



## Low Risk, Big Reward: Methacton Explores Chrome With CloudReady

Methacton School District has gone “all-in” on Google. More than a quarter of the teaching staff in the 4,900-student district are aiming for certification as Google Certified Instructors, and half have integrated Google Apps for Education (GAFE) into their classrooms as part of a move towards a more collaborative, student-centered classroom. As adoption in the district continues to grow, leadership faces a familiar question – what devices best support teachers and students as they move towards a new environment? In partnership with Neverware, Methacton set an informed vision about devices and management for the future.

Troy Sosnovik, Director of Technology, Safety and Child Accounting for Methacton, is in a transition year. In setting out a vision for the district, he felt device selection for supporting instruction from kindergarten through 12th grade posed a challenge. Troy asked, “What are our curricular objectives and how can we put the most appropriate mixture of devices... maybe a mixture of tablet and Chromebook and laptops, in these classrooms to best support curricular objectives?”

To help find a solution for his complex and budget-sensitive challenge, Troy turned to Neverware’s CloudReady. The initial appeal for Troy was allowing the district to explore a brand-new operating system, without the significant hardware investment usually required for a pilot. Troy notes, “We were more and more interested in Chromebooks... before making a huge investment in them, this gave us the ability to use pre-existing hardware and still have the Chrome OS experience.”

Methacton’s initial pilot of CloudReady included a floating lab of laptops, library desktops and a small fleet of much older laptops in an English language arts classroom. The feedback was immediate: “We put it on very low resource machines and the response was great.” Teachers were quick to point out how fast the machines were, both in boot up time and browsing the Internet, and were thrilled at how simple the machines were for students to use. The majority of teachers surveyed during the pilot preferred CloudReady machines over their existing Windows devices.

The pilot also allowed Karthik Ganesh, Systems Administrator for Methacton, to dive into the Google Management Console. Enrolling CloudReady machines in a centralized platform was a breath of fresh air for a district used to clunky management systems. Karthik especially appreciated “the granularity with which I can set certain settings,” allowing him to independently manage elementary, middle and high school computers with a single system.



### METHACTON SD FAST FACTS

#### Student Enrollment

~4900

#### Key Takaways

Decision making around devices is hard, but CloudReady provides a low-cost, hardware-free option for trialing the Chrome OS.

CloudReady provides major time-savings for both teachers and systems administrators.

District leadership feels confident moving forward with the Chrome OS, both on Chromebooks and CloudReady devices, after the trial.

Speed and ease of use were not just noted by students and teachers -- Karthik saved valuable time updating and customizing machines. He was able to "make a change and in the next minute or so, all the devices would get the setting," saving him valuable time and resources in maintaining a large fleet of devices.

CloudReady's seamless parity with Chromebooks played a critical role in decision-making for the district. Troy noted, "What I've found looking at Neverware and a regular Chromebook is [that] it's identical. I was pleased with that." Because CloudReady is closely aligned with the Chromebook experience, the software offered a the opportunity for a true Chrome OS pilot, without concerns about modifications or shortcuts. Based on their CloudReady and Google Management Console experience, Troy and his team are moving forward with a purchase of Chromebooks for the upcoming year. Troy also plans on continuing his implementation of CloudReady to "help with the whole implementation of Chrome and get buy-in throughout my district before making a major investment."

Ultimately, CloudReady's appeal lays in its flexibility and uniform experience. CloudReady offers the ability to try a Chromebook before buying one: "What I am really thankful for is that there is a solution out there where I don't have to make a major investment in infrastructure, like devices, for me to move forward. It would be so much more difficult for me to purchase 400 devices for five buildings versus possibly augmenting and extending those devices another year or two using a Neverware-like solution."