



## Computer/Device Purchase Guidance – SY 24-25

Rochambeau, French International School

**At Rochambeau, our student device protocol is as follows:**

<b>GS – CM1:</b>	iPads (Stay at School) <sup>1</sup>
<b>CM2:</b>	Chromebooks (Stay at School – Stylus/Touch enabled) <sup>2</sup>
<b>6eme – 3eme:</b>	Chromebooks (Travel – Home/School - Stylus/Touch enabled) <sup>3</sup>
<b>2nde – Terminale:</b>	Bring your own device (BYOD)

Rochambeau is a platform agnostic school, supporting all computing platforms equally. As students' progress in our educational program, we recommend the use of computing devices over the use of tablets as a primary device.

For parents of 2nde through Terminale or families looking to provide computer access to their children at home, here are some things you should consider if/when you are in the market to purchase a new device.

### Things to consider:

1. Is this device going back and forth to school? (weight)
2. How much time will this device be used each day? (weight/screen size/battery life)
3. Does your child have advanced skills they will be exploring on the device? (video editing, advanced image editing or coding, 3D design or rendering)? (Performance, screen size)
4. How long should the computer be used before considering a replacement? (performance/specifications, grade level)
5. Do you predominantly use one platform or another at home? (Mac vs. PC vs. Chromebook – support, software purchases, etc.)
6. Larger computers are generally cheaper because they are less popular, but they weigh more, however, gaming laptops, thin/light OR workstation-level laptops are the opposite (cost more)
7. Computing platforms don't matter as much these days. What matters most is software compatibility/availability – Is there something your child needs to use that ONLY exists on one platform or another?
8. If you have different types of computers at home, support is typically handled through the manufacturer or third-party service (Apple, HP, Lenovo, for example or via Microcenter/Best Buy Geek Squad, etc.) – If you are using a single platform at home, consider the implications of adding a different one. Many families have a variety of devices at home (Mac/PC/iOS).
9. Generally speaking, newer processors, with increased RAM (16GB or more) and larger hard drives, will last longer, but will also be more expensive.
10. Average lifespan of a computer is 2.5-4 years (can be longer on some platforms and/or with advanced processor/RAM/hard drive configurations). NOTE: There is a relationship between cost, platform, and longevity
11. Business-class computers will typically last longer than consumer models and have potentially better warranties
12. Where possible, try to avoid the three months to a year of a brand-new technology (processors, operating systems, etc.) as they may have bugs that you will need to work through

<sup>1</sup> Device assigned for in-school use. Additional uses may be allowed under certain circumstances

<sup>2</sup> Device assigned for in-school use. Additional uses may be allowed under certain circumstances – May change in the future

<sup>3</sup> Devices travel to and from school daily.

13. We are not going to talk about desktops here, but the specifications noted below will also apply. There are other features in desktops like video cards, etc. to consider if it will be used for more advanced tasks (gaming, programming, graphic design, video editing etc.)
14. Touch screens and 2-in-1 computers are more common now for PCs. Many are stylus enable as well – Small increase in price for more engaging input options
15. If you need a larger screen, consider purchasing an external monitor for your home

### Specifications you should look for in a new computer:

#### Processors:

**Apple:** M-series processors (current processor is the M2, M3, and M3 Pro/Max/Ultra chips) on 13-inch MacBook Air/Pro/iMac 24” (desktop), M2/M2 Pro/ M2 Max for MacBook Pros

**Chromebook:** Intel Celeron/Pentium/N-series, Intel Core and AMD Ryzen Processors (higher-end Chromebooks)

**PC:** Gen 14 and Ultra (just starting to appear) or 13 (Gen 13 Processors are widely available) Gen 12s and 11s can be found easily on the market) Intel Core Processors -

<https://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/products/details/processors/core.html> - We recommend an i5 or faster OR AMD Ryzen 5 or 7 – 5000 Series or higher

#### RAM:

**Apple:** 8-16 GB of RAM (NOTE: RAM is an expensive upgrade on all Apple Products)

**Chromebooks:** 4-8 GB of RAM (NOTE: Average Chromebooks come with 4GB)

**PC:** 8-16 GB of RAM (NOTE: Some manufacturers charge quite a lot for RAM) – 16GB is starting to become the

standard in many Gen 13s

#### Hard Drive Capacity:

**Apple:** 256-512 GB

**Chromebook:** 32-64GB (NOTE: As this is a Google device, most of the files are stored in the cloud, higher-end Chromebooks will have storage like a PC/Mac 128-256GB)

**PC:** 256-512 GB (higher-end machines may come with 1-2 TBs)

#### Screen Size (Size should be based on use):

**Apple:** 13.3” - 16” (13” is “standard”)

**Chromebook:** 11” - 15.6” (11” – 13.3” is “standard”)

**PC:** 13.3” - 17.3” (13.3” – 14.1” is “standard”)

### Typical price range for a new computer

**NOTE:** Lower-priced computers will usually mean shorter lifespan. Price ranges represent the average price of a computer you would buy a student.

**Apple:** \$1100-\$1800

**Chromebook:** \$200-\$900<sup>4</sup>

**PC:** \$600-\$1300<sup>5</sup>

#### Examples:

##### Apple:

MacBook Air (M2/M3 is the current standard - M1 can still be found but are several years old now) – 13” OR 15”  
MacBook Pro 13” OR 14” (M3 is the current standard)

<sup>4</sup> Chromebooks are based on Google technology and are added here as it is a platform that we use at the school. It doesn't run programs like a traditional computer (Mac/PC). Higher priced Chromebooks should be looked at carefully for features/performance

<sup>5</sup> More if you are looking for more specialized computers with advanced screens, wireless, processors, storage, etc.

**Chromebook:**

Acer Chromebook Spin – Various Sizes and Models with (314, 515, 714, etc.)  
Lenovo 500e (our current device) (11.6”) – Current Gen 4 is a 12.2  
Lenovo Flex 3/5 Chromebook  
HP Chromebook x360 14c  
HP Elite Dragonfly Chromebook  
Lenovo Chromebook Duet (3 or 5)  
Acer

**PC:**

Dell XPS 13/15  
Asus Zenbook  
HP Envy 13  
HP Spectre x360 – Various Sizes/Versions  
Microsoft Surface Pro (Current version is 9, but 7s are still available at incredible discounts)  
Lenovo X1 Carbon

**Best Places to Purchase:**

**Apple:**

Microcenter  
Amazon  
Best Buy<sup>6</sup>  
Apple (usually have deals for students in the mid to late summer – Generally college)

**Chromebook:**

Microcenter  
Amazon  
Best Buy  
Directly from the Manufacturer<sup>7</sup>  
Costco<sup>8</sup>

**PC:**

Microcenter  
Amazon  
Best Buy  
Directly from the Manufacturer<sup>9</sup>  
Costco<sup>10</sup>

**Links to Sale Sites (may stop working when sales/promotions are over):**

Best Buy (will change as we get closer to the start of School (Mid-July through parts of August):  
<https://www.bestbuy.com/site/back-to-school/parent-hub/pcmcat1530201105801.c?id=pcmcat1530201105801>

Microcenter:  
[https://www.microcenter.com/search/search\\_results.aspx?Ntt=5206&Ntk=Adv&N=4294967288](https://www.microcenter.com/search/search_results.aspx?Ntt=5206&Ntk=Adv&N=4294967288)

---

<sup>6</sup> Microcenter and Best Buy routinely have sales on Apple Products, where Apple does not

<sup>7</sup> Manufacturers typically will have regular seasonal and Back-to-School sales and may also offer student discounts

<sup>8</sup> Costco, on PC products typically offers a free, extended warranty on computers

<sup>9</sup> Manufacturers typically will have regular seasonal and Back-to-School sales and may also offer student discounts

<sup>10</sup> Costco, on PC products typically offers a free, extended warranty on computers

Apple:

No Current K-12 promotions – If you have a child in college, you can buy through those promotions:

<https://www.apple.com/us-edu/shop/back-to-school>

Costco:

<https://www.costco.com/laptops.html?keyword=OFF>

**NOTE: If you have a child enrolled at a university, their bookstores also offer discounts to students and should be considered for students that may be graduating or for an additional home computer.**

## Final Thoughts

Purchasing a new device for your child or family is an important decision.

When are the best times to buy a computer?

- January
- Holiday weekends
- Back-to-school season
- Black Friday
- Small Business Saturday
- Cyber Monday

Refurbished computers are also available at places like Micro Center and Amazon. These computers will typically come with a 90-day to 1 year warranty and may offer much more computer for a lot less money. You can typically save between 20-40%.

Warranties on computers are tricky and usually add between \$200-\$400 to the price, depending on features like accidental damage coverage, battery coverage, data backup/protection etc. Check the base warranty on the device you are considering (90-days to 1 year; three years are sometimes standard for higher-end or business computers). There are dozens of devices out there to choose from so focus on specifications, needs, price, and online reviews to provide some guidance as you work through this process. Make sure to invest in great accessories (padded bags/backpacks/cases) to ensure a long and happy life with your new device!