

May 16, 2016

Dear 4th-7th Grade Swallow Families:

Swallow has had a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy for the past several years. Additionally, the district has increased the amount of mobile devices available to students in an effort to provide necessary technology access for our students to supplement devices brought from home. Despite these efforts, teachers and students have reported the need for more access to internet-ready mobile devices, especially at the upper grades.

Last year, the Swallow School Board approved requiring students in the upper grades to provide their own device. This would guarantee device access to our older students, as well as increase the availability of our existing school-managed devices to our younger grades. Several area schools, as well as Arrowhead, currently have a bring your own device requirement in place. The committee developed a plan for all 6th-8th grade students to purchase a device that they would be required to bring to school every day next year, or alternatively to lease one through the district. Care was taken to ensure that the minimum device requirements for this program would match those of Arrowhead so that these devices could be used beyond Swallow.

At their May 11th meeting the Swallow School Board voted to approve expanding this plan to require all 5th-8th grade students to bring an internet-ready mobile device, meeting minimum specifications, to school each day beginning next school year.

**What is “Bring Your Own Device?”**

Bring your Own Device is a way to ensure technology-rich teaching and learning opportunities because all students have technology with them on a daily basis that can be counted on for instructional activities. BYOD takes advantage of our students’ devices to allow for a more personalized approach to learning in that students can exercise more choice in selecting digital tools to assist on their learning journey, under the guidance of their teachers, while also providing far more ways for them to display their learning outcomes in digital formats. We believe that by fostering a more personalized learning environment on a more consistent basis, students will find even more inspiration for learning and become even more creative and independent critical thinkers.

**Will technology-rich learning experiences help make my child a better student?**

Yes, we believe technology-rich learning experiences allow for students to demonstrate responsibility and accomplishments electronically. Teachers will be able to easily monitor, adjust, respond and enrich learning. Your child will learn how to access information so they can dig deeper in their learning and analyze, evaluate, and create new levels of knowledge.

**Does my child have to bring a device to school? We have a computer at home.**

Yes, your child should bring his or her device to school each day. A computer at home will definitely help students to complete work outside of class. Today, teachers are making use of devices during class to monitor learning, and have students collaborate and create. Teachers are planning with the understanding

all students are bringing devices every day. If your student does not bring a device, he or she will miss essential parts of lessons.

**I am concerned my child will waste time during the school day on inappropriate websites.**

Our wireless network is filtered for inappropriate materials. We cannot guarantee, however, that every inappropriate game, visual, or website is blocked. Our staff will monitor student use and will ask students to put devices away if they are abusing the privilege or breaking the acceptable use policy. In order to reinforce responsible technology use, you should also have this discussion at home.

Outside of school access to the internet through devices will not be monitored or controlled. It is the responsibility of parents to monitor their own child's internet access outside of the school campus. While there will be supervision of students, Swallow has limited ability to control student device usage at Swallow because the devices are completely under the control of the students. We will not be able to block the installation of unauthorized applications on the devices. Common Sense Media - [www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org) is a free online resource with educational parent videos which may help the conversation regarding internet safety, privacy, and ethical use.

**What will happen if my child does not comply with the student conduct policy?**

Depending on the severity of the offense, a student could simply be asked to put his or her device away for the class period or face additional consequences in line with the district's Acceptable Use Policy and Student Rights and Responsibilities policies. We take digital safety and security very seriously at Swallow.

**What if I cannot afford a device?**

A Chromebook will be provided for children whose families qualify for the free and reduced lunch program.

**What happens if my child's device is damaged?**

If the device is leased through the school, the child should immediately report the damage to library staff. If the device is owned by the family, it is the responsibility of the family to get the device repaired.

**What is the District doing to support this initiative?**

To provide a choice for families who may not wish to purchase a device at this time, the district is planning to purchase Acer C740-C4PE Chromebooks as a lease option. **If this is of interest to you, please be sure to respond to the link at the end of this document by Friday, June 3.** The specifications of this device are as follows:

- Celeron 3205U processor
- Chrome operating system
- 4 GB RAM memory
- 16 GB hard drive storage
- 11.6", 1366 x 768 ( HD ) display
- Intel HD Graphics
- 802.11ac wireless protocol
- integrated webcam
- gray-colored case

- ❑ weighs 3.1 lbs

While we encourage everyone to purchase their own, families not wishing to purchase their own device can lease directly from the district. Leased devices are required to have insurance and can be leased for each school year for \$130. At the end of the school year your choice will be to a) pay the remainder of the cost of the Chromebook and own the Chromebook or b) return the Chromebook to the District in good working condition. Families will be responsible for damages not covered by insurance.

## **DEVICE OPTIONS**

### **What type of device should my student bring to school?**

The device should follow the [TLE@Arrowhead device guidelines](#).

### **Does a smartphone count as a device?**

Although a smartphone can be very helpful, we find students can be much more productive using a device with a full keyboard that can fully access Google Apps. The specifications for a suitable device include (at a minimum) a tablet-sized screen and full keyboard for this reason.

### **Is there a specific type of device you would recommend?**

No, buying a device is a personal decision and technology changes very quickly. Choose a device that best fits your child's needs. The device should follow the [TLE@Arrowhead device guidelines](#). Although we do not recommend any specific brands, we do recommend Chromebooks and laptops rather than tablet devices.

### **Are there suggested accessories?**

Yes, we strongly suggest a protective sleeve or case. If you are leasing a device, **this will be required**. A USB headset with microphone would also be recommended but not required. The accessories are listed in the [TLE@Arrowhead device guidelines](#).

### **Can I get a discount for devices and accessories?**

Parents are encouraged to purchase their devices through a company where they feel they can get a quality device at the best price with good support. The district discovered that there are not volume discounts for going through any particular vendor for this type of purchase at this time so it will be best to watch for sales advertised.

## **TECHNICAL DETAILS**

### **How can my child connect to the Internet at school?**

Students will sign in to the internet using the Swallow Student wireless network.

### **What if my child's device runs out of battery during the day?**

Students should bring their devices to school fully charged. We ask that battery life is one of the specifications you look at carefully when selecting a device. Swallow will provide limited numbers of

charging stations in classrooms and the LMC. A limited number of additional devices will be available in the libraries for checkout in emergency circumstances.

**Will the Swallow staff offer tech support for my child's device?**

Swallow staff may assist students with minor troubleshooting issues, but students and parents are responsible for the care and repair of their devices. It is recommended that students get a protection plan when buying a computer.

**What if my computer is broken or has a virus and I need to take it in for repairs?**

If a student's computer is unusable for any reason, he or she may borrow one of the school Chromebooks during the school day on a limited term basis provided the students have a note from home detailing what happened to their device and how long it will take to be repaired.

**We ask that ALL families please complete and submit the following form by June 3 so we can begin planning for next year. Please note that this information will be used to create the school district's purchase of devices for lease. We need your help ensuring this is accurate so that everyone has a plan for securing a device prior to the start of the school year.**

**Family Lease Request Form - <http://bit.ly/1WAnKtW>**