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SKSD needs \$2.8 million in 2026 to replace Chromebooks

By Elisha Meyer Port Orchard Independent • January 25, 2023 1:30 am



While a cheaper option than most, the popularity of Chromebooks in student learning could cost the South Kitsap School District millions of dollars for replacements in coming years.

Since 2017, Chromebooks have become commonplace in SK schools through the 1:1 device initiative. The cheap design and easy-to-work-with setup make it an ideal choice for technology in classrooms.

However, director of information technology services Derry Lyons said one of the biggest disadvantages is a short lifespan.

“Chromebooks have what I would call a hard stop expiration on them,” he said. “So, Chrome and the ChromeOS says, as of ‘this date’, this device will no longer work.”

The expiration date becomes an even bigger problem when considering online state testing. Lyons said the state schools chief office claims that unsupported Chromebooks will not work for tests such as the Smarter Balanced Assessments.

“So we’ll get through the testing season in 2025-26, but once we get to the summer of 2026, we’re going to have to figure out what we’re going to do with funding moving forward,” he said.

Lyons reported this projected “big kick” in front of the SKSD board Jan. 18. The district will need to replace roughly 9,483 Chromebooks in 2026, an expected cost of over \$2.8 million.

“I feel bad about this because I really wish this could be spread” out over a longer period of time, Lyons said.

He added that inflation and the need for more Chromebooks and replacement parts could increase that cost estimate.

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