September, 2012

1:1 iPads 4 Learning at MLC Parent Update Year 6 and 7

Dear Parents/Guardian,

This is an update for our Middle Years 1:1 iPad program, like in previous correspondence, we would like to thank you as parents/guardians for your continued and overwhelming support. 1:1 iPad program can only be successful through high support from families and students.

It has been great from an ICT Leaders point of view to see the students using their devices as tools to assist with their learning. Students have continued to demonstrate their learning through developing new concepts with the assistance of their iPad device and as their teachers will attest, it has certainly been great to witness.

As students are using their 'own' devices through the BYOD model that we are running, it is imperative that there is a key focus of trust between families and the college in relation to students using their own iPad's. As already mentioned we have received a great number of queries from parents and guardians as to how the devices are being used and I encourage this to continue.

Please feel free to touch base with your child’s teacher to seek feedback, not only about your child’s learning but also how they are using their devices in learning and teaching context.

Like before, we as a college ask that you as parents/guardians monitor your student’s iPad regularly for inappropriate content. This can come in the form of inappropriate applications, music, movies and images. It is important that you are aware of what your students are doing on their device, especially whilst not at the college. Although not in large numbers, we have had concerns raised with students constantly using applications such as Skype, iMessage, Facebook and a number of other Social Media based apps to converse with friends outside school hours. The only permanent solutions to these issues include you as the parent ensuring that these applications are either not installed, WiFi access is restricted, and / or your child loose iPad privileges.

We have continued to encounter students using applications in class that we as a college deem inappropriate, such as games that contain adult content and violence. If students are witnessed playing these games in class at any stage throughout the day, students will be spoken to and have that particular application deleted. Parents will then be notified of the student’s behaviour.

Recently, we have noticed an increase in the number of damaged iPad’s. The large majority of these being cracked glass screens, generally, a broken iPad screen will warrant a replacement of that device however we have worked with our Mac Supplier / Repairers to where we can now have screen replaced for a nominal fee. The down side to this is that it will void warranty as well as their being a large turnaround time to have this repaired. Parents need to ensure that students are looking after their technology to ensure these types of breakages do not occur. Cases need to be on the device at all times and although they are strong and can take quite a knock, they still break and crack.
We have also noticed that there are students within years 6 and 7 who still do not have the required applications necessary to assist their learning. This is disappointing as all students who paid their books and requisites received a $50 iTunes card to purchase the required apps. We would appreciate it if parents ensured that the apps needed are installed. The app lists are available on our Blog, linked below.

In 2013 we will be implementing for the first time iPad management software known as ‘Casper Suite’. This will allow us as a College to do a host of things in relation to managing IOS devices wirelessly.

These include:
- Creating inventory’s of what applications students have installed.
- Distribute applications
- Manage settings on individual devices, such as locking out wireless access.
- Send out messages and notifications
- Identify Jail broken devices.

Once up and running, we will be sure to showcase this software to you.

In relation to the instalments for parents who have purchased the iPad’s through the college, payment is now over due, can you please ensure payment is made as soon as possible, if not made already.

Lastly, our college’s reputation of running effective a 1:1 iPad Program has been gaining steady momentum. Students involved in the 1:1 program are making it the successful venture that it is and the work that they are producing has been of a very high quality. We are having visits weekly from schools and colleges from across the state to see just how our teachers are using iPad’s to assist student learning and how students have been creating outstanding work to demonstrate and reflect what they have learnt.

Remember that our 1:1 iPad Blog is up and running and a lot of what we do gets posted for all to see so that we can share our journey with others and learn from the feedback that we receive. The link to this is: http://ipads4learning.global2.vic.edu.au/

If you have any questions or quires please contact your child classroom teacher or Corrie Barclay via the College office on 9741 4202.

Thank you,

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