



Student Laptop Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What kind of laptop do I need to purchase for my child?

Students should have a laptop with wireless internet capability, at least 256GB of storage, and a minimum of 8GB of RAM, though additional RAM is strongly recommended for better performance and multitasking. Tablets such as iPads are generally not suitable substitutes for laptops, and Chromebooks are not recommended because they often lack the performance and storage capacity needed for daily academic use and may have difficulty accessing the campus printing system. For families who are able, we recommend purchasing an Apple laptop (such as a MacBook Air, MacBook Pro, or MacBook Neo) because they are easy to manage and include strong built-in accessibility and assistive technology features. With educational pricing, the MacBook Neo is a budget-friendly option that works well for students' needs.

What kind of software needs to be on the laptop?

Our school uses Google Workspace for Education, which requires internet connectivity to access platforms such as Google Classroom, Google Docs, Google Slides, and Google Sheets. Students are required to have the Google Chrome browser installed, as it supports many of the assistive technology tools used in classes and will serve as the primary browser for accessing school resources. In addition, school printer drivers will be installed on student laptops with the assistance of school technology personnel to ensure students can access campus printing services. Additional software may also be installed on student laptops depending on the courses they take, such as Adobe Photoshop for photography classes, programming software for robotics courses, and other course-specific applications.

Can my child bring an iPad instead of a laptop?

No, iPads are not suitable substitutes for laptops in our program. While iPads have improved significantly over the years, they still do not provide the same level of functionality and performance as a laptop, particularly when accessing and using many of the web-based tools and academic platforms required for coursework.

What happens if the laptop breaks?

Assets School does not have the resources to repair or troubleshoot student laptops. We strongly recommend purchasing insurance or protection coverage when buying a laptop, especially for students who may be prone to accidental damage. Many manufacturers and retailers offer accidental damage protection plans that can help cover repair costs. Families may also wish to purchase additional technical support services. For Mac users, we recommend AppleCare, though families should note that certain types of damage may require an additional service fee. You may also want to check with your homeowner's or renter's insurance provider to see if supplemental coverage is available for lost, stolen, or damaged laptops.

Do students have access to inappropriate sites at school?

Assets School uses a filtered network and proxy system that students must access in order to use Wi-Fi on campus. This system is designed to block most inappropriate websites and online content. While the internet is constantly evolving and no filtering system is perfect, the school makes every effort to provide students with a safe online environment. Please note, however, that many students also have personal cell phones with independent internet access through their wireless providers, which does not go through the school's network filters. As part of our commitment to digital citizenship, Assets School teaches students to use technology responsibly and has established expectations, policies, and consequences regarding appropriate technology use, including the use of personal devices. These guidelines are outlined in the school's Internet and Technology Use Agreement and the student handbook.

What happens if my child forgets to bring their laptop to school or their laptop is being repaired?

Students are expected to bring their laptops to school every day. Laptops should arrive fully charged and should also be accompanied by a power cord so they can be recharged if needed during the day. We understand that there may occasionally be situations where a student forgets their laptop or needs to have it repaired. In these cases, **the school has a limited number of loaner laptops available for temporary use**, provided that a parent-signed permission form is on file with the office. Please note that loaner laptops are intended only for short-term situations and should not be relied upon as a student's regular device.

What are some of the benefits of each student having their own laptop?

At Assets, we help students better understand themselves as learners, build on their strengths, and use appropriate accommodations, tools, and support strategies to address challenges. A personal laptop is an important tool that helps students access learning more effectively and work more independently. In addition, technology skills are essential for success in both college and future careers. Many colleges require students to complete coursework online, and most professions rely on technology in some capacity. By helping students learn how to use laptops and integrate assistive technology into their daily routines, we are preparing them with the skills and confidence they will need for future academic and professional success.

If you have a question not listed here, please email High School Principal, Nikki Hamai Sakai <nhamai@assets-school.org> and/or High School Technology Coordinator, Peter Tan <ptan@assets-school.org>.