

# Creating a culture of digital, personalized teaching and learning

Pennsylvania school district replaces desktops and shared laptop carts with Acer Chromebooks as part of a 1-to-1 program

**A** couple of years ago, Pennsbury School District in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was seeking to provide access to technology for its 10,500 students while creating a culture of digital, personalized teaching and learning.

To efficiently execute this initiative, Pennsbury needed to replace outdated desktop computers, shared laptop carts and existing infrastructure with a cost-effective solution as part of its move to a 1-to-1 district in grades kindergarten through 12.

Pennsbury decided Acer Chromebooks were the solution. Kevin Dorsey, director of technology for Pennsbury, says the district selected Acer Chromebooks after evaluating several products. Acer's build quality and robust customer service stood out from those of other vendors.

"Acer has been a true partner in our Chromebook deployment, not just a vendor," says Dorsey.

Acer Chromebooks are an adaptive tool for teachers to customize education for both individuals and groups of students. Teachers can also use them to provide a more personalized approach to academic content design, instruction and assessment for students, who use the Chromebooks as their tool for complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity and collaboration.

## Pilot and implementation

Brad McCormick, supervisor of educational technology for Pennsbury, led a three-month pilot program in middle school grades beginning in April 2015. Before getting Acer Chromebooks, McCormick's students used some older PC laptops and tablets that were not useful for curricular applications. The Chromebooks were a game-changing element for McCormick that made it easier to forge ahead with the districtwide 1-to-1 program.

"Once the Chromebook was in front of teachers, they knew they could use it every day and that it was reliable," says McCormick. "It allows me to change the way that I teach rather than going back to my old bag of tricks."

McCormick says the number of teachers using the Chromebooks has expanded from an initial group of 30 to 40 to as many as 350 on a daily basis. He says one con-



sistent piece of feedback from teachers is the efficiency of the Chromebooks. For instance, teachers no longer need to make 100 copies of a worksheet as they can now simply send students a link to a Google Doc, which saves time.

K5 students use Chromebooks only in the classroom, while in grades 6 through 12, students take home their devices each day. A total of 5,500 Acer Chromebooks were ordered, and students pay an annual insurance fee of \$40 each, with discounts and scholarships available for families who provide documentation of financial hardship. The insurance fee covers the cost of a shell case as well as battery support, accidental damage and routine repairs.

## Feedback and bottom-line benefit

Dorsey says Acer Chromebooks give students ubiquitous access to technology and provide teachers with tools to make sure that students stay on task.

"We have gotten rid of the haves and have-nots when it comes to technology," says Dorsey. "We leveled the playing field across the district, so we don't have teachers scrounging for technology and fighting over desktop computers or laptop carts."

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