

BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) at SMS For Grades 6-8

Why BYOD?

By now we all know that technology continues to advance and change at an extraordinary rate. Because no single technology remains the clear winner for use in an educational setting, more and more students are already equipped with their own updated devices, and because our small school could never secure enough budget to remain current with hardware updates, it is a logical solution that students be allowed to bring their own devices to school.



The BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) trend is one way to solve this dilemma in schools. For the last three years, students in the 6-8th grades have been allowed to bring their own computing devices (such as tablets and laptops) for use in the classroom. Allowing our students to bring their own devices not only prepares them for future high-tech educational settings, but will help train students in how to live responsibly in today's digital world.

Using personal devices encourages greater collaboration, problem solving, and creative thinking. When used properly, it can result in more engaged students and thus increase achievement. Printed books, paper, and pencil have not been replaced by BYOD. There is a time and place for traditional learning tools, but there is also a place for allowing students to bring their own devices to school.

What Kinds of Devices?

Because these devices are used in school for educational purposes, parents and students need to consider what kind of device will best meet the needs of school work. Generally, a larger screen will be better than a smaller one, a keyboard will be a better input device than a touch screen, but these are decisions for students and parents to make.

Device Requirements

The best choice is for a Wi-Fi enabled device and has the ability to access the Internet and especially our school's cloud-based services provided by Google. The ability to run the Google Docs app is advantageous. Before purchasing, check to make sure the platform will support our Rosetta Stone World Language Program. This would include support for a USB headset, the ability to run Java and Flash, and a more recent operating system. Students use their devices for research on the Internet, for word

composition, for presentations, for spreadsheets, and for accessing the school-issued email accounts. An ability to access a file system or to easily switch between tasks is not essential, but it is recommended.

For families with a demonstrated need, limited computing devices are made available **in exchange for a donation to the school's technology fund.**

What Rules Will Students Have to Follow?

Students and parents will have to agree to the ***Internet Use and Web Presence*** policy outlined in the Family Handbook, to the ***BYOD Acceptable Use Policy***, and sign the ***BYOD Responsibility Agreement*** that includes:

- * A waiver of liability (the school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged devices).
- * An understanding that the role of a teacher is not tech support.
- * An understanding that parents are partners in monitoring the appropriate use of devices.

BYOD Acceptable Use Policy

- * *No use of devices during tests unless authorized by the teacher.*
- * *The device must be in silent mode while on school campus.*
- * *No non-instructional use, such as texting or making or receiving personal calls.*
- * *The device must not be used for taking photos, videos, or audio recordings of others on school campus or during school activities unless approved.*
- * *Students will only use appropriate applications during school.*
- * *No sharing of devices without written parent permission.*
- * *Devices will run on their own batteries and be charged prior to bringing to school.*
- * *Transmission of bullying material (or material of a sexual nature) will not be tolerated.*
- * *No use of BYOD in the cafeteria, hallways, bathrooms, on playground or any place other than inside a classroom.*
- * *Not following BYOD Acceptable Use Policy will result in loss of technology privileges (devices will not be allowed at school).*
- * *Devices suspected of inappropriate use can be examined by a teacher or administrator at any time.*

More to Come!

Additional details of the BYOD policy, including the technology fee amount, will be published in August. In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding the BYOD program, please contact Dan Sherman (dsherman@stmadsophie.org) or Terry Maguire (tmaguire@stmadsophie.org).