

Information Technology at Emmaus Catholic Primary School

Gateways to Learning

In striving to support the development of students to become self-directed learners, Emmaus has always approached learning through three gateways:-

- Creative use of physical space
- Creative deployment of all personnel
- Creative use of learning technologies

In regard to the third of these gateways, Emmaus operates with high levels of information technology being used to support student learning. As students progress through the years at Emmaus their use of technology supports their own capacity to be creative, to innovate, to collaborate, to communicate and to organize.

Emmaus this year has achieved a considerable milestone with recognition as an Apple Distinguished School. This recognizes the high level of teacher expertise and student practice in the use of information technology to support quality learning and teaching. Emmaus is one of only five Apple Distinguished Schools in Australia. This gives us confidence that we are providing the students of Emmaus with a future focused learning environment.

The third of our gateways brings with it the considerable challenge of maintaining appropriate hardware, software, Wi-Fi infrastructure, program and technical support. Maintaining the daily use of in excess of 400 devices in the most effective manner does come at a cost.

In the past Emmaus has used a combination of its own cash reserves and borrowed funds to build the required hardware and infrastructure required for an effective information platform. As these requirements continue to grow there is a need to implement a sustainable funding source for these needs.

IT Levy

Through the budgeting process we have separated staff IT costs from student IT costs. We have then made a budget allocation to share the IT maintenance costs and divided the remaining costs on a per student basis. Costs for Year 5 & 6 students vary from other year levels given the fact that they purchase their own iPad. The cost for Foundation students has been reduced to reflect the ratio of devices per student in operation at this level.

The final costs stand at:

Foundation - \$135 per student per annum (Weekly cost \$3.37)

Years 1 – 4 - \$180 per student per annum (Weekly cost \$4.50)

Years 5 & 6 - \$100 per student per annum (Weekly cost \$2.50)

The final costs cover all elements of the student learning program: devices, applications and software, Wi-Fi infrastructure and technical support.

Rather than purchasing machines outright, this approach involves entering into a plan to lease all IT hardware. Leasing reduces the overall cost as Apple will buy back machines at the end of the lease.

In addition to the sharing of the direct device maintenance costs, the levy comprises-

- The introduction of Logitech iPad Crayons
- Classroom sets of iPad keyboards for the senior students



EMMAUS
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

1503 Geelong Road, Mt Clear
PO Box 41, Mt Clear, 3350
Tel: 5330 2266 Fax: 5330 2422

Email: admin@emtclear.catholic.edu.au

ABN: 65 524 478 945

- Apple device management program per device, which will enable the delivery of Apps and upgrades in a timely and effective manner.
- The provision of staff iPads to enable the staff to model and deliver the programs and applications to students.
- The two-year lease of 6th Generation student iPads
- An upgrade of iPad covers to ensure greater protection which guarantees a greater buy-back price.

The levy includes the deduction of the buyback price of our current devices, and further deductions carried by the school.

In total, Emmaus has budgeted to expend \$144,700 in 2019 to enable the use of information technology in support of student learning. Drawing from within the budget the school is able to cover \$95,800 of this total cost leaving \$48,900 of the student related IT costs to be covered through the IT Levy.

In Conclusion

As stated in the letter re Fees and Charges, the decision to introduce this levy has not been taken lightly.

We have approached the Catholic Education Office of Ballarat to alert them to the high level of cost involved if we are to maintain what is exemplary practice in this area. Like ourselves, the Catholic Education Office relies on Government funding streams to fund schools. Our request is that there is advocacy on the behalf of schools to build the 'education nation' that governments like to espouse.

Beyond the introduction of a specific levy or an increase in funding levels provided to schools there are only two options open to us - building cash reserves locally through the trimming of other budgeted costs and applying this to the IT Levy or increasing the level of fundraising that the school raises and applying this to the IT Levy.

On an annual basis, these options will need to be considered and the final costs applied to the IT Levy determined.

I am happy to meet to discuss the reasoning for this levy or your own capacity to meet these costs should you wish to do so.

Yours sincerely

TONY PERKINS
EMMAUS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

"A School of Faith, Hope & Love"