

Updated with superintendent statement: Clinton education changing with the times

By Jan Gottesman

Posted Oct 25, 2019 at 3:01 AM | Updated Oct 25, 2019 at 12:03 PM

Editor's note: In light of the fire in a Chromebook distributed to a Sterling student from Monty Tech, Clinton School Superintendent Steven Meyer released this statement:

“Clinton Public Schools is aware of the incident which recently occurred with a Monty Tech chromebook. According to our research Monty Tech does use the same type of Chromebooks that Clinton Public Schools is using. However, based on our history with these devices, we have not experienced this type of device failure. Based on the information available regarding these devices, this type of incident is typically an isolated incident as a result of a malfunction of an individual device. That being said, our director of technology is sending an email to our students advising them to keep a close eye on their Chromebook and to immediately report any abnormal heating or physical expansion of their device. We will continue to monitor the situation and if there appears there is any pattern or demonstrated risk with these devices we will work with our supplier to rectify the situation.”

CLINTON - The world of work today's high school students will enter is much different than when their parents graduated.

Clinton voters funded a 1-1 Chromebook initiative at a recent town meeting.

Clinton High School Principal Scott Czermak and Mike McEachern said the investment in student education is paying off as curriculum is changing and going more paperless.

By having the U.S. History 1 and 2 teachers working to create the curriculum through open sources online, the schools were able to save the money put aside for textbooks. That money is being reserved in case the schools need it during the year. The schools were also able to put 269 Chromebooks in the hands of all

members of the Class of 2022 and 2023, plus English Language Learners and dual enrollment students (eighth-graders who take courses at the high school).

In a presentation to the School Committee on Monday, Oct. 21, Czermak and McEachern said in addition to history, environmental sciences, biology, English, health, Spanish 1, introduction to physics and accounting 1 and 2 are all using the Chromebooks in their classes and all teachers at the high school are using Google Classroom.

In another related - and a bit unforeseen - development, McEachern said the help-desk is being staffed by students, who can help with repairs and programming. Czermak said he was impressed by the knowledge of the students.

“We re going to try to get course credit in the future for this,” Czermak said.

The school is also working on an early college program. Juniors and seniors at Clinton High School can receive up to 12 college credits by taking classes through Quinsigamond Community College. The credits are transferrable to Mass. public colleges. The college approved Richard Quirk to teach the English classes and Ellen Welsh to teach economics. Students must take a placement test for admittance, but could take four classes (two half-year English and two-half-year accounting) classes for three credits each, Czermak explained.

If taken at the school, students would have to pay \$225-\$250; at Clinton High, the classes cost \$100 per student per course.

Superintendent Steven Meyer said that Title 4 federal funds could be used to make the classes free, or at least offer financial assistance. But, even if that doesn't work, “\$100 for a college course is incredible,” Meyer added. Courses at public colleges can cost close to \$500 each, he said.