To: Dr. Mike Riggle
        Board of Education

From: Dr. R.J. Gravel

Date: Monday, January 28, 2019

Re: Employee Technology Purchase Program

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve the updated Employee Technology Purchase Program as described.

Background

Since December 1990, the Board of Education has offered employees interest-free loans to purchase computer-related equipment in the form of a "computer buy program". The intention of the program was to encourage employees to become familiar with the capabilities of computers and related software so that they "will be more likely to utilize them with greater ease and ability at school" (Board Packet Materials, September 28, 1998). Through Board action, the program parameters were last updated in September 1998, offering $500-4,000 loans to full-time employees over a repayment term of 10 or 20 months for the purchase of computer-related equipment, supplies and software.

At the time the program was established, instructional and support personnel had limited access to and training of how to utilize technology tools and resources. The resources owned by the District were located in computer labs or placed strategically to fulfill the operational needs of the schools (e.g. school offices). Additionally, most devices were stationary, desktop computers, that could not be easily moved from one location to another. Over the past 20 years, the District has made significant enhancements to the availability of technology tools and resources to all staff members. Our staff has taken advantage of the available tools, and have invested in a variety of other emerging technologies to the benefit of our students. Promoting the evaluation of new technologies to enhance learning activities remains a priority of the District, for which the technology purchase program makes possible for all of our staff.

Recommended Purchase Program Updates

Recognizing that the technology purchase program has not been updated in over 20 years, the administration is proposed the following changes to the program effective July 1, 2019:

	1998 Program	**2019 Program**
Eligible Items	Computer related equipment, supplies and software (including upgrading existing equipment). No used equipment.	Technology related equipment and software.
Who May Purchase	Full-time Glenbrook employees only.	Full-time Glenbrook employees with annualized employment compensation agreements.
Purchases	Employees may purchase computer related items from any dealer. Each employee will group the invoice(s) and submit them with a signed contract agreement for processing by the business office.	Employees may purchase technology related equipment and software from any vendor. Detailed receipts, including any applicable sales tax, must be submitted with a completed purchase program agreement for processing.
Loan Limits	Only one open contract per employee. Minimum Contract - $500 Maximum Contract - $4,000	Only one open loan per employee. Minimum Loan - $250 Maximum Loan - $2,000
Financing Terms	10-months or 20-months (interest free). Computer buy program shall be ongoing throughout the year(s).	The amount of the loan will be divided into equal paycheck deductions. All loans must be repaid in the same fiscal year for which they are requested.

There are two important changes to the program that are being recommended. The first is an adjustment in the amount an employee can borrow. This reduction in loan limits reflect changes to the marketplace since 1998, and provides an adequate budget for an employee to purchase a quality device for their own personal/professional use. The second change is a modification to the financing terms for employees. Currently, an employee can spread their loan repayment over three fiscal years. This has created an accounting challenge, requiring a multi-year reconciliation and justification of balances as of June 30th of any given year, which was recently discussed with the auditors. Additionally, there have been instances when employees have separated prior to the full repayment of their loans, creating a liability for the District.

The administration remains supportive in offering a technology purchase program for employees. We believe that the changes outlined above will address current accounting and liability concerns, while continuing to provide employees the opportunity to expand their understanding and knowledge of innovative technology tools and resources. At this time, we are requesting permission from the Board of Education to revise the technology purchase program as identified above, and to place this item on the Consent Agenda for the February 11, 2019 meeting.