

## Q & A Responses to Parental Concerns Raised in BYOx Survey

During the recent BYOx survey, a number of concerns were raised which were the result of several misunderstandings. This document will hopefully clarify any misconceptions.

### Question:

***"I would be very annoyed if people were forced to enter eg. An iPad scheme for \$1350 if the family could just send their existing one along."***

### Response:

Wavell State High School is currently investigating the development of a new, sustainable model to provide students with access to computers, internet, software and printers through a partnership with parents/guardians. No parent/guardian will be "forced" to join this program.

The BYOx program is being designed to enable students to bring to school a privately owned computing device that meets certain minimum specifications to enable the device to connect to the school network and access resources such as licensed software, internet and school printing devices. The cost structures are yet to be determined for any device provided by the school for students to take home to use but will be based on a three year period and will include components related to insurance, warranty, software and technical support.

### Question:

***"Given that most kids have their own devices at home, surely technology + free programmes on internet has progressed that they can access school stuff by using what most kids already have at home? Why does everything always cost so much? "***

### Response:

At Wavell State High School we use quality software that has been endorsed by industry or education as of the highest standard for educational use. A number of our senior subjects require access to special software. As this software is very expensive to purchase from a retail outlet for individual use, we have licencing arrangements in place with software manufacturers that enables us to provide the software for student use on school owned devices throughout the school. With the BYOx program, much of this licenced software will be available for students to use outside of school hours, depending on the licence conditions.

### Question:

***"Cost is a major factor that affects our family as we are on a very low income. We want the best for all of our children and support this program, however costs need to be manageable for us. "***

***"It just needs to be affordable and available for all students so no one is disadvantaged."***

### Response:

Wavell State High School recognises that not all parents are in a position to fund the technology requirements for a BYOx program and is seeking to develop, in consultation with the school community, an equity plan to ensure all students will have access to an appropriate level of technology.

**Question:**

***“I don't believe this (BYOx program) is required.”***

**Response:**

As educators, Wavell State High School staff feel they have a responsibility and a unique opportunity to investigate the challenges and work on solutions to make BYOx a manageable option for students.

A successful BYOx model should provide students with outcomes that include:

- improved student learning outcomes through the use of technology that facilitates learning
- students developing and maturing as digital citizens – embracing digital opportunities and responsibilities
- normalising technology use between the school and home
- greater autonomy in the classroom
- improved motivation and increased engagement
- increased comfort and confidence using a familiar device students can use for learning immediately
- opportunities to collaborate on projects with students from other schools
- using technology that is appealing at home that can also be appealing and interesting in the classroom
- rapid development of technological skills for increased future employability.

**Question:**

***“I 100% support using a device to enhance education outcomes. It could benefit many students. Would be good if the text books could be downloaded. Many schools are already using devices.”***

**Response:**

Education Queensland has been in negotiation with several textbook publishers to come up with a cost effective solution. At present, we receive one individual licence every time we purchase one textbook. No cost effective site licencing solution currently exists. The costs for access to online curriculum resources would continue to be met through the Resource Hire Scheme.

**Question:**

***“I think the school should choose a device and all kids then have the same device. My opinion is the school does a deal with a particular supplier to get the best price and we purchase through the school, that way everything is equal.”***

Schools are able to align recommendations made to the community with devices on the Queensland Government preferred supplier arrangement list (QGCP0 861-12). However, the cost savings from a bulk procurement arrangement **will not** be allowed to be passed on to parents.

**Question:**

***“Just wondering about transporting to and from school as bags are so full and heavy now. Where would they go once at school? I would be concerned about theft and breakage.”***

***“The BYOx program potentially will result in students having to carry a device in addition to their bag of books, lunch boxes and for some footy or sports gear. The school does not provide lockers to support students in this regard. Some thought should be given to the amount of weight they are expected to carry to school on a daily basis.”***

**Response:**

Wavell State High School is very conscious of the combined weight of student equipment being brought to school in their school bag. Ergonomic, Health and Safety issues and the weight of a BYOx device(s) are recognised and will be addressed within the scope of this program. We are also looking into issues such as storage; security of device while being brought to school, while at school; and while on the way from school; and battery life.

**Question:**

***“Would the \$250 resource levy be abolished?”***

**Response:**

NO. The resource levy exists for students to be able to access a range of resources including textbooks, printed resources, elective subject resources such as; music equipment, sporting equipment, Home Economic machines, industrial technology tools and equipment, computer network infrastructure, library resources, school planners and calendars and a range of other learning resources used in classroom. This is a very cost effective way to provide a well-resourced curriculum. The costs associated with any online text resources downloaded to BYOx would also need to be met by this scheme.

**Question:**

***“I am sure the Australian Government in their election promises stated that each student will receive a computer to do their school work on, I haven’t seen one yet, but have other parents from other schools whose children have received a laptop to use. Where does the funding go if Wavell High School isn’t using the government funding for supplying computers? I have 3 kids, I can’t afford \$3000 or more for computers, I can get a basic one for around \$500 at any supplier. I do not support BYO devices. They get stolen, broken and or lost. The school should supply all classrooms with basic computing capabilities especially in this day and age.”***

***“I thought it was being offered to students in year 11 & 12 already and yet not one of my children have been offered this availability.”***

***“This was a program that was implemented by the state government years ago where schools were supplied funds for each child to provide with a laptop in particular grads. For some unknown reason Wavell chose to spend that funding of other resources and now we are expected to pay for it.”***

**Response:**

The previous Federal Labour Government provided funding to all secondary schools through the National Secondary Schools Computer Fund (NSSCF) to provide all students in Year 9 – 12 with **access** to a computer device (desktop or laptop) while at school. This funding has now been withdrawn. Schools will now be required to develop innovative programs to provide sustainable access to computers for all students into the future.

With the NSSCF funding, some schools implemented a take home program for their students. The parents who decided to engage in this program were required to pay a levy for additional services (In other schools this levy ranged from \$200 to \$600 per year depending on the software and support provided). Wavell State High School used our NSSCF funding allocation to provide students at our school with laptop computers and desktop computers. These computers/laptops are located throughout the school so that all of our students and not just students in Years 9 – 12, have access to a computer device. This decision was taken following surveying parents and receiving overwhelming feedback that most parents were unwilling to pay the additional levy.

A retailer may sell a basic computer for what appears to be an attractive price. However, this device is a personal use device and has a limited warranty for 1 year. Any "extended warranty" will generally have conditions imposed. It is not built as an enterprise device which is more robust and is designed for the type of "use" which students in a school can subject a device to. These devices also carry no insurance. There is generally no after sales service attached to these devices and no "technical support available". If the device requires servicing it will be sent away for weeks at a time and no loaner device will be provided by the retailer. Once a retailer has made a sale, many really do not want to know you.