

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we start the second trimester of the school year, I would like to share some updates regarding our policy to keep student iPads at school. Being that this is a new policy for us, we have learned some things and have had to monitor and adjust throughout the first trimester to establish some concrete protocols for how we will respond in certain situations- specifically around if/when we will allow a student to bring home an iPad. This information is outlined below as well as answers to some other common questions we have gotten this trimester.

Why did we make this change?

This change was made to address key challenges we've observed over the last few years that have been negatively impacting our school learning environment: students coming to school without their iPads charged and ready for learning, increased instances of iPad damage and misuse, and a tendency for students to postpone schoolwork to the evening so they could use class time to socialize or engage in other off-task behavior (playing games or watching videos on their iPads) instead of using class time effectively. The combination of these issues resulted in classrooms regularly having 50% of their students or more not having or using their iPad for learning. By keeping iPads at school, our goal is to ensure students have consistent access to their devices during the school day, students learn to make the most of their class time, reduce instances of iPad damage, and reduce other unnecessary distractions. As we finish up the first trimester, I can report that we have seen improvements in all of these areas!

When/how can students complete their work without bringing iPads home?

- **Class Time:** Teachers allocate time during lessons for students to complete assignments using their iPads. Unfinished work is usually due to students not using class time appropriately or student absences.
- **Flex Time:** Students have a 25-minute Flex Time period each day for a total of about 2 hours per week. This is dedicated time each day for students to catch up on work or seek help from their teachers. For students who do not have work to complete or do not need support from a teacher, extension activities are offered. Flex Time, if used responsibly, provides time and support for students to work on class assignments, get caught up from an absence, and/or retake/redo an assignment/test.
- **After-School Academic Support:** We provide additional support on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:15 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. for students who need extra help or time. Students have access to their iPads during this time.
- **At Home Devices:** If you have access to the internet and have a personal device at home (computer, tablet, phone), you can use the following directions for your student to login into some of their school accounts at home using their ISD47 Google credentials to login to Clever, Schoology, and Google.
 - **Safari** - Go to Google.com then click to sign into Gmail or Google Drive using your student's ISD47 account. This is an important first step as future websites like Clever and Schoology are going to use this account when checking for access.
 - **Clever** (<https://clever.com/in/storm>) - Clever is a Bookmark website for teachers to use so students can click the bookmark icons and automatically sign into connected eBooks or sites. Clever will only work if the ISD47 email is used in Safari. If your student uses a personal email account with Safari, Clever won't be able to differentiate between the two accounts.
 - **Schoology** - Two options: You can go to the App Store and download the free Schoology app and have your student login using the school "SRRMS" and their ISD47

email account. The other option is to use the web version via Safari and navigate to <https://isd47.schoology.com/> and use their ISD47 email address to login.

- **Google apps** - to make the transition from school and home easier, please download/use the free Google Drive, Docs, Slides, Sheets from the app store. Then sign into the apps using the ISD47 account.

Exceptions to This Plan:

We have recognized that there are emergency and/or unique situations that require exceptions which would allow a student to bring home their iPad for a limited amount of time (usually 1-3 days, no more than 5 days). The following criteria will be used to make this determination.

Part 1: Attendance Criteria

To qualify for taking an iPad home, the student must meet one of the following conditions:

- Chronic Absenteeism:** The student has been absent from school for more than **10 days** this trimester due to documented illness or other excused absences.
- Recent Absences:** The student has missed **3 or more consecutive days** due to a documented illness, emergency, or other excused absences.

**** Please note that iPads will not be sent home for vacations.** If a student is absent due to a vacation, the iPad will remain at school and arrangements can be made to send it home after their return.

Part 2: Behavior and Responsibility Criteria

To be eligible, the student also must meet the following behavior and responsibility standards.

- Previous Device Usage:** The student has no history of lost, damaged, or stolen iPads. This includes students taking an iPad home without permission.
- Agreement to Terms of Use:** The student and parent/guardian agree to follow the school's technology use policy, including:
 - Returning the device on time and in good condition.
 - Using the device solely for educational purposes.
 - Reporting any damage or issues immediately.

If you have questions or believe your student qualifies for an exception, please fill out the [iPad Take-Home Request Form](#) to apply. This form will also be posted on our school website. Questions should be directed to your child's [grade level counselor](#).

Thank you for your support and partnership as we make this change at SRRMS. We understand that adjusting to a new policy can be challenging. We appreciate your flexibility and understanding as we work together to create a more structured process and ultimately a more effective learning environment for your child. By reinforcing the importance of using class time and Flex Time effectively, you are helping to instill essential habits of preparation, focus, and responsibility that will serve them well beyond the classroom.

Best regards,

Laura Arndt
Principal
Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle School