

St. George's High School Laptop Program

FAQ

How do students use laptops in the classroom?

Most courses in the high school have students use the laptop on a regular basis for note taking, data collection, research, data analysis, graphing, and writing assignments. Teachers integrate the laptops when and where it is appropriate to facilitate the child-centred approach to instruction in order to lead to enhanced student-learning. In addition, the variety of media-based software installed on the computers lead to enhanced learning and creativity (i.e. video creation, long-distance video-conferencing, etc.). Accessibility and portability leads to “anytime, anywhere-learning”. Students are given a brief introduction at the start of the school year with the basics of use and care of the computer.

How does the School encourage responsible use of the laptops and the Internet?

The school encourages an atmosphere of responsibility, and we, as in all situations, expect students to use good judgment. Students must be aware of the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) found in the Student Handbook, and they are held accountable if they violate any of the rules outlined in the AUP. The school uses Web filters to prevent students from accessing inappropriate web sites and social media sites such as Facebook. In class, games, social networking, instant messaging, or other activities not approved by the teacher are not permitted. Responsible digital citizenship is an important part of the curriculum.

Why were Apple MacBook Air laptops selected?

13-inch MacBook Air laptops were selected for their extremely lightweight design, as well as their completely solid-state interior which provides much better reliability. Their successful use at St. George's over the past several years has also confirmed our decision.

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Were tablets such as the iPad considered?

The school considered iPads, Windows-based laptops and tablets, MacBooks, and Chromebooks. The disadvantages of switching to tablets included limited software and a lack of a comprehensive file management system. The general consensus was that tablets are a great alternative for those who previously did not have a one-to-one laptop but that it would be a step down for our students to use as a primary machine who are used to the robust computing power of a laptop.

How does the laptop lease work?

Students entering Grades 7-9 will receive a laptop that may be new or used, depending on the cycle of the lease. While they may have some slight cosmetic blemishes, they have all been inspected for internal damage and passed through diagnostics to ensure that they are completely functional for school purposes.

All students entering Grade 10 will receive a new laptop. Upon graduation, they will have the option to purchase the laptop for a small fee, and will be able to take it for use in CEGEP (note that the laptop will be reset to factory-settings for legal purposes before they take it). In addition, they will benefit from 1 additional year of the AppleCare warranty, which will cover the computer for any manufacturer defects during the first year of CEGEP.

Will students be allowed to install their own software?

Yes, students will be allowed to install their own software, provided that it is a legal copy of the software and complies with our Acceptable Use Policy. An administrator password must be entered by the Coordinator of IT before installation of any application.

Will we be able to connect to our home network and printer?

Yes. However, our school technicians will not be able to assist you with this process.

Wouldn't it be cheaper for me to just buy my own computer for my child?

No. It is a misconception that it is more cost-effective to purchase your own computer or bring an older one in to use at school. Below are some of the reasons why.

1. There are no up-front costs (purchasing a MacBook Air with AppleCare can cost upwards of \$1,700).



2. Purchasing a new computer in Grade 7 will mean that by the time your child reaches graduation, the computer will be 5 years old, which can mean a lot of wear-and-tear and outdated technology.
3. Because the Grade 7-9 computers are leased and returned to Apple, the cost is significantly lower than the purchase price spread over three years.
4. Laptops purchased individually are not covered by our repair program, potentially resulting in very expensive repairs (a broken screen can be \$600) and lengthy downtimes for the student.
5. Software costs would be much higher, as the school cannot install educational licenses on non-school-owned computers.

What if the laptop is accidentally damaged? What is covered in the warranty?

It is the student's responsibility to ensure the computer remains in good working order. It is therefore highly recommended that a strong protective case be purchased. The school pays for repairs, minus a deductible paid by the family as per the situations below:

- Any repairs due to defects in manufacturing or that are covered under the AppleCare warranty are free of charge.
- Any repairs due to accident or negligence resulting in the repair or replacement of individual parts will incur a charge of up to \$250.
- Any repairs due to spillage or that require the full replacement of the computer will incur a replacement charge of up to \$500.

How does the school charge me for these repairs?

The school will collect a refundable deposit of \$500 per child at the start of the school year to cover the cost of repairs. Once depleted, the deposit will need to be topped off before the laptop is returned to the student. Upon graduation or withdrawal from the school, the remainder of the deductible deposit will be returned to you.

What if my child loses his laptop? Do I need to insure the laptop?

In the event of theft or loss, parents are responsible for the full replacement cost of the computer as determined by St. George's School. Some parents choose to include the laptop in their home insurance to cover these costs.



Whom do students contact for technical support?

St. George's is an Apple-certified Self-Service Provider and provides maintenance for the laptops. The laptops should not be taken elsewhere for repair (including the Apple Store) without the express consent of the Technology Department. Note that any outside service may result in the voiding of the manufacturer's warranty.

What is included in the Technology fee?

Each student is charged a technology fee which not only covers the cost of the leased computers but also software programs and licenses, dedicated on-site support, infrastructure costs such as servers, internet and wireless connectivity, and other technological services and products used within St. George's. This fee is set annually and is a separate line item on your invoice.

Why are technology fees different from school to school?

It is very hard to compare technology fees across schools as there is no consistency as to what is included in the charge. For example, some schools include tech support in their numbers while others do not. Also, because a large portion of technology costs are fixed, a school with a large student population over which to spread these costs will appear to have lower fees per student.