

## **Raymond High School Completes "A Computer in Every Backpack" Program**

### **Local News**

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Raymond Senior High School began issuing computers to every freshman in 2007, with the goal of every student having a computer by 2010. In fact, the school will meet that goal one year early; every high school student will receive his or her computer in time for the 2009 school year. Dr. Steve Holland, superintendent of the district, expressed his satisfaction with the program and the ability to support each high school student's technology needs ahead of schedule. "As we saw how the students who had laptops benefited from this tool, it became imperative to do everything we could to implement the program as quickly as possible," said Holland. "We found that by making use of some existing lab computers and buying just a few more than we normally would, we could both stay within our budget and meet all of our computer needs." The school has enough laptops for every 9th-12th-grade student, plus a few extra. "We anticipate that we will have a few students who are new to our school and we want to make sure we can take care of them as well," stated Dr. Holland.

The laptops are managed by the district technology specialist, Mr. Scott Martinsen. According to Martinsen, these machines are "state of the art." "They read and write to CD and DVD, they include wireless networking and they have a built-in camera." The computers have software that will allow students to write, read electronic textbooks, create multimedia presentations and access the Internet. The machines are also loaded with "LoJack" technology that allows any machine that "goes missing" to be tracked. The district emphasizes that these are tools to improve learning. According to Dr. Holland, "We want the students to learn to use the tools of the current century, not the previous one. It's the equivalent of my high school ensuring that I had the opportunity to take drivers education instead of teaching me how to ride a horse. These machines are not luxuries but necessary tools our students will use to successfully compete and thrive in our current reality." In the two years that the school has been issuing laptops to students, teachers report that both researching and writing skills have improved. Rather than having to take the entire class to the library to do research, a teacher can allow students to remain in the classroom to research, write, edit or complete whichever portion of the assignment they are currently working on. It is much simpler for students to have their individual needs met when they do not have to learn in lock-step to every other student in the class. Students will begin picking up their laptops during the week of 17 August. They should as call the district office as soon as possible (942-3415) to make an appointment. The annual tech fee of \$55 will be due at that time. All students will be issued a laptop; however, they will not be allowed to take their laptop home until the tech fee is paid.