

SAINT THOMAS ACADEMY

BYOL Program

BRING YOUR OWN LAPTOP

Upper School

Please direct any questions or concerns regarding the Saint Thomas Academy iPad Program to:

Mrs. Tina Monosmith
Director of Technology
tmonosmith@cadets.com
(651) 683-1573



Why a Bring Your Own Device Environment?

Schools and districts are moving towards more flexible environments in which the school is not identified with only one “brand” of technology. Saint Thomas Academy knows that each learner is unique. A laptop BYOD 1:1 environment assures that each student will have a device empowering him to be successful academically as well as tailoring a device to his own differentiated learning needs.

The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) is the most fiscally responsible option used to create a 1:1 computing environment. Families are responsible for providing a laptop for their son to use for learning at Saint Thomas Academy every day. This allows the family to make the choice of the type of laptop, warranty, and service options. Families also own the device, and the student will then have the device throughout the summer to use for extended learning outside the classroom. BYOD allows families to provide their son with an existing laptop without needing to purchase something new.

The BYOD environment prepares graduates for the types of technology environments they will find at most four-year colleges. Saint Thomas Academy partners with Unique Software as a service provider. Students can choose from multiple types of warranties for new laptops purchased through Unique as well as new and used laptops purchased from other retailers.

Why is a laptop the best choice for the 9 -12 student?

Saint Thomas Academy has a tradition of preparing young men for leadership and is academically demanding. Students use higher level thinking skills like critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning, analysis, research skills, creativity, leadership, collaboration, and cooperation authentically in learning. Laptops allow students to have multiple applications running, multiple browser windows open, and simultaneously use various digital resources and applications fluidly and collaboratively.

The courses at Saint Thomas Academy involve writing across multiple subject areas. Having a keyboard, a robust word processing and document creation program, and storage for accessing documents without reliance on Wi-Fi will simplify and enhance the student experience in our college preparatory environment so that technology does not impede academic performance.

Saint Thomas Academy maintains an Apple environment. All of our computer labs have iMacs, and our faculty members use MacBook Pros. One of the reasons why the Media Technology Department faculty members prefer the Apple environment is due to the reduced effect of computer viruses compared to similar Windows laptops. If you are making a new purchase and have no preference for a platform, our suggestion would be to look at the MacBook Air. This is not an endorsement or requirement; either primary laptop platform, PC or Mac, will work in our 1:1 BYOL.

The minimum requirements for laptops:

	Apple MacBook	PC/Windows
Memory/Hard Drive	4GB memory 128 HDD OS Sierra	4GB memory 128 HDD Windows 7 Intel Core i5
Screen Size	11"	11"
Battery Life	7+ hours	7+ hours
Keyboard	Attached	Attached

We need to purchase a laptop. Where do you recommend we start?

Unique Software, Inc., is our recommended vendor for computer purchasing and service. Unique is creating a web page that will represent our requirements with a variety of available warranties and service packages. Unique is located near Saint Thomas Academy at 3140 Neil Armstrong Blvd #127, Eagan, MN 55121. Their phone number is (651) 454-0622. They welcome student phone calls concerning machine issues and are available for repairs. Unique Software, Inc., offers warranties for new laptops and previously owned devices and will establish a web page, providing device and warranty options available.

What are the software requirements for the 1:1 BYOL?

Saint Thomas Academy will provide a website for students to download Office 365 (free of charge) suite of basic programs, including Word, Excel, and Powerpoint as a minimum for his Mac or PC. Saint Thomas Academy will not be installing any type of software on student laptops for monitoring or networking.

Laptop Equipment and Care

Microphones and Cameras

Most laptops have a built-in microphone and camera. All electronic recordings created with the device must comply with Academy Policies and State and Federal Laws. Any recording done at the Academy must be for educational purpose and only with the knowledge and consent of the person(s) recorded. Use of the laptop in a manner that violates Academy policy may result in disciplinary consequences.

Laptop Care

Carefully transport your laptop to school every day. Avoid placing weight on the laptop. Try to keep the laptop in a bag by itself or in a bag with a padded section for laptops. Being carried in a backpack next to heavy textbooks can break the screen. Never throw or slide a laptop. Never expose an laptop to temperature extremes or direct sunlight. If the laptop is very hot or freezing cold, allow it time to come close to room temperature before powering it on. A car is not a good place to store a laptop.

Laptop Battery

The laptop should be charged, and brought to school ready to use each day. It is the student's responsibility to charge the laptop at home and ensure it is ready for use in school each day. Failure to do so may result in the student's inability to participate in classroom learning activities.

Laptop Screen

Laptops do not respond well to liquids. Avoid applying liquids to the laptop. The laptop screen can be cleaned with a soft, slightly water-dampened, lint-free cloth. Avoid getting moisture in the openings. Do not use window cleaners, household cleaners, aerosol sprays, solvents, alcohol, ammonia, or abrasives to clean the laptop.

Keeping your Laptop Safe

Never leave a laptop unattended. When not in your personal possession, the laptop should be in a secure, locked environment. Do not lend your laptop to another person. Each laptop is individual owned by a student and responsibility for the care of the laptop solely rests with that individual. Students should add a password to their laptop to help secure their personal information.

Make a Commitment to Use Technology Safely and Appropriately

Regularly share your expectations with your child about accessing only appropriate sites and content, as well as demonstrating personal character when online (even when parents aren't watching). It is important to maintain open dialog about Internet use. Ask your son what social media sites they use. Discuss your expectation for appropriate use and behavior.

Filter Access

Filtering software is not built in to the laptop. While many potential dangers are filtered and blocked on the school's wireless network so students can't access them, children often have complete, unrestricted access to inappropriate sites at home. Experts strongly suggest installing software to filter and block inappropriate content on your wireless home network. You can do this with free software such as OpenDNS. Some products offer additional protection features such as cell phone filtering, text message and photo screening tools, and digital footprint/reputation monitoring.

Monitor & Limit Screen Time

Experts suggest having teens surf the Internet in a central place at home, such as the kitchen or family room, rather than away from adult supervision or behind a closed door. Know what your child is doing with technology and how he spends his time. Technology can be a great tool and resource, but also has the potential to be a big distraction. Help your son learn to focus on completing tasks or assignments first before spending time on games, shopping, and social networking. Teaching today's children how to manage multiple sources of information and potential distractions is a critical life skill, one best learned before heading off to college or the workplace.

Cybersafety

Providing students with devices with which they can access the Internet at home or school creates opportunities for lifeimpacting choices. A student's digital footprint is essentially what is found by "Googling" that student's name. It can be composed of information from social networks, online photos, and mentions from other people. Cyberbullying is when harassment occurs through a digital device, platform, or software. Cyberbullying devastates a few students each year. Online choices are critical for students. Students will be faced with many opportunities in collaborating, communicating, and behaving in online environments. Poor decisions cause bad outcomes for students who choose poorly and those they impact. Cyber safety is an important parent-child discussion to revisit frequently. Experts warn that children are most vulnerable to online dangers while in their own home. Parents are responsible for monitoring use of the Academy's educational technologies, including email and Internet technologies from home or through other remote location(s).

Frequently Asked Questions

What do I do if my son's laptop is damaged? If the laptop is lost or is not working, your son is welcome to stop by and talk with one of the members of the Media Technology Department for basic troubleshooting. However, our Media Technology Department members are not able to repair any laptops. Saint Thomas Academy uses Unique Software in Eagan for computer repair. Many of our students have bought laptops or warranties from Unique.

As a parent/guardian, what are the home expectations for my child using the laptop? Students are expected to use their laptop for academic purposes both in and out of school. Students may use their laptop for completing homework, conducting research, collaborating on projects, completing tests or quizzes, along with other academic uses. You should feel comfortable to ask to view your son's laptop and materials. Laptops should be kept in a common location in the home for overnight charging and storage. Parents are encouraged to be proactive and treat the laptop as any digital device in your home- feel free to set limits and provide boundaries such as using the laptop in common spaces under supervision and not having the laptop in your son's room, a shutoff time at night, and consistency with already existing family rules on social networking. You understand your son and may need to address limits, boundaries, and expectations for laptop use in your own home. Please keep in mind, while Schoology looks like Facebook, Saint Thomas Academy is not requiring, advocating, or encouraging the use of Facebook or other social networking sites. If you are concerned with the impact of the laptop on your son's academics or on your family, please feel free to contact us for support and assistance.

Can my son add his own software? Your son owns his laptop. Saint Thomas Academy does not own the laptops. Your son can choose and control which software is on his machine.

Why is a Digital Footprint important?

From Common Sense Media: "Digital life is both public and permanent. Everything our teens do online creates digital footprints that migrate and persist. Something that happens on the spur of the moment – a funny picture, an angry post – can resurface years later. And if teens aren't careful, their reputations can be harmed. Your teen may think he or she just sent something to a friend, but that friend can send it to a friend's friend, who can send it to their friends' friends, and so on. That's how secrets become headlines, and how false information spreads fast and furiously. The stakes only increase when we remember that all of this takes place in front of a huge, invisible audience. Teens' deepest secrets can be shared with thousands of people they've never even met." Common Sense Media exists because our nation's children spend more time with media and digital activities than they do with their families or in school, which profoundly impacts their social, emotional, and physical development. As a nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization, Common Sense Media provides trustworthy information and tools, as well as an independent forum, so that families can have a choice and a voice about the media they consume. Parents and students are invited to explore more resources from Common Sense Media at www.commonsensemedia.org