

FAQ: Purchasing a Chromebook for use in Wolf Creek



Starting in September of 2014, **Wolf Creek Public Schools** will be supporting a **Chromebook Parent Purchase Program** in many of its K-12 schools.

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) guide is intended to provide some information around the expectations and recommendations for personally owned Chromebooks in Wolf Creek Schools which have been purchased **outside of the Parent Purchase Program**.

Q. Why did Wolf Creek choose Chromebooks as part of a parent purchase plan? How did this all begin?

Wolf Creek started working on 1:1 devices about 5 years ago in schools as part of an Alberta Education research project. Since that time, our schools have been purposefully learning about how a personal device can assist students in their learning experience as we prepare them to be part of a 21st century environment. In November of 2012, Wolf Creek started to do some research around a new device that was available. This new device was the Chromebook. Since that time 17 schools throughout Wolf Creek have participated in this **pilot project** where students have utilized a Chromebook in their classrooms. This work has resulted in being able to offer the ability for parents to purchase a Chromebook through the school division as many parents ask our school staff what kind of device is desirable for student learning. Our research in this project has demonstrated that a Chromebook is an inexpensive, yet powerful tool for students to use in their learning with our Google Apps domain. We wanted to assist parents by making a convenient and affordable recommendation to ultimately support learning for students.

Q: What are the advantages of purchasing through the Parent Purchase Program? Can't I just go to my local electronics retailer and buy one?

Wolf Creek public schools believes in a BYOD, or bring your own device, philosophy when it comes to the digital learning tools our students and staff wish to bring to school to support learning. While we welcome Chromebooks into our classrooms that have been purchased at electronics retailers, here are some of the advantages of purchasing a Chromebook through our Parent Purchase Plan:

- Included in the purchase plan pricing through Wolf Creek is a **\$30.00 insurance fee** for the first year. This insurance fee will be collected annually in order to provide insurance against manufacturing defects and other problems with the devices which do NOT result from physical damage or abuse (accidental or intentional). This insurance will ensure that there is a pool of devices available for loan or replacement so that our students are not without a device that they have come to use as an integral part of their learning.
- Included in the purchase program is a **\$50.00 licensing fee** to enroll the Chromebook in our Google Apps for Education Domain. If a student wants to bring in a Chromebook purchased at an electronics retail store, we will be **requiring a \$50.00 licensing fee** as we will need to purchase a license from Google in order to enroll the device in our Google Domain.

Q: Wait a minute, what is a “domain” and why is Wolf Creek requiring that my student’s Chromebook be enrolled in this domain?

Our **Google Apps for Education Domain** is essentially our own digital “space” that we have contracted Google to provide us. It’s the digital “space” where our teachers and students will create and collaborate through different types of documents and email, amongst other things. Since we control this domain, we have endeavored to set it up to best support the learning needs of Wolf Creek staff and students.

In order to be able to extend **the full feature set** of this domain or digital “space”, a Chromebook purchased **outside** of our parent purchase program will be required to purchase a license, from Google via Wolf Creek, so that we can “open the digital doors” for this device to connect to our domain.

What kinds of advantages does a Chromebook enrolled in our domain have:

- access to a custom app store where students will be able to access and browse learning apps vetted by Wolf Creek staff;
- have wireless settings “pushed out” to the devices which may make it easier for students to quickly connect to our network and get learning!
- Access to digital testing software produced by the Alberta Government called Quest A+ which our schools are using to write Provincial exams, mid terms, final exams, unit exams etc.
- When we use products that add to the functionality of our Google Apps domain, a Chromebook enrolled in our domain will be able to access this software and have access to all of the features of these additional digital tools.

Q: We already own a Chromebook that we would like to send to school with our child. What do we have to do?

We will have a process whereby:

- the Chromebook will be collected by the school and Technology Services staff from Wolf Creek will work on it to enroll it in our domain.
- In order to enroll the device, a \$50.00 license will need to be purchased via your school’s School Cash Account. Wolf Creek Technology Services will purchase this license on your behalf and apply it to your device as they enroll it in our domain.
- Your student’s Chromebook will be returned to them via their school.

Q: My student went to school in another division last year and their Chromebook was enrolled in this division’s domain. Does this mean it can be enrolled in Wolf Creek’s Google Apps domain because it already has a license?

No. Unfortunately these Chromebook licenses grant each device, not user, access to a single domain. Since your license is still tied to the old school division’s Google Apps domain, you will need to purchase a license to become enrolled in the Wolf Creek Google Apps Domain for \$50.00.

These are just some of the most frequently asked questions around the advantages of purchasing a Chromebook through Wolf Creek’s Parent Purchase Program and the expectations around Chromebooks purchased outside of this program which are being or will be used in Wolf Creek schools.

Please do not hesitate to talk to your school’s teacher, technology coach, or principal should you have further questions. We are extremely excited about the growing use of digital tools of modern literacy ,such as Chromebooks, in our schools. We are also excited about the support for these types of learning tools which is being demonstrated by our parents across Wolf Creek. Thank you for partnering with your student’s school and with Wolf Creek Public Schools as we bring “success for all learners” through this