



Connect Charter School:

A Leader in Innovation and Technology



Grade 6 students doing research on their iPads

At Connect Charter School, we pride ourselves for being at leader in information and technology. Connect Charter School, previously named the Calgary Science School, was established in 1999 and since 2006 the school has been committed to integrating technology into the everyday curriculum by maintaining a one-to-one technology program. Connect Charter School's mission is to "Prepare our students as extraordinary citizens." This goal is achieved through innovation and the ongoing development of exemplary learning, teaching and leadership practices within an active

inquiry-based learning community. Connect Charter School's one-to-one iPad and MacBook program enables environmental, outdoor and global education learning opportunities for students to experience and appreciate the world outside of the classroom. At Connect Charter School we strive to never have just an "ordinary day."

"Having our own devices is the easiest way to do research, because we don't have to go to the library and look through textbooks or book time in a computer lab," says a student is grade 9.

At Connect Charter School our one-to-one technology program ensures that each student has access to either an iPad or a MacBook depending on their grade. Connect Charter School also uses supportive technology for students who need extra help in certain areas of their learning. For students who require support in developing fine motor skills such as typing and writing they are provided speech to text devices that allow them to get their thoughts out verbally first. Connect also purchases online textbooks for select students. For students who



Grade 7 students completing assignments on their MacBooks

require more support with reading, they can highlight certain areas of the textbook and can have passages read to them for more clarity. For younger students, who still greatly benefit from learning through play, we have modern technologies such as Osmo, which is an award winning educational gaming system. Osmo helps kids learn hands on with a set of iPad games played with real-world pieces, and comes with a unique stand with a red plastic piece that redirects the iPad's front-facing camera to the game pieces as your child interacts with them on a table or floor.

"I work with a student who benefits from practice and repetition with math. Every time I ask, 'Do you want to play with Osmo?' he gets so excited because to him he's just playing a game," explains educational assistant Stephanie Horsman.

In 2016, Connect Charter School became an Apple distinguished school. Schools with this designation are considered to be at the centre of leadership and educational excellence that demonstrate Apple's vision for learning with technology. Apple believes this recognition helps identify some of the most innovative schools in the world. Connect Charter School is the only Apple Distinguished School in Calgary and is 1 of 3 designated schools in all of Alberta. The Apple Distinguished School program is by invitation only for schools that meet the current program qualifications. Recognition is for two years, with an opportunity to renew



Grade 4 student using Osmo



each invitation period. The requirements to become an Apple distinguished school are as follows:

- Established one-to-one program
- Innovative use of the Apple platform
- Faculty proficiency with iPad or Mac
- Documented results

The Apple Distinguished School program supports school leaders through leadership events, opportunities to engage with experts, and collaboration with peers who share an interest in innovative learning and teaching.

In May, 2018 our principal Dr. Butterfield and grade 8 teacher Mr. Cloutier were invited to attend the Apple's Global Innovation Summit in Chicago. Connect Charter School was one of only five Canadian schools to be invited. At the summit, our school representatives attended lectures and sessions that revolved around how technology is used in different schools, and learned the overall best practices for implanting technology into the curriculum.

“It was a great experience for networking and learning how different schools approach the use of technology in a classroom setting,” states Mr. Cloutier. “It was also a great way to showcase Connect Charter School’s unique innovative approaches using Apple’s technology.”



Dr. Butterfield and Mr. Cloutier at Apple's Global Innovation Summit