



December 20, 2011

Dear Mercy Parents/Guardians,

We are pleased to announce the following update and “reboot” of our instructional technology plan called **Mercy 2.0**. The plan evolved after months of surveys, focus groups, research, and reflection on behalf of Mercy’s Administration Team. After seven years of our current tech program, we recognized that Mercy needs to continue to move forward. **Mercy 2.0** is designed to keep us on the cutting edge of innovation and to position us optimally in a rapidly changing environment. All stakeholders have been represented in the decision making process and we felt it was imperative that you receive this information from us before the holidays.

After carefully weighing options, it was decided that beginning the 2012-2013 school year, Mercy will change to iPad and Google Apps technology.

Some of the advantages follow:

1. The iPad functions fall more in line with usage than our current device. In addition, the iPad reflects the major trends in computing: touch; mobility; cloud.
2. We recognize the current economic climate and feel the cost of a Mercy education should be measurably reduced for incoming students by the purchase of this device.
3. Our Wi-Fi system can accommodate the current tablet PC’s and the iPad, immediately. We expect that the students will need little time “learning” how to use the device.
4. The iPad is light, has a battery life that will last through our school day, and boots up/shuts down almost instantly.
5. The change to the iPad and the transfer of Moodle and Power School to the “cloud” means that a currently vacant IT Department position can be eliminated providing additional cost savings to the school.

Please note the following features of the **Mercy 2.0** rollout plan:

- Next year’s incoming ninth graders will be required to purchase a preformatted Mercy iPad. The specific model with warranties and applications (Apps) is in the process of being determined. We ask that you not purchase an iPad for your daughter to use at Mercy until further details are provided from our IT Department.
- All teaching staff will be provided with an iPad and maintain their HP Tablet.

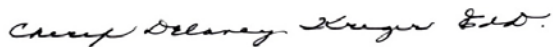
- Students who currently own an HP Tablet will have the choice to continue to use it or to purchase an iPad. Students who wish to switch to the iPad will be offered a buy back discount on their current HP Laptop toward the purchase of an iPad.
- Mercy will support a “mixed environment” of iPads and HP tablets for at least three academic years.
- We will be moving students from Microsoft Office to Google Apps, and as a school we will move to Gmail. The price is right (free) and Google Apps work across platforms.

We are very excited about all of these changes and even the challenges they bring. Many of the details are still “in process.” We will keep you informed and included in the process as the implementation unfolds. We expect our “reboot” to benefit all students regardless of device. We hope you share our excitement for ***Mercy 2.0***.

Again, you are asked to please wait for specific information before you act. No students should buy an iPad on their own for school use. We are finalizing plans and will inform you as soon as they are complete.

Thank you ahead of time for your efforts to make this successful.

In Mercy,



Cheryl Delaney Kreger, Ed.D. '66

President



Mrs. Carolyn Behringer Witte '67

Principal

Mercy 2.0 iPad FAQs for Parents

Can I go buy an iPad for my daughter from the Apple Store or from the Apple website?

No. iPads for the 2012-13 school year will be purchased directly from Mercy. They will be preloaded with many of the software apps that students will need to start the school year. The standard Mercy iPad package will also include an extra year warranty and will also be discounted from the retail price. Recommended accessories will also be available for one stop shopping. Further information on when and how you will be able to order an iPad will be forthcoming.

I have a daughter who is already a student at Mercy and I paid a lot of money for her HP laptop; how will this affect us?

The students who currently own an HP Tablet will have the choice to continue to use it or to purchase an iPad. Students who wish to switch to the iPad for the 2012-13 school year will be offered a buy back discount on their current HP Laptop toward the purchase of an iPad. Further information on the discount will be released as we draw closer to the end of the school year. Support for HP laptops will remain in place at Mercy until all students who own them graduate.

How much will the Mercy iPad cost?

The base model price of the Apple iPad is \$499 through most retail channels. Once the discounts that Mercy can pass along to families and any added cost for extra year warranty and software are added in, we expect the total cost to be in the \$500-\$600 range before any accessories.

Why is Mercy switching to the iPad?

There has been a dramatic shift in the personal computer world away from the standard laptop to even more mobile devices. Accompanying this shift has been a move away from machines that have large storage capacity and computing power to devices that connect to the cloud for storage and computing power. These shifts, paired with a decrease in price to our parents, were key factors in the decision to move to the iPad. Recognizing these trends, officials from Mercy started researching the best way forward through surveys, focus groups and discussions with parents, students, teaching staff and outside partners. We evaluated several similar devices from different manufacturers. The widespread adoption of the Apple iPad by thousands of schools across the country and the relative maturity of the device and its platform were keys in the decision to go with the iPad.

How will this change my daughter's education experience at Mercy?

Mercy has been in the forefront of integrating technology into their curriculum for many years. In the six years that Mercy has had a 1:1 computing environment there have been dramatic shifts in many classrooms in how subject matter is learned. These shifts have allowed our teaching staff to accommodate many learning styles and pedagogies to further enrich our students' learning experience. We expect this to continue regardless of the device we use. Our teaching staff will receive specialized training and will be ready to maximize the potential of the iPad once the new school year begins.