

# Rome City Schools looking to get more Chromebooks

Spencer Lahr Aug 8, 2017 Updated Aug 8, 2017



If the Rome Board of Education approves purchasing 600 Chromebooks for second-graders this evening, then the school system would be one step closer to achieving a goal of equipping each student with their own device.

The monthly meeting will be held in the boardroom at the system's central office at 508 E. Second St., starting at 5:45 p.m. Caucus will begin at 5 p.m. in Rome City Schools Superintendent Lou Byars' office.

Byars said the Chromebooks will run the system about \$200,000, which would be covered by funds collected from the current education local option sales tax.



All students in third grade through 12th grade already have Chromebooks, but that one-to-one ratio has yet to completely reach down into second grade to kindergarten — some schools, through purchases of their own or with help from a Parent Teacher Organization, have gotten a handful of the laptops for these lower grades, Byars said.

By the end of this school year, the system hopes to complete the one-to-one push.

Byars said having the Chromebooks for second-graders means they have one full year of getting acquainted with the devices before they have to take the Georgia Milestones tests online. He said the system doesn't want the tests being an assessment on how well kids know how to use a computer.

The board will also look to approve a construction manager at-risk — the person who oversees the building process and helps the system put together bid packages for subcontractors — for the project of building a new Main Elementary School, estimated to cost between \$10 million and \$11 million.

The system received three proposals for the project. Funding from a new ELOST would be put toward the project.

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Byars said getting a construction manager in place allows the system to hit the ground running if voters approve another five years of ELOST collections in November, and stay on schedule for finishing the project by fall 2019.

Also related to a new Main Elementary, a request for site approval will be up for approval by the board. The site for the school must get the go-ahead by the state Department of Education.

The board will also be presented the enrollment numbers for the first weeks of school. Enrollment at the high school and middle school are up, Byars said, and the number of students at elementary schools is down. Overall, the system has seen right around 6,000 in school, about where it was last year at this time.

However, the system generally adds about 250 students by the start of September, and after that, enrollment begins to level out, Byars said.

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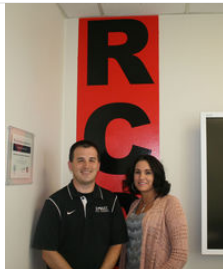
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