To: Board of Trustees

From: C. Lewis, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: **September 2017 Technology Department Update**

Originator: K. Shipka, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Resources: K. Smith – Learning Services Supervisor

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board receive an update on the various projects and initiatives from the Technology Department.

UPDATE

Background:
In the 21st century, understanding and using technology will be an integral part of virtually every aspect of daily life. The GYPSD Technology Department strives to provide a solid infrastructure, agile access to a variety of devices, innovative and timely support to all students and staff while fostering a culture of citizenship in a digital age.

Staff
A. Bird is now working in the role of Education Technology Lead Teacher. She will spend a minimum of 85% of her time in classrooms working with teachers to support and enhance their instructional practices using technology.

Current composition of the team:
> K. Smith - Supervisor
> A. Bird - Lead Teacher, Educational Technology
> T. Cameron, Support Analyst
> H. Shearer - System Administrator
> H. Le - System Analyst
> L. Le - System Analyst
> J. Close - System Analyst
> B. Dick - System Analyst

Infrastructure
The 2016/2017 school year saw the upgrade of our firewall hardware and software at all of our GYPSD sites. This improved security measure will prevent unauthorized access to and from our private network. We now have increased granularity in allowing and blocking access for individual users. Each school within the division underwent a major upgrade to their CAT6 wiring and new access points were added in each building. In many cases, the school now has quadruple the access points they originally had. This upgrade will provide uninterrupted wireless access for staff and students.

GSuite Migration
GYPSD is now officially a GSuite division!! In the 2016/2017 school year we migrated over 5000 users (staff and students) from the Office 365 platform to the more educational friendly GSuite platform. Usage of cloud based computing and collaborative tools has increased significantly within the division since the migration.

Citizenship in a digital age
Grande Yellowhead Public School Division #77 is committed to providing anywhere/anytime learning opportunities and it is critical that GYPSD teachers and students are familiar with the responsibilities of being digitally connected citizens. In consultation with the Learning Technology Advisory Committee AP 354 along with Appendix A was created. This AP is focused on helping staff and students understand their responsibility to be good citizens in a digital age.

GYPSD has subscribed to MediaSmarts which provides online, interactive tools that support the health curriculum from K-12 and teach students about digital citizenship. Teachers have access to weekly lessons to help support students to become responsible technology users.

Digital Library
An exciting project our department has been working on and will roll out this school year is the implementation of our Digital Lending Library, which will be available to all schools. Given the expansive selection of technological tools and the associated costs, the technology team will do the research and purchase the digital resources making it easy for schools to access and use them in their daily instruction. The department has acquired (and will continue to build) a variety of digital technologies that will provide innovative, relevant and meaningful tools that teachers can incorporate into their lessons.

Makerspaces
Makerspaces can have a significant impact on student learning. The New Media Consortium (NMC) /Horizon Report has identified makerspaces as one of the six important developments in educational technology for K-12 education. Similar to the Digital Library, the technology department is going to support the creation and use of makerspaces in each of our school sites. A "home base" of materials will be collected, purchased and stored centrally and taken to school as required. The Ed Tech lead teacher will work with staff at each school to effectively incorporate the use of makerspaces in their classroom routines.

Google Summit
The coup de gras of the technology department's work will be showcased with this year's Summit on the Summit. A world class Google training event will take place in our school division for all staff. On October 19, staff will have the opportunity to participate in either Level 1 or 2 Certification, October 20 (Institute Day) will bring all support staff to Hinton and teaching staff to Jasper to participate in GSuite training specific to their areas of work. October 21 all staff have the option to participate in additional day of training. On October 22, Google Earth will be hosting an outdoor education quest using Google Maps, which is free to any interested staff.

Conclusion:
That the Board of Trustees receive an update on the progress of the information and educational technology in Grande Yellowhead Public School Division.