

## **School District of Tomahawk Internet Survey - 2014**

An internet availability survey was initiated by Nathan Hanson, D.Ed. on Tomahawk School District students requesting the type of internet access they currently have and where they live within the District. This is part of a study of rural schools and also applies to the work the District needs to accomplish for filing the DPI required District Technology Plan. The District chose several years ago to provide technology to all students in a one to one initiative. This requires internet access for assignment completion while in the schools, though internet access may not be available to all students when outside the building. Building principals asked their teachers to administer the survey between October 20 and November 17, 2014.

Enrollment at the District was 1,235 students in PK-12 as of the third Friday in September 2014 count. 72% of the students responded to the survey with the highest percentages being grades K-9. St Mary Catholic School a PK-5 education facility was not part of this survey.

As the survey was administered to all students the results may reflect more than one response from the same family. Full survey results are available online as this is a summary of those findings [Tomahawk School District Internet Access Survey](#).

### **What did this survey tell us?**

1. 65.8 % of the respondents live within the City of Tomahawk, Town of Bradley and Town of Nokomis, 38.2%, 14.6% and 13.0% respectively. 7.6% of the respondents did not know where they lived. To keep anonymity of the families the question was phrased in a manner that the respondent did not disclose their physical address.
2. 86% of respondents have access to the internet at home. This is fairly evenly divided between the grade levels. Of the 14% indicating they do not have internet access, 45.2% indicated it was unaffordable, 24.4% unavailable and the remaining 30.4%, family did not want internet or other reasons. One might assume economics or family beliefs do play a significant role in preventing out of the school day internet access for these students.
3. 91% of respondents living in the City of Tomahawk report having internet access, while 83% of respondents living in the surrounding Townships report having internet access.
4. 72.1% of the total respondents say they have high speed internet access (broadband). We need to be careful with this term. Those of us that lived through the dial up age may find 3g internet fast. High speed is a very relative term. You can see some confusion over this question when you see that in a follow up question.
5. 75.3% said they do in fact have high speed internet. Of those reporting they did not have high speed, 13.4% unavailable and 7.4% unaffordable. Does this mean that they do not get cellphone reception in their home? Or that they do not count cellphone internet as high speed?
6. 80% of respondents who said they lived in the City of Tomahawk, and have internet access, claim that they have high speed internet access
7. 73% of respondents, who said they lived outside of City of Tomahawk, and have internet access, claim that they have high speed internet access.

Next steps for the Board to consider:

1. Network with Lincoln County and local governments to explore increased affordable broadband options for all residents in the target area.
2. Network with Northwoods Broadband Development Coalition (NWBDC) <http://nwbdc.org>

Ken Schulz, Board President