An Investment in the Future:
Our Journey Toward a Vision for Technology Use

Rapid changes to our global world are driven by technology. Technology is at the core of nearly everything that we do and is deeply infused in our daily lives. Our students come to school with a working knowledge of the internet, search engines, hand-held electronic devices, gaming, robotics, social media and more. Our students have immediate access to information and can share their ideas instantaneously with anyone on the planet. Technology has opened the entire world to all of us and, at the same time, has provided an unlimited set of effective and engaging learning resources for teachers and students.

The story is quite different in our schools. When teachers want to use computing devices, they must schedule a time in the computer lab or reserve and arrange for the delivery of a laptop cart. Why? It's simple - the bold steps necessary to fully integrate technology into our instructional program have not been taken. Fear of economic realities and a hesitancy to take entrepreneurial risks are the obstacles. In spite of these challenges, we have a vision where technology is fully available and assimilated, where we take complete advantage of the potential for technology to personalize instruction and assessment and engage students in rigorous and relevant content. Technology will allow us to democratically and collaboratively participate in the generation of solutions to classroom, school, community, regional, national, and global problems. Students will use technology as a tool to problem solve and think critically about issues that will face their generation and generations to come.

We're about to embark on a journey to truly provide our students with the new skills that they will need for the careers of the future. Looking ahead, our schools may look different. Learning will not be confined to the classroom, the school, or the school day. Instruction will be available at any time and at any place; the opportunities for learning will be limitless and vast. At the same time, we know the importance of human interaction and are convinced that technology will never replace a highly effective and resourceful teacher.

Our journey began when Chariho School Committee Member Georgia Ure challenged us to find ways to use a computing device to lessen the weight of books in backpacks. From this challenge grew *Chariho 1:1*, with a framework developed by nearly forty school committee members, school and district leaders, teachers, support personnel, parents, community members, and students. Separate Device Selection Committees and Policy Development Committees have provided valuable guidance to our work; more collaborative work will be required in the future as we re-invent ourselves.

Through this process, we've learned plenty. We know that we will need to be flexible, resourceful, and supportive as we implement this transformational initiative. We know that reliable, available, and current technology will be as important as the professional learning opportunities that we provide to our faculty. We know that our students will need to be responsible consumers of technology. We know that we will need to make difficult budgetary decisions. At the end of our trip, our bold investment will pay off in ways that we can't imagine today. Yet, we will be fully confident that our students will be well-served and prepared for their world.

For more information and to track our progress, visit http://www.chariho.k12.ri.us/1to1.