

## Funding A BYOD Program

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### BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)

As school budgets have been cut, so the prices of digital devices have dropped dramatically. And more and more students are coming to school with their own devices in their backpacks.

This confluence of conditions has fostered the idea that students could use their own device at school. The appeal, of course, is that on the surface, BYOD seems to provide a way for schools to have a 1-to-1 program but not pay for it: a sort of 'have your device, and learn with it, too'.

One common BYOD complaint is "What about the have-nots?" Yes, low-income students may not come equipped with the latest, most-versatile gadgets. But just as students learn in different ways, not all students need the same learning tools. The key is in empowering families to take ownership of securing tools for their children's learning.

Here are some tips to get low-income children the technology they need to succeed.

**Business Refresh:** Many companies regularly refresh their equipment. Contact local business to see if they would consider giving their old devices to students.

**Go Online:** Students can use tools like Craigslist, Twitter and Facebook to let people know they are in need of a device that someone might be throwing away. Not only will they likely get a good deal, many people will reduce their asking price if they know their old gadget is going to a good cause.

**Community Mentors:** When schools help facilitate relationships with mentors for their students, many can either provide or help with securing resources for learning.

**Recycle School Technology:** Bureaucratic red tape often prevents schools from providing their old technology to students. Work to reduce the hurdles keeping perfectly good technology out of the hands of students.

**Payment, Layaway and Leasing Options:** Schools should do their best to provide various financial options for families looking for digital hardware for their children.

**Fundraiser:** Smart kids can come up with smart options for getting what they need. Make it a class project! Come up with unique fundraising ideas to raise both money and awareness for your school's technology needs, or hold a Tech Day where the community can come to your school and donate technology for children in need.

When collecting technology for your school, keep in mind that if devices are used for a class activity, the teacher needs to cater to the least powerful device in the classroom, and often the least expensive devices are designed for consumption, rather than creation. Schools can minimize this exposure by guiding the families in their plans to acquire devices. Some schools work with manufacturers to secure a group pricing that families can take advantage of.