

OUR VIEW

Local district will answer questions about laptops

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By Kelcie Moseley, for the editorial board |

It looks like a local school district will be a guinea pig this fall for the Students Come First initiative put forward by Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna.

The Idaho Department of Education named Genesee School District among 32 others across the state to receive the laptops, after 170 high schools applied and were blindly rated by a committee. That gives Latah County a decided advantage in the implementation process of the 1:1 initiative, because it allows for some technical questions to be answered. Giving taxpayer-funded, expensive electronics to teenagers shouldn't happen without shedding light on some details.



"The Genesee School District is excited to be one of the first districts to receive the 1:1 laptop devices," Superintendent Wendy Moore said in a prepared statement. "We believe this initiative will help bring greater educational opportunities for our students and help raise academic achievement. We are very grateful for this opportunity to invest in our future - our students."

That sounds great, but how will it help raise academic achievement? What is the plan for utilizing these electronics to their highest potential? What kind of safeguards will be put in place to prevent students from having "technical difficulties" in completing their homework, or "accidentally" spilling Mom's coffee on the keyboard? Teachers and administrators will be the first to receive the laptops before they are given to students in 2013, so now is the perfect time to have these conversations and communicate with the public.

We encourage Genesee School District to be open and transparent in this process.

We also hope they will be vigilant about potential problems with the laptops and their future in Idaho schools. Be a leader for the rest of the schools who weren't picked, and help make the process easier in the future.

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