

Tech *to* School

A device for every student



Fullerton Case Study

THE PROBLEM:

Not enough money to go around

When you're the chief technology officer of a large school district, you manage everything from air conditioners and lighting systems to the content and curriculum used in classes. As Jay McPhail knows, it's a big responsibility. The CTO of California's Fullerton School District's biggest challenge is ensuring the 1:1 BYOD district is able to provide resources for its students without blowing the budget.

"Although the budget crisis has eased a bit for us, there's still not enough money to go around," said McPhail. "We need to make sure that we stretch those dollars in such a way that we have functional devices that can achieve the instructional goals we need."

For McPhail and his district, they found the solution to this challenge through **Tech to School**, a leading provider of refurbished Apple technology.

THE SOLUTION: Creative budgeting with refurbished EdTech

McPhail researched quite a few options before choosing **Tech to School**. He started by checking into Apple's supply of leasable and refurbished technology, but the prices were still just too high to suit his district needs.

So he and his team began investigating refurbished EdTech vendors, and while there were many companies he could have chosen, **Tech to School** stood out for their consistent supply of inventory.

"Many refurbished vendors buy a batch of inventory, and they have it for a little bit, but you have to act very quickly to get it," said McPhail. "**Tech to School** seemed more established and dependable, and I liked that."

As the ordering process got underway, he was equally impressed with the company's customer service. "Amber has been fantastic - always very professional, very friendly and very responsive. If I need something from her, I usually get a response within 15-20 minutes," said McPhail. "They have a great team and are certainly filling a needed niche in our area."

Tech to School was also able to customize the MacBooks to the district's specifications, adding a unique image and exceeding expectations for the look and age of each device.

When McPhail identified a small issue with the customization of the order, **Tech to School** was quick to correct it. "I was a little worried because we were on a very short timeline — we needed the devices for back-to-school. But as soon as I noticed the issue, I contacted Amber. She worked her magic and got us everything we needed within two or three days," he said.

McPhail cited **Tech to School's** two-year warranty as another reason he chose the company. "Having the warranty ensures that I will have workable devices for the next two years, and I can't tell you how good it feels to be able to provide those devices to my students."

When the devices arrived, McPhail could not have been happier with his purchase from **Tech to School**. "Their team was great every step of the way," he said.

MAKING THE IT BUDGET GO FURTHER

Apple
Quoted
\$125,000



Purchased
from
Tech to School
\$75,000



SAVINGS \$50,000

Extra
money for
Apps, Online
Curriculum, LMS, Other
EdTech Needs

Reaction from students and parents

Fullerton's schools are a 1:1 BYOD Apple district - devices are checked out to a particular student, who uses it throughout the school day and takes it home with them at night.

"At the same time, we realize we're a free and public education system - some of our parents could afford to buy new devices but choose not to, and some just can't afford it," said McPhail. "I generally use this analogy: I would love to drive a Ferrari, and I would buy a Ferrari for anyone and everyone who wanted one if I had the money, but I don't. So I need a vehicle that can run - and run consistently. **Tech to School** was able to give me Ferrari-quality devices without the Ferrari price tag."

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~ Jay McPhail
CTO Fullerton School District

Students have responded extremely well to the new devices. "For that subset of students who can't afford their own device, I've guaranteed that they're going to have a device in their hands, no matter what happens," said McPhail. "That is a great feeling, and I know the kids and their parents appreciate it as much as I do."

““ *If we're going on a long voyage, I want to work with someone who will be in the boat, not on the dock... Tech to School was a true partner in that sense.* **””**

~ Jay McPhail
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A partner for the journey

Moving forward, McPhail said their district plans to continue working with **Tech to School**. His strategy for finding solid EdTech partners is two-fold:

- 1) Find companies that are willing to partner with you. "If we're going on a long voyage, I want to work with someone who will be in the boat, not on the dock. I always look for people who are willing to negotiate to best meet the needs of my district and can be flexible throughout the process, **Tech to School** has been a true partner in that sense."
- 2) Work with people who understand the education industry. "In our world, nothing happens quickly, even in a progressive school district like ours. Amber and the entire **Tech to School** team completely understand that and have been very patient with us throughout the process."

While McPhail knows some of his colleagues may be hesitant to consider refurbished EdTech, he feels it's one of the most cost-effective ways to support a device push, whether 1:1 or supplementing BYOD. By taking his district this route, his team was able to put the money they saved toward other areas of need, making other decisions easier in the process.

"At the onset of an implementation, your leadership needs to clearly define what is a fully functional device and what is not," said McPhail. "Once you have that line, it's just a matter of who can give you the highest quality, best price, warranty and service. For our district, that was **Tech to School**."

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