

SMUHSD 1:1 Chromebook Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Parents and Students

1. What is a Chromebook?

Chromebooks are computers that run Google's Chrome Operating System. These machines are designed primarily for internet access, with most applications and documents stored in the cloud. They are simple, reliable, and affordable, they boot up quickly and are easier to use than most computers.

2. What is a 1:1 Chromebook environment?

A "1:1 Chromebook environment" means **every student has their own district-provided Chromebook that is assigned to them for the duration of their SMUHSD career.** *SMUHSD will be taking a big step toward a 1:1 environment by giving district-owned Chromebooks to all 9th grade students beginning in August 2020.* While the devices are district property, students have full use of it 24/7, but the devices still have district internet filters on them (both at school and at home).

3. Why shift to a 1:1 environment?

Access to technology is as fundamental now as pencils, papers, and textbooks were in previous educational environments. Ensuring that every student has equitable access to online resources and communication is a critical need if SMUHSD is to ensure that students succeed after high school.

4. Who is paying for these devices, and which students will be getting them?

The school district will be purchasing additional Chromebooks for all students in August 2020 to build on the generous contributions that have already been made from individual school foundations.

5. Can we "opt out" of the Chromebook? Do parents get to approve usage of the device? Can students use their own device instead of the school assigned Chromebook?

The district is seeking equitable resources for everyone, so all students will be issued a Chromebook. Students and parents are strongly encouraged to use the district-issued Chromebook so that classroom applications, exams, and maintenance of the device can be effectively handled by the district tech IT department.

6. What about a BYOD approach ("Bring Your Own Device")? Aren't our feeder schools already having our students bring devices?

A "Bring Your Own Device" approach is being used at several school districts, both high school, unified, and some local K-8 districts. This option involves a few interesting considerations:

- There are clear benefits to having all students with the same device, including technical management of devices, and providing an equitable testing environment.
- Allowing different devices may require the district tech department to spend significant resources maintaining a large number of devices across all vendor platforms.
- If the devices are all district-owned and maintained, it allows us to push educational apps out to devices, ensure regular maintenance, and consistent, equitable assessment for students.

7. What are students' responsibilities for these Chromebooks?

Like any other school property checked out to students, students are responsible for taking good care of their Chromebook to keep it in good working order.

- Students will need to: charge their Chromebook every night to ensure the battery will last through the school day (batteries have up to 8 hours of life if fully charged).

- Students must be careful to ensure the Chromebook is treated like any other computer or electronic device to ensure it is not dropped or damaged from negligent care.
- Students are recommended to purchase a protective laptop case or padded sleeve for their backpacks.
- Students should never share passwords or let classmates borrow their assigned device.

8. What happens when students forget their devices, or lose it, or if they forget to charge it?

Students would go to their school library before school to pick up a loaner device, so that they can continue to access school material with minimal disruption to their learning. Students with lost or damaged devices would report this to the school librarian for repairs, replacement, and possible billing (if not covered by insurance, which will be available for purchase by each family).

9. Is there content filtering on the chromebook and are students blocked from accessing content that's not appropriate for teenagers?

Yes. These Chromebooks will have the same internet content filtering that is utilized on school campus computer networks, as required by federal law. Parents should be aware, however, that there is no such thing as a "perfect" filter that will catch everything that every person would deem inappropriate. Parents are advised to have candid conversations with students about responsible internet use, digital citizenship, and digital footprints students leave during online activity.

10. How does Chromebook handle privacy?

Within reason, SMUHSD respects freedom of speech and access to information. We may monitor usage and/or activity to fix an issue, or to investigate a complaint. Students should be aware the school may review files and other communications to maintain the integrity of the network, and to ensure everyone is using their machines responsibly. Chromebooks and all district applications will be utilized in compliance with state and federal laws regarding student privacy.

11. Will they be able to access their personal email from the Chromebooks?

Yes. Students are expected to use their @stu.smuhsd.org school emails for all school business. Once logged in, other email accounts can be accessible on these devices. When you are at school, you should use your school email account and should not access your personal email accounts. If you use another account at home (like Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail) for communication within the school community, the same rules of respect apply as if you had used your school account. Using other email systems are not a way to get around the rules and standards for communication within the school"

12. What type of email and other communication is not acceptable?

You should treat others the way others wish to be treated. Specifically, it is not acceptable to send messages or pictures that use obscene, racist, or offensive language, or any other communication that could be considered harassing, insulting, derogatory or hurtful to others. This is considered cyber-bullying, which the school takes very seriously when it involves our students, whether the communication is generated on-campus or off-campus. In certain cases, it may be necessary for the school to report cyber-bullying incidents to the proper authorities.

13. What are families' responsibilities with Chromebooks?

Families should understand that these Chromebooks are intended to be learning devices for educational purposes. We strongly recommend that parents consider how much time students are allowed to spend online, what ground rules are for managing student use outside of school hours.

Some parenting tips are available through Common Sense Media, an independent non-profit organization: <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/parent-concerns>

14. Will students have access to social media?

The school issued Chromebooks will have internet filtering on them, however social media sites are accessible from the Chromebooks. Parents should be advised that the school sites use that there is no such thing as a perfect filter, so parents are encouraged to monitor student usage of Chromebooks as an additional safeguard.

15. What if students do not have internet access at home?

Families who qualify can pursue discounted internet through local service providers. The district will also direct families to other free internet options in their community. If these options are not successful, families who still have difficulty in getting reliable internet access should check with their school site administration to explore other options to ensure consistent access to online resources. Families who qualify will be provided internet hotspots.

16. Are all teachers in every class going to be using Chromebooks regularly?

Many teachers are already using online tools like Canvas or Google Apps to post content, give online quizzes, or have students participate in discussions or other online activities, and many tests are now given online. This does not mean that traditional teaching is going away, nor does it mean every aspect of learning will be electronic in nature. While more tools and supports are happening online, these devices are not meant to (nor can they) replace good teaching.

17. Do we have enough WiFi bandwidth if every student has a device every day?

The SMUHSD tech department has significantly increased our existing bandwidth during summer 2019, and will continue to upgrade WiFi access points throughout the district.

18. Are Chromebooks replacing textbooks? If so, why?

No, they are not replacing textbooks. While the number of resources online continues to grow, it's possible the demands for printed learning materials may decline as it has in other districts.

19. Can students put stickers on Chromebooks?

No. Stickers cannot be placed on the device itself. Stickers can be placed on personal cases that have been added to the device as long as the stickers are "school appropriate."

20. How much time will students be on the Chromebooks each day? Are there alternatives to Chromebooks for students who have health issues related to screens?

The time spent on Chromebooks will vary widely, just as time spent on homework varies from student to student, and from class to class. Any student health issues will be taken seriously and handled on a case-by-case basis.

21. Are all classes utilizing Chromebooks?

Our goal is that the Chromebooks will be put to good use in all classes, depending on the subject matter, and the value of online tools for that class. This does not mean, however, that they'll be used every day in every single class.

22. When are they returned, and are they kept at school premises? Is there a check-in/check-out process?

Students keep the Chromebooks until the end of their enrollment with SMUHSD. There is no check-in/check-out process, as students would simply keep them until they leave SMUHSD.

23. Do parents have access to training so they can help their students?

We are working on some basic instructional tools on a “Digital Support” website that will have parent tools available, so that parents are aware of Chromebook and Google fundamentals.

24. What are consequences for students who use the Chromebook inappropriately?

As stated in the district’s [Acceptable Use Policy](#), students may have technology privileges limited or removed, depending on the severity of the student’s actions.

25. How is district training/supporting teachers to be innovative? Will they be creating or consuming?

The district has invested in significant and ongoing professional development for all teachers, and many are already using Canvas, Google Apps and many other online tools. Teachers have been strongly encouraged (and incentivized) to earn their Google Certifications and Micro-Credentials in specific applications, and have opportunities to develop many other online skills.

Regarding student work, our goal is to have students learn in a truly dynamic environment where they do not just consume information, but work together with other students to create innovative work products that solve relevant problems. ***Put simply, we want our students to be successful in any post-secondary path they choose, we want them to be employable, and we want them to be responsible citizens, both online and in person.***