



**TEACHERS PLAN FOR WIRELESS OPPORTUNITIES.** . . High school teachers are ready to cut loose with new learning techniques as soon as enough laptops can be purchased.

Three laptops were bought this summer bringing the total available to 15. The goal is to have at least 10 more so an entire classroom of students can utilize the technology. The building is wireless-ready and teachers are anxious to incorporate their ideas. From online visual labs during science classes to endless research outlets for English papers, wireless technology can greatly enhance learning opportunities for every St. John's student.

Senior religion teacher Kim Honigford can't wait for the day when her senior religion students can complete their Discernment Project without the extra duty of finding time when the computer lab is available.

"For the seniors to complete their projects they must find time when class isn't being held in the computer lab. With laptops, students could work on the PowerPoint project in religion class," Honigford said.

Ideas on how the technology could enhance learning abound. Here are more ideas from the teachers:

Band – Laptop computers in the music theory class would allow students to do their music writing and band arranging at their own computer. Currently, they share a 15-year-old desktop computer to complete their assignments.

Foreign languages – Students could play vocabulary and grammar games and take practice quizzes online. They could do research for cultural projects and produce PowerPoint presentations. Software allowing students to take aural exams and online chapter tests is already in hand but hasn't been used due to the lack of computers.

English – Last year, freshmen had to do a research project on a specific topic from the Holocaust and a comparable topic from modern times. Special arrangements had to be made so the English class could trade locations with the class in the lab so computers could be used.

Laptops would allow for more days of research at a time instead of just one period.

Students in American Literature could research authors and Periods (Romantic Period or Transcendentalism). Students could also find additional information online, such as finding facts about Typhoid Fever while reading *Angela's Ashes* or researching segregation issues while analyzing Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech.

Music – Music classes would benefit from laptops by studying about music technology and composition. There also are many computer programs available for teaching music.

Religion – Students could research many different topics: patron saints, world religions, social justice topics, scripture topics, etc. They would be able to do the research and write reports in class.

Health – Students would be able to do research on a variety of topics and have up-to-date information (even new textbooks are dated). We could also install a program so students could check their eating habits and learn the importance of proper nutrition.

Using laptops instead of the computer lab allows for more opportunities for teachers and students. First, the computer lab is being used for class during much of the school day and is unavailable to teachers of other courses to use the technology. When the room is available, time is lost bringing students from their classroom to the lab. Finally, having laptops allows for more group work and encourages students to capitalize on all educational resources on any given topic instead of the teacher being the sole source.

The wireless technology also offers students the ability to develop skills they will undoubtedly need in most college or professional settings.

Technology and educational grants are being researched to find funds to pay for the laptops. Until then, teachers will continue to plan for ways to enhance and diversify the learning opportunities available in the high school.

If any alumni are interested in this project, please contact Sue at - [mgerker@woh.rr.com](mailto:mgerker@woh.rr.com)