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Pittsburg Unified School District Partners with Oakland Technology Exchange West to Offer Free Technology to the Pittsburg Community

Pittsburg, CA — On Tuesday, April 12, 2016 at 10:00am, dozens of free computers will be given to selected families at Heights Elementary School. Pittsburg Unified School District has teamed up with Oakland Technology Exchange West (OTX) to bring free technology to families in the Pittsburg community. The newly formed partnership with OTX aims to help close the digital divide in Pittsburg by offering parents refurbished computers free of charge. Parkside Elementary School will follow the same model by presenting free computers to parents on May 2, 2016. "Parkside Elementary is excited to provide an opportunity for our families to acquire technology," said Jeff Varner, Principal at Parkside Elementary. "Not only are our families receiving technology, but they are receiving training on how to use it effectively." Martin Luther King Jr. Junior High School and Willow Cove Elementary School have already hosted technology giveaways, gifting more than 100 computers to local families.

The innovative tech program is made possible through OTX, a non-profit in Oakland, whose mission is to get free computers and low-cost internet into homes of families in need. OTX refurbishes computers and loads them with programs. The non-profit then works with East Bay schools, to give the computers away. During a donation session at each school, families are shown how to sign up for an internet service and are led through a computer literacy training, prior to taking home their computer. "We gave away computers to almost fifty families," said Angela Stevenson, Principal at Martin Luther King Jr. Junior High School. "We had families park their cars in front of the gym when they arrived. At 10:00am, they began in the library with the computer literacy training in English and Spanish. Parents were able to have their questions answered during this session, which lasted over an hour. Afterwards, they stood in line, until directed to drive their cars into a line of about three or four vehicles at a time. Computers were placed into the cars and they drove away. It was a very smooth assembly line."

Pittsburg Unified School District is proud to participate in this program and thanks Oakland Technology Exchange West for the organization's commitment to bring free technology to residents of Pittsburg. "Learning today involves creating digital content, accessing online resources, and collaborating through technology," said Seth Hubbert, Executive Director at OTX. "Having a computer and home Internet access is foundational to our students' success. We commend Pittsburg Unified's commitment to equitable tech access, demonstrated in their engagement with our services; we are excited to partner and help get families connected!" Plans are in place to continue this program to additional schools throughout Pittsburg.

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About Pittsburg Unified School District

Pittsburg Unified School District (PUSD) is a K-12 district serving the community of Pittsburg, California. Founded in 1933, the school system is committed to providing an excellent opportunity for all students to learn. Comprised of eight elementary schools, three junior high schools, one comprehensive high school, one alternative education high school, an adult school, independent study, alternative learning experiences, and early childhood education services, the school district serves more than 10,500 students. PUSD is located in the San Francisco Bay Area, fifty minutes outside of downtown San Francisco.

About OTX

Oakland Technology Exchange (OTX) West is dedicated to providing digital equity to residents across the East Bay. For over 20 years, OTX has provided free refurbished computers and digital literacy training to low-income families and supported schools' and community centers' technology needs. By refurbishing donated technology from individuals, businesses, and organizations, OTX West has diverted 700 tons of e-waste from landfills. OTX was founded by Bruce Buckelew, a pioneer in addressing the digital divide through green technology solutions. After retiring from IBM as a Systems Engineer and Manager, Bruce completed his Masters coursework in Educational Technology at San Francisco State University and began volunteering at Oakland Technical High School. With the help of students, Bruce began refurbishing computers to provide to families in need. Under Bruce's leadership, OTX refurbished nearly 40,000 computers for our community.