

Good Evening

My name is Debbie Wilson, and I am one of the Technicians in the district. I am here tonight to speak on behalf of the CUPE staff of our department including Technicians, BCeSiS Specialists and a Help Desk Coordinator. The Help Desk and the Technicians are the first contact from all staff members when there is a problem.

With the purposed cuts to our department we feel you should know the following services that we support and what the impact could be from the 2014/2015 proposed budget.

Our Department supports 17,000 staff and students, over 12,000 devices at 32 locations across the district.

Four years ago the School District developed a strategic plan to encompass IT from 2012 through to 2015 called "Support Learning for Tomorrow." It included programs that are in the schools today such as:

- One-to-One Inquiry Program
- Grade 3-4 Reading Fluency Program (iPod Reading project)
- District Smart Board Program/Apple TV
- Laptops for classrooms and computer labs
- 1,100 teacher laptops in the system that our department currently supports.

The success of these implemented programs are seeing great results for students.

For example:

The Grade 3-4 Reading Fluency Program currently has 35 classes throughout the district each student provided with an iPod Touch or iPad mini. 100% of the students are meeting provincial reading expectations directly attributed to the devices used in this program. These devices require training, support, and maintenance, all of which filters down to the IT department. A similar initiative called The One-to-One Inquiry Program has 45 grade 6-7 classes throughout the district, whereby each student uses a laptop or iPad. This program focuses on inquiry based learning to teach higher thinking skills. Without ongoing technical support, training and repair for the teachers and students' equipment, the educational future of our students may be impacted.

We have invested in a wireless infrastructure that is consistent across our schools so that you can go from school to school in the district and receive the same level of access. We have increased wireless density to support more and more students either using District laptops and iPads or bringing their own devices. Without the staffing, bandwidth and network resources to support this, what could Technology in the Classroom look like in the future? Who would ultimately suffer from the potential disruption or loss of these services?

As equipment becomes older and cannot be replaced or software becomes outdated, more breakdowns and the cost of the repairs will be increased. Without staff to perform the repairs or updates, how long will it take to get systems and programs up and running again?

Learning doesn't take a break just because technology does.