

BY DARRELL GLEASON

State Editor

LOW MOOR — One-to-One computing has been successfully rolled out at Alleghany High School.

All students were issued Chromebooks when they returned to classes Jan. 5 for the start of the second semester.

The school division's One-to-One computing initiative aims to provide students with access to the Internet, digital course materials and digital textbooks. Approximately 700 Chromebooks are being used at Alleghany High School.

"The devices are being used quite widely and at this point, so far, so good," Jeff Alleman, the school division's supervisor of technology, reported to the school board Monday night.

Alleman, Austin Gibson and Matt Paxton of the school division's technology department were recognized by the school board for their efforts to implement the One-to-One computing initiative ahead of schedule.

"We're way ahead of schedule and ready to implement at Clifton Middle School," said Superintendent Eugene Kotulka.

The school board voted in February 2016 to begin implementing its One-to-One Initiative. It's part of the board's Vision 2020 plan for "transitioning to a student centered, technology enriched and project based- learning environment."

The goal is to use technology as a means for boosting students' personal motivation to learn.

The original timeframe called for the first through 12th-grade initiative to be implemented over a four- year period. However, implementation is running a year ahead of schedule. Necessary infrastructure upgrades at Clifton Middle School have been completed and the technology department is now working to devise a training plan for teachers.

It was originally anticipated that the final phase of implementation of the One-to-One Initiative would be completed during the 2018-2019 school year. The school board, however, authorized the technology department to begin seeking bids for Wi-Fi networks at the three elementary schools.

One-to-one student computing was first introduced to K-12 schools in the United States in the late 1990s. Chromebook sales now account for more than half of all devices sold for U.S. classrooms, up from less than 1 percent in 2012. Chromebooks are laptops that use Google's Chrome operating system and rely mostly on Internet applications. Chromebooks are the popular choice among schools because of their low cost and easy manageability.

"This One-to-One Initiative will be a great thing for Alleghany County Public Schools," School Board Chairman Randy Tucker said.