

### **By Tim Linscott**

*Managing Editor*

Perkins County High School Principal Dean Friedel is always trying to stay one step ahead of students and their use of technology while on campus.

This never-ending battle took a new twist when Friedel proposed a 'three-strikes' rule for next year in regard to using laptops.

At the March school board meeting Friedel noted that there was an incline of 'goofing off' behavior with the laptops.

Inappropriate music, YouTube videos and web searches have kept Friedel busy trying to halter the unwarranted behavior of some students.

"We don't catch everything but we are monitoring them the best we can," Friedel said.

He monitors students' activities and will take a screen shot of inappropriate sites or views to discuss with the student. He explained to school board members that some students are looking at inappropriate items while at home and leaving the machines on when they walk into the school building, effectively circumventing the school's internet filter.

The school will be implementing its own filter system next school year to prevent illicit downloads and searches as well as eliminating the use of headphones. Currently the school has a filter system through the ESU.

The filter will allow teachers to block websites during a particular class and present videos to the students.

"It lets the teachers handle things a bit more," said Michelle Evans, technology coordinator for PCS.

Friedel has proposed a three-strike rule for the use of laptop technology by students that will tie in not only physical damage to the equipment, but behavioral issues as well.

Students pay \$100 of the first portion of repairs through an insurance waiver provided by the school, which will cost the student \$30. The \$30 fee is based on free and reduced lunch status for the student.

One student has broken a laptop screen twice already this school year, according to Friedel. Students pay an insurance policy of \$100 to help in these matters but both Friedel and Evans explained that each screen is \$250 per incident to repair through the ESU.

"The student pays \$100 but in the same school year we are looking at several hundred dollars to fix one student's computer," Friedel said.

"I have not seen that many screens broken in my seven years as a technology coordinator," Evans said of the overall issue with students this year.

She noted that she has seen students pick up laptops by the screen, pinching the top of the screen with their fingers to grip it, which can easily cause cracking and damage.

Evans has priced laptop cases and next year students will not be allowed to keep the equipment in book bags or backpacks. A case will be provided by the district and students must keep the laptops in the case.