March 8, 2012 Question and Answer

1. Why is WCS implementing BYOT?
   Today’s students have been called “digital natives.” Technology is an integral part of how they communicate, seek knowledge, and process information. WCS is committed to helping students and teachers maximize learning by taking advantage of relevant technology, while at the same time ensuring that we help students become good consumers of information, achieve media and technology literacy, and maintain a safe and ethical digital environment. As a part of this plan, we will implement our BYOT plan in 2012-2013 for students in grades 3-12. Through BYOT, we expect students to experience expanded just-in-time access to resources that will enhance classroom learning, read and annotate course content electronically, create digital presentations, and collaborate with other students.

2. Does educational research support the connection between the use of technology and improved student achievement?
   Education researcher Robert Marzano says, “Applied effectively, technology not only increases student learning, understanding, and achievement but also augments motivation to learn, encourages collaborative learning, and supports the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.” The power of student use of technology, however, does not really lie in the device itself. The power is in what the device helps the student do. For instance, the Mid-Continent Regional Education Laboratory (McREL) identified 246 separate studies that demonstrate that the use of nonlinguistic representations has a very strong positive effect on student learning. For years teachers have struggled to find ways to incorporate this strategy. Digital devices offer a huge array of resources to meet this need—from streaming video to interactive presentations.

3. Will WCS teachers get professional development on the most effective uses of digital devices to improve student learning?
   Yes. The WCS Instructional Technology Coaches have already begun this work. Over the course of the next two to three years, WCS teachers will have access to a wide variety of professional development, ranging from the practical matters of managing a classroom in which students have digital devices to more complex thinking about structuring meaningful learning experiences with technology in mind.

4. What kinds of digital devices will students be able to bring to school?
   Students will be able to bring laptop computers, smart phones, tablet devices, and e-readers. Of course new technology emerges quickly, and as new kinds of devices become available, WCS may expand the list of allowable devices.

5. Will students be required to bring digital devices from home?
   No. Recent surveys indicate that many WCS students and their families are looking forward to being able to bring their devices from home, but this will not be a requirement. Schools are planning to have digital devices available for students to check out. Teachers will ensure that if they require the use of a digital device for an
activity, all students in the classroom will have access through their own device or through a school-owned one.

6. **How will students be protected from inappropriate content?**
   Students will be expected to access the internet through the WCS Guest Network, which will be available in every building in the district. All students will have signed the WCS Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement, which requires that they use the WCS guest login to access the internet. The WCS Guest Network is filtered in accordance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

7. **I have a data plan from a provider (AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, etc.). Can my child access the internet through that plan without using WCS guest access?**
   No. All students are to use the WCS Guest login to access the internet, as required by the Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement. Students should not access the internet through a cellular provider while on campus.

8. **What happens when a teacher feels that the use of a digital device is inappropriate for a particular activity or time period?**
   The teacher has the final say on activities and procedures in the classroom. Students will be expected to comply with all teacher directions regarding digital devices.

9. **Can students save work to the WCS network?**
   No, the Guest Network is not the same as the network students would normally access from a campus computer. Students will not see their shared folders, so they will need to save work in a different place. Options would include a flash drive, the device’s hard drive, or the student’s WCS Google Docs account. Students will also need to save work in one of these methods to gain access to printers.

10. **What happens if a student uses a digital device to bully another student on campus?**
    Bullying, digital or otherwise, is a serious disciplinary infraction and should be reported immediately to the school administrator. It is important to talk with your child about appropriate behavior in a digital environment.

11. **What happens if a student’s device is damaged or lost?**
    The district will not be responsible for damaged or lost technology. Keeping track of the device’s serial number, model, and type at home is a good idea. Many vendors of digital devices offer insurance against theft or breakage, and tracking features can be installed in many of the devices as well. Theft or vandalism of any kind should be reported to the school administrator so he or she can take appropriate steps.

12. **Students often stay after school for tutoring or other activities. Will they have access to the WCS Guest Network after hours?**
    Yes. The Guest Network will be available during any hours your child is in the school building.