

## Blazing Technology Trails

Founded in 1903 as one of the first elementary boys' boarding schools in the nation, the Fessenden School—located in West Newton, Massachusetts—champions both high moral values and an innovative education. The former is still fostered among its all-male student body, and the latter is very much on display in this school's embrace of technology.



### The Fessenden School At A Glance

- Founded in 1903 in West Newton, MA
- Independent all-boys, junior boarding school, grades K-9 (Pre-Kindergarten, Fall 2012)
- 475 students: 1/3 local, 1/3 U.S., 1/3 international
- 55 Chromebooks

### Management Console

School districts will benefit from Google's web-based Management Console, a tool that lets IT administrators manage their Chromebooks from the cloud—from pre-installing or blocking apps and extensions to managing user and network access. As Chromebooks continue to evolve, the Management Console's functionality will continue to develop.



There are 325 computers available for the 475 students in its kindergarten through 9th grades (with an additional 125 allotted to teachers), and 1:1 parity is a goal Ced Paine, Director of Technology, knows he will soon reach. He eagerly welcomed the opportunity to become one of the nation's first three schools to begin using Google's Chromebooks for Education.

The independent school already boasts a five-member IT team, nine laptop carts, a computer-stocked library, and two bustling computer labs. Paine keeps tabs on the latest technology innovations that might have merit for the school. "I'm a big advocate of cloud-based computing because of the obvious cost-saving implications for schools, and am thrilled Fessenden was able to test drive the first devices to hit the academic market," he says. "When I read about the Chromebook, I thought, 'This is perfect; this is what we need.'"

*"Give a child an intuitive computer and compelling multimedia software, and then watch their imaginations take flight. Chromebooks and Google Apps provide that potent combination."*

—Alexandra McMullen, language arts teacher, *The Fessenden School*

### What Makes Them Tick

Chromebooks—based completely on cloud-based technology—offer an innovative approach to both computing and education. Built and optimized for the web, the easy-to-use Chromebooks boot up almost instantaneously, are protected against viruses, don't require manual software updates, and, best of all, can access a wide suite of student-oriented applications. They run the Chrome Operating System, which mirrors the popular Chrome browser.

The Fessenden School began testing 55 Chromebooks earlier this year. Because the largest class size is only 17, there were enough Chromebooks to give everyone an opportunity to try them out. The Google Apps product suite and other web apps were student-tested by 3rd graders on up and the verdict was unanimous—teachers, students, and IT managers loved them.

"Students loved them right away," says Head of the Middle School Curt Lewellyn, "Even in the lower grades, kids grasped the concept of collaborative work using Google Docs to create and interact with one another and their teachers."

### Ample Teaching Tools in the Cloud

In the 5th and 6th grades, there was extensive use of Google Apps for spreadsheets, presentations, and group-project work. "We have some real high-flyer middle-school teachers who led the students in creating really amazing multimedia projects," says Lewellyn. Students used Picasa, Google's free photo-editing software, in conjunction with YouTube videos, and Google Docs to create presentations they could then share among themselves and their families.

---

### Chromebooks for Education include:

- the hardware and operating system
- a web-based Management Console
- warranty, service, and support from Google

There's no need for software licenses, servers, security solutions, and maintenance plans, meaning that owning a Chromebook can cost up to 70% less than a traditional PC.

---



Chromebooks

---

Chromebooks are the ideal tools for running an ever-expanding number of cloud-based educational apps. At Fessenden, apps like Xtranormal—web-based movie making predicated on simple typing moves—found eager audiences among several grades, and the fourth-grade literature club made full use of Edmodo—a flexible social learning network—to create a fictitious travel blog.

“The kids thought the project was fantastic and the quantity and quality of their writing increased dramatically,” says instructor Jamie Ames. “Give a child an intuitive computer and compelling multimedia software, and then watch their imaginations take flight,” says Alexandra McMullen, language arts teacher, The Fessenden School. “Chromebooks and Google Apps provide that potent combination.”

---

*“My ultimate dream is to go completely Chromebooks. ... Essentially, Chromebooks are all we need for most of what we do.”*  
—Ced Paine, Director of Technology, The Fessenden School

---

### Test Drive Apps

Fessenden teachers discovered and tried a variety of new web apps when using Chromebooks in their classrooms. Google Docs were used for everything from quizzes to student-teacher communication and Google Templates were employed as research note cards. DropBox—a file-hosting service that uses cloud computing to let users store and share files across the Internet—was popular to promote a “virtual” learning environment. And even Google Calendar helped teachers schedule the mobile-computer carts.

### IT is All-In

The IT staff at Fessenden appreciated the Chromebook's long battery life, simplicity, reliability, and cloud-based versus client-side applications. “Maintaining our incumbent software and operating-system was never-ending,” says Will Tuttle, IT coordinator. “I was often on the phone with software reps or configuring a new computer. With Chromebooks, all this is moot and updates are done automatically.”

Factoring in the overall computer costs of purchasing, maintaining, and updating, Paine believes that installing Chromebooks will cost about half that of traditional laptops. “We are looking at 40 traditional laptops that need to be replaced soon and we've decided to replace them with Chromebooks,” he adds. “My ultimate dream is to go completely Chromebooks,” says Paine. “How can I say this succinctly? Essentially, Chromebooks are all we need for most of what we do.”

