August 28, 2014

Dear Middle School Families,

With the school year about to begin, I’d like to pass along some information regarding procedures related to Pingry’s 1:1 laptop program. This is the first year of our 1:1 laptop program in the Middle School, and the laptop will be an essential tool for our students in our 21st century classroom. **Students should plan to bring their laptop everyday, including on the first day of school, Wednesday, September 3.**

As a reminder, please review your son or daughter’s current laptop and make sure that it will be adequate for Pingry’s 1:1 program for this coming year. You can find the minimum requirements here: [http://www.pingry.org/page.cfm?p=1239](http://www.pingry.org/page.cfm?p=1239). In general, if a laptop can perform all of those tasks efficiently enough, then it will be suitable for the 1:1 program. Most laptops purchased in the past 4 years should meet the requirements (though perhaps with a small upgrade, such as a replacement battery). Also, on that same webpage are recommended computer specs that you should take into consideration if you decide to purchase a new computer. **Please note that those specifications are only a recommendation for those purchasing new computers, not a requirement.** For its faculty, Pingry purchases MacBook Airs and Dell Latitude 7440s (both upgraded to 8GB of RAM). If you are purchasing a new computer, the Pingry Tech Team recommends those two systems for student use as well, depending on Mac or PC preference (for your reference, 85-90% of our students are on Mac).

Pingry does have loaner laptops for students who break their computer; however, this applies only for broken computers **and not for computers that are left at home or elsewhere.** The Pingry Tech Team will loan a student with a broken computer a laptop for a period of up to 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, if the school laptop is not returned to the tech team, the student’s account will be charged $50 per week.

Anytime a student is away from Pingry for more than 2 weeks (e.g. during the summer, winter break, and spring break), he or she will need to register using his or her Pingry username and password. This school year we will continue to utilize the Network Access Controller system put in place last year, that allows us to limit access to our network and prioritize bandwidth for classroom use. Middle School students will register when they arrive to school on Organization Day, Wednesday, September 3. There will be technology time built into the schedule at the beginning of that day. In order to register, a student who uses a PC will need to have up-to-date antivirus installed and be running the latest version of Windows 7 or 8. The Tech Team recommends using the free version of Avast ([www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)) for antivirus. A student with a Mac must be running the latest version of Mac OS X 10.6 or later.

For parents, if you are on campus and would like access to WiFi, you may request guest access. However, please be advised that you must ask, in person, someone in a school office, such as Technology, Admissions, Upper or Middle School, to grant you access.
Also during our dedicated technology time on September 3, we will work with students to not only get them registered on the network, but also make sure their email is working and set-up their Evernote accounts so they can join Pingry’s business account and access all of the premium features of Evernote. If you are not yet familiar with Evernote and would like to learn more, please visit their website ([www.evernote.com](http://www.evernote.com)).

Please feel free to reach out to me at bburkhar@pingry.org if you have any questions.

Best,

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