at the May and June school committee meetings, and an advisory committee was formed to plan the project.

In the course of looking at possibilities for this project, committee members researched many other school districts, both in Massachusetts and elsewhere throughout the country, to learn about problems and successes with implementing a 1:1 project. There really is no common thread as to the best grade to begin the project, but there are many districts that have implemented 1:1 iPad use in kindergarten or 1st grade, or even in pre-K. Many have implemented 1:1 projects from K-12. In our district, we felt that 4th grade would be a good year to begin, for a variety of reasons. In Southborough, 4th grade students are still in classes that are mostly "self-contained," which facilitates learning foundational technology skills, and learning appropriate and effective use of technology at this age will stand them in good stead throughout their school years and, in fact, throughout their lives. 4th grade is an important year; it has often been said that in 4th grade there is a change from "learning to read" to "reading to learn," and 4th graders are learning to become more independent learners and own their own learning. Another way to phrase it is that 4th grade is a year when students are asked to apply previously learned skills to a variety of new tasks. The iPads will assist with seamlessly accommodating those students who are still on the learning curve for these basic skills as well as allowing for both meaningful modification of assignments and challenging options for those students who are ready for them. For all these reasons, we decided that 4th grade was a good year to begin the pilot project; if the pilot is successful, the district may very well in the future decide to begin at an earlier grade, as many other districts have done, but for now 4th grade seems to be a good point both for students to learn technology skills and for the application of technology to make differentiation and individualization of instruction most effective.

As I noted, attached is a summary of last Tuesday evening's presentation, including both the presentation and the questions and answers that were discussed at the meeting.

I hope this is helpful. Please do let me know if you have any additional questions that I can help with.

Sincerely,

Linda Murdock

Linda A. Murdock,
Principal
Neary Elementary School
Southborough, MA 01772
(508) 481-2300
Blog: neary-principal.blogspot.com

Attachments available for 30 days until Wednesday, October 30, 2013:
[one-one P mtg notes.docx](#)
[Gr4Pmtg.pptx](#)