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Letters: Pros and cons of iPads in schools

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June 23, 2013

[Re "LAUSD awards pact to Apple," June 19](#)

The decision by the Los Angeles Unified School District to provide its 660,000 students with tablet computers is a step in the right direction. As the head of a nonprofit funder that provides computers and training to parents and teachers in three LAUSD schools, I have lessons to share:

With our partners, we see schools thrive when teachers are well-trained and encouraged to coach one another in collaborative settings. Teachers who champion technology deserve support.

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The district is right to let the computers go home with the students, and it's critical to involve parents. The principals we work with say training parents to email teachers and monitor grades engages them in their children's education like nothing else has.

In L.A. County, 30% of households lack high-speed Internet. If we don't want idle students and computing devices after 3 p.m., let's challenge Internet service providers to offer discounted broadband to parents who participate in computer training at schools. Only then will the LAUSD's plan truly fulfill its potential.

Sunne Wright McPeak

San Francisco

The writer is the president and chief executive of the California Emerging Technology Fund.

The decision by the LAUSD to use school construction bonds to pay for Apple iPads is a violation of the voters' trust. Surely it was the intent of the voters who approved these bonds for the district to purchase infrastructure that will last the decades it will take to pay down the debt.

New computer systems are traditionally purchased through grants or by using monies from a district's general fund. The state ought to find a way to overturn the LAUSD's decision and make it clear that the use of school construction bonds must not be used for projects other than infrastructure.

If the state does not act, then the voters will — by becoming cynical and voting against future measures to fund education.

George Garcia

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Long Beach

Each year, middle and high schools issue thousands of books to students. And each year, hundreds of those books are lost, stolen or damaged. Currently, the families of those students are responsible for replacing those books.

If iPads that are brought home are lost, stolen or damaged, will the families of these students be on the hook for replacing the \$678 device? What is the district's plan for that?

This seems to me to be another poorly thought-out plan by a district that has had many over the years.

Tom Iannucci

Los Angeles

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