

Learning & Information Technology Services

EVERETT PUBLIC SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER



November 2019

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Technology News

Monthly Newsletter

It is that time of year when giving thanks and appreciation is on our minds. The holiday season, Thanksgiving in particular, causes us to think about all the special things in our lives and express gratitude for them. This is a favorite time of year for many, in large part because we are surrounded by loved ones and visibly reminded of all that we are grateful for. If you are like me, you wish this feeling could last all year long.

This is a great time of year to focus our thinking on how we support those around us and those within our organization. We thank you all for your continued support of the district's integrated technology plan. The Learning and Information Technology Services (LITS) department is committed to supporting staff and understand that communication is key to success of these efforts.

All the best this holiday season.

Brian Beckley

Brian Beckley
Chief Information Officer

Retirement of surplus Windows desktops

As we communicated last spring, we are compelled to remove the older desktops from schools due to Microsoft ending vital security updates which would cause security risks on our network. We originally announced we would be removing them by the end of December. We have been able to prolong the deadline to **Friday, April 5, 2020**. Our team will be working with schools to ensure there is a smooth transition plan.

This is what you can expect.

- The LITS team is beginning to deploy Chromebooks and laptops to instructional paraeducators at middle school and high school locations. The new devices will eliminate their dependence on the outdated desktops.
- We will announce a classroom conversion schedule when school resumes after winter break. This will be a schedule where our technicians will "swarm" school sites to assist teachers in moving from their desktop computers to their certificated laptops as their main presentation device.
- We will be working on a plan for non 1-1 elementary schools who still need the older desktops for students. We are currently testing the concept of turning those old Windows desktops into Chrome devices by installing a Chrome operating system. This eliminates the Windows security needs.

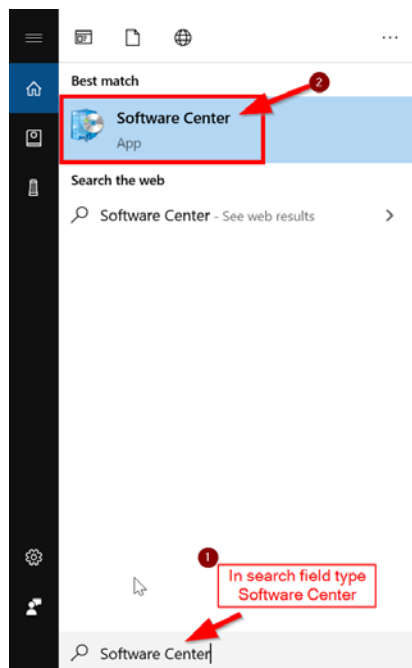
We anticipate there may be some short-term needs that are not addressed by the initiatives above. We will be able to resolve them this next summer when we update office and classified computers. These computers are in their final year of warranty, but still have years of life in them. When these are replaced at each site, this will allow us to repurpose them in other areas that may have been deprived of workstations when the surplus computers were removed. I will be in contact with every site over the next few weeks as we begin the process of identifying which computers will be removed and possible resolutions if there are needs which cannot wait until the summer upgrade.

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Updating laptops



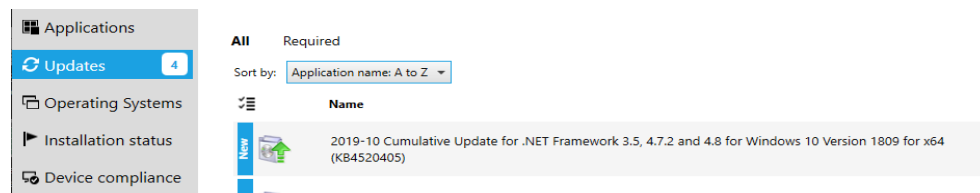
There are updates the district pushes out automatically to our devices. However, there are applications **you** need to update **manually** yourself **each month**.

To start, you will navigate to the **Software Center** by typing the words: **Software Center** in the search bar (bottom left of the screen).

Select the **Software Center** option (do not select the option to search the web). The **Software Center** is where you will find information about both required and available updates to install for applications, software and operating systems.

Next, select **Updates** from the menu on the left (above). You will see listed here any updates that need to be completed. It will list if it is past due or not. Make sure to update everything listed to avoid disruption in using your device and for security.

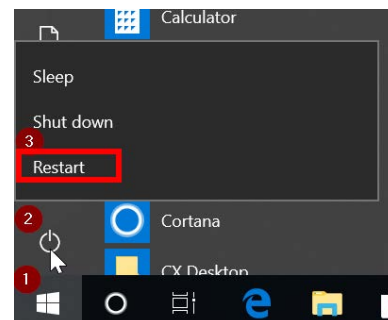
Then select the "Install All" blue button. The install will run in the background, you can continue working on other items



*****This step is very important! DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP**
This step can be done at home****

To complete the entire install and make sure your computer is running properly, you **MUST** **RESTART** your device. To do this

1. Select **Windows** Icon
2. Then select the **Power** icon and
3. Finally, select **Restart**



Two reasons why software updates and patches are important



You're probably no stranger to those pesky little pop-up windows telling you software updates are available for your computer, laptop, or tablet. You might be tempted to click on that "Remind me later" button. Don't do it. Don't put off updating your software. You're given a certain amount of time to update at your convenience but if you wait too long you may find yourself with a computer rebooting at an inconvenient time.

Software updates are important to your digital safety and security. The sooner you update, the sooner your device is more secure - until the next update reminder.

Why are software updates so important? There are a lot of reasons. Here are just two that show why it is important to update your computer regularly.

1. Updates help patch security flaws

Hackers love security flaws, also known as software vulnerabilities. A software vulnerability is a security hole or weakness found in a software program or operating system. Hackers can take advantage of the weakness by writing programs to target the vulnerability. The program is packaged into malware — short for malicious software. An exploit sometimes can infect your computer with no action on your part other than viewing a rogue website, opening a compromised email message, or even playing infected media.



What happens next? The malware can steal data saved on your computer, allow the attacker to gain control over your computer, and even infect the district network. Software updates often include software patches. They cover the security holes to keep hackers out.

2. Software updates help protect your data

You probably keep a lot of documents and district information on your devices. Your files and district information are valuable to cybercriminals. They can use it to commit crimes in your name or sell it on the dark web to enable others to commit crimes. Updating your software and operating systems helps keep hackers out.

You could ignore, for a while anyway, those reminders to update your software, but you might be missing out on a lot, starting with your cyber security.

Software and hardware approval process

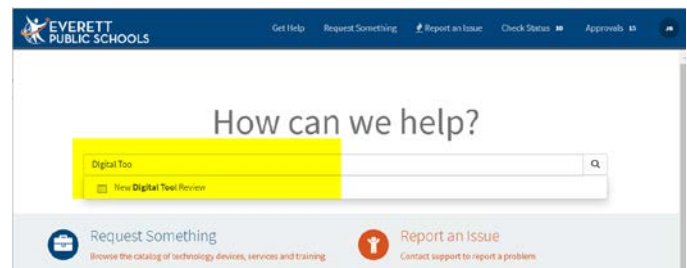
The district provides operational, productivity, curriculum, and instructional digital resources as well as computer hardware standards that the Learning and Information Technology Services department supports. These products go through a technical and contractual review process. Ideally, staff can find what they need from among these standards. If they do not know how to utilize, LITS can provide materials and trainings to advance staff understanding.

When the district-provided digital resources do not meet the educational needs of staff or students, then by Everett Public Schools Board policies related to purchasing, technology, supplemental curriculum, and digital resources, staff need to submit a HelpDesk Web ticket for a technical review and assurance that purchasing knows of contracts and terms of service conditions. Whether the resource is paid, free, used by only staff or in use by students and staff, the review needs to be sponsored by building or department leadership and the process is completed before purchase. If there is not a specific contract for the resource, then terms of service and privacy statements need to be gathered and provided by the requesting staff for the review. If the resource qualifies as supplemental curriculum a more extensive review process is required including Procedure [2311](#) which includes Appendix E for technical information.

You can find the Digital Tool Review form in HelpDesk Web typing Digital Tool Review in the search field.

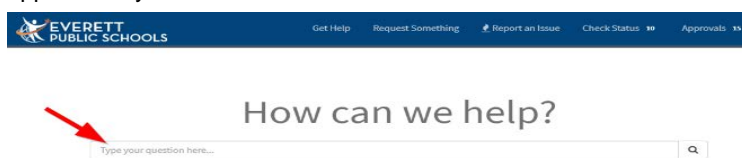
Learning and Information Technology Services (LITS) already publishes a hardware standards list and will soon be publishing a list of approved products, guidelines for use, and if there is a need to contact the vendor for an Everett-specific contract.

Coming soon this process will be in a published review cycle that aligns with the requirement by vendors to inform parents and receive permission for use in a bundled format.



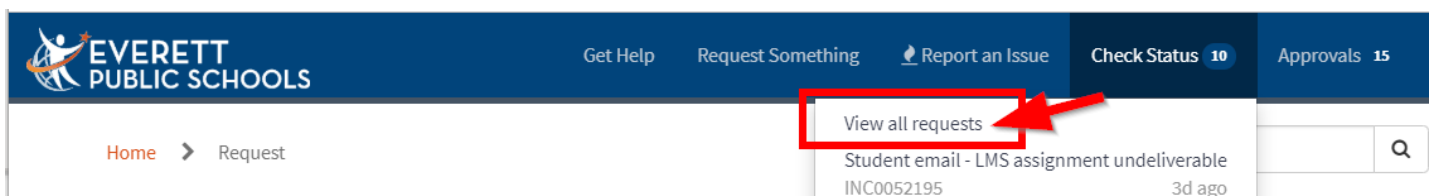
HelpDesk Web Tips

To open a [HelpDesk Web](#) ticket you can simply type your software or hardware or key word in the search field, and a list of forms will appear that you can select from.



If you have already turned in a HelpDesk Web ticket, you can either communicate with support through replying to the email sent with last status or you can go to the website and Check Status.

From the top menu you can select Check Status – you should click *View all results* from pull down.





Select the ticket you are curious about. Review its status and feel free to type a message related to this specific ticket in the message field. You can also add attachments for this ticket on the screen.

NOTE: You cannot open a new ticket from the status page.

[Get Help](#)
[Request Something](#)
[Report an Issue](#)

Check Status 10

[Approvals 15](#)

[Home](#) > [Request](#)

Search

REQ001299 - Software/Systems/Online Tools Help - Docushare Client

Type your message here... Send

12d ago

Add Comments

Since you did not specify who are the staff who needed access, I am giving you the link to forward to them to download the DS Client.

<https://docushare.everett.k12.wa.us/docushare/dsweb/View/Collection-12466>

Support staff information

13d ago

REQ001299 Created

Customer input

Start

Requested Items

Software/Systems/Online Tools Help - Docushare Client

RITM0013009

Request Approved (Approved)

Fulfillment Waiting for Wait for condition: Wait for Completion (In progress)

Completed (Pending - has not started)

Number	State
REQ001299	Work in Progress
Priority	Created
3 - Moderate	13d ago
Price	Updated
\$0.00	12d ago

Requests are picked up during normal business hours.

Attachments

Drop files here

Have questions about items in this issue of Technology News? Email technology@everettsd.org for more information.