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SUBJECT: Optimised access to quality technology in our School, a necessary shift

Dear Parents / Guardians,

We are almost 2 decades into the 21st century and our school has always strived to be at the cutting edge whether in our teaching practices, specialized equipment or the use of technology. As you know, we've ensured that our students have had access to technology in several ways. From a computer lab, to the 1-1 iPad program to the implementation of the Media Center this year, we constantly renew our inventory of equipment to help stimulate and enhance the learning of all students.

Here is an overview of our current inventory

- 80 Cloudbooks accessible on loan for any student.
- 32 Resource iPads with keyboards and specialized apps for students who have access to adaptations.
- 170 iPads available for classroom research.
- 1 3D-printer in a science lab.

Here are the new items that will be available as of August 2019

The Video Conference room, adjoining the Library/Media Center, is getting revamped and will truly be a *Makerspace*, a collaborative space for creating, learning, exploring and sharing where we use high tech to no tech tools.

In the Makerspace, students will have access to:

- 16 high tech, touch screen, laptops used with
 - 16 Intuos drawing tablets for our Visual Arts classes and Multimedia projects,
 - 8 new Arduino robotics kits for our Robotics option and Science classes.
- 1 3D-printer.
- 2 iMacs with Final Cut Pro software which allows students to edit and create multimedia files.
- 1 75-inch SMART Board interactive flat panel screen for interactive demonstrations and video-conferencing.

As you can see, with the support of the QHS Alumni and the Citadel Foundations, we have managed to make QHS a technological school.

We are also very attuned to the effects of technology on the health and well-being of everyone in our school, students and staff. In the last few years, we have noticed that our students have increased their use of personal portable devices during class, whether they be cell phones, tablets or smart watches.

We conduct a survey (COMPASS) which examines the students' habits on various subjects such as physical activity, eating habits, time spent in front of a screen, etc. In last year's survey it was revealed that only 7% of our students follow the recommended amount of time spent in front of a screen which is 2 hours per day. In fact, the students surveyed at the time spent on average 5,6 hours per day in front of a screen for recreational purposes.

The staff has been concerned about the effects of cell phone use on the students. We wish to make them aware of the impact of the excessive use of technology. It is a question of balance. We also review what the research says about the impact of social media on individuals' well-being.

Studies have shown that too much use of social media can lead to depression, high levels of anxiety and low self-esteem. It has also been proven that too much screen time can affect sleeping patterns as well. Here are a few interesting clips on the subject:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8P57hOHSbg0&t=9s>

https://www.cbsnews.com/video/new-study-links-phone-use-and-mental-health-issues-in-teens/?utm_campaign=meetedar&utm_medium=social&utm_source=meetedar.comcbs%20news

During class time, students who have their cell phones with them are inclined to be distracted by the numerous notifications they receive. For instance, one of our teachers did an experiment during one of his classes. He asked the students to note the number of notifications they received during that period. The average was 10 to 20 notifications in one period and one student got 82 notifications. That is more than 1 per minute in a 70-min period. The point of the activity was to raise awareness with our students to the fact that these devices, while very useful, greatly hinder the learning of the individuals because the students do not use them effectively. Despite our various efforts to raise awareness, students continue to use their devices for recreational purposes during class time.

As we have ample technological devices available for our students, we've decided to create a **No handheld personal electronic device zone in the classrooms**. This means that during class time, students must leave their cell phones, or any personal portable device such as a tablet or a smart watch, in their lockers. Portable computers for academic purposes are permitted. The electronic device-free zone is meant to get students' full attention while they are in class but also to show them that they do not have to react to every single notification they receive. They will have access to their devices during breaks. We will continue to educate and make them more aware of the effects of the overuse of technology on their learning and their well-being.

We encourage all parents to discuss the use of technology with your child and if you, as parents, have any questions about this new practice, do not hesitate to contact us.

Our Code of conduct was revised accordingly, and we will present this new policy at the start of the new year.

As usual, if you need to contact your child for an emergency during class, you should contact the school – 418-683-1953 and the administration will ensure your child gets the message.

Thank you for your continued support,



Warren Thomson
Principal



Joanne Arsenault
Vice Principal