

# Hathaway and Pacheco schools in New Bedford to get technology upgrades

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The wish list includes an iPad Cart, laptops for teachers, desktop computers in each classroom, education software, and a new computer lab. By CAROL KOZMA

NEW BEDFORD — The 26 computers inside the Carlos Pacheco Elementary School computer lab aren't state of the art equipment anymore.

The computers in the lab "turn on most of the time," joked Principal Lisa Yates. "Most of the computers in the building are so old that they have floppy drives."

But the school's technology is getting a makeover.

The Carlos Pacheco and Ellen R. Hathaway elementary schools will get a technology upgrade this year from Friends Academy's Center for Education Innovation.

Yates said she is finalizing her wish list that includes an iPad Cart, laptops for teachers, desktop computers in each classroom, education software, and a new computer lab.

Teacher instruction in the classroom will be complemented by access to the Internet, and the education software, she said.

"The students know something is coming, they're very excited," she said.

The center opened through a \$672,000 grant from philanthropists Kate and the late Al Merck, said Ben Parsons, the center's executive director. Merck, who died in July, was the grandson of the founder of pharmaceutical giant Merck and Co.

This school year, the Mercks gave the program an additional \$600,000, bringing their total contribution to more than \$1.5 million, Parsons said.

The center has already funded technology upgrades to the Hayden-McFadden, Elwin G. Campbell, and Abraham Lincoln elementary schools.

"Our biggest change in development this year is we were able to hire two technology integration specialists," Parsons said.

The specialists will divide their time among the Hathaway, Pacheco, Campbell, and Lincoln schools. Parsons wrote in an e-mail he has not yet contacted the new principal at Hayden-McFadden about helping out teachers there.

"(The specialists) are going to be able to help teachers on a day to day basis with questions they have about technology," he said.

Teachers at Pacheco and Hathaway will also receive professional development through a Wide World Course developed by Harvard University, Parsons said.

This past year, Colleen Dawicki of the Urban Initiative Department at UMass Dartmouth headed a review of technology upgrades in the schools, Parsons said, which led to three findings.

Thanks to the upgrades, technology access increased and there were more collaborative practices between teachers, he said.

How teachers analyzed data also changed, for example through the use of the Lexia reading software.

Lexia allows teachers to track individual student progress, and the areas in which students might struggle, Parsons said.

Teachers, he said, "really saw the power in narrowing down their instructions to meet individual needs."

Yates said she used the program in the past and that it had "great success" with students struggling to learn to read. Many Pacheco students also struggle with reading, she said.

Principal Andrea Curtis at Hathaway could not list what technology the school was receiving, but said, "we are excited because of the level of support that it will give our students to succeed in schools."

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