Dear Parents and Guardians,

As the holiday season nears, you may be considering purchasing a computing device for your child. A variety of products including netbooks, tablets, smartphones, and e-book readers are available and offer many powerful tools for you to choose from.

As you know, we have been encouraging students to bring their own device to school as part of our Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program, http://www.fcps.edu/it/byod/index.shtml. Although Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) does not require students to purchase their own devices, if you are considering purchasing a device that your child could use during the school day or at home, please review the specifications listed below.

While we cannot recommend specific models or devices, we encourage you to buy a product that includes these features to ensure your child has the greatest possible access to the educational resources that will support and enhance their learning. You might wish to bring the list below into the store and ask the salesperson if the device, you are considering, meets these specifications.

**Recommended Specifications for Student Devices**

- wireless networking capability using 802.11g or n (the district provides filtered wireless access in all buildings for students bringing a device)
- a color screen
- an on screen or external keyboard or other means of entering text
- an audio-out port and earbuds or headphones
- a minimum 4 hours of use from one battery charge
- the ability to run a full functioning, recent web browser (Firefox, Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Safari) that will allow it to access Google Apps for Education tools and other learning resources provided by FCPS
- a virus protection program (for computers running a Windows or Macintosh computer operating system)

You may also wish to consider these features:

- a camera that takes both still photos and video (front and rear cameras are most versatile)
- a microphone
- productivity software (word processing, drawing, spreadsheet tools) that can be used when an Internet connection is not available
- the capacity to run graphing calculator software

In addition to all of the retailer incentives and promotions this holiday season, FCPS has partnered with Dell, HP, and Microsoft to provide discounted devices and software for all students in FCPS. You can access more information at our Technology@Home site, http://www.fcps.edu/it/technology/TechnologyHome.shtml

Whether writing a paper, solving math problems, researching a topic, or collaborating with fellow students, portable technology can help your child better complete his or her school work and assist them in developing skills that will prepare them for their future.