



21st Century Learning Initiative

BYOD, Device Buying Guide And Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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21st Century Learning Initiative Device Buying Guide

This document is intended to provide the requirements for bringing your own device (BYOD) or purchasing a device for the 21st Century Learning Initiative in your school. This information may be updated from time to time. Please visit your schools web page for the most recent version of this information.

General Information

Students will require either a laptop or tablet for the school year and the device will need to interact with the LRSD network environment. Windows, Macs and Chromebook laptops are well suited for this initiative as well as iOS and Android tablets. (If a tablet is the device you want your child to use, we do recommend it to have external keyboard compatibility)

Important Factors to Consider

Based on our experiences with previous year's group of students, we offer the following general recommendations to consider;

- **Cost:** Purchasing a new laptop or tablet can range in price from \$300.00 and up. However, a device in the \$300.00 to \$600.00 range will be suitable for this program.
- **Portability of the device:** You'll want the device to comfortably fit in their school backpack without weighing them down. On average a 15" laptop can weigh as much as 2.4 kgs or 5.6 lbs or higher
- **Battery life:** Choose a device with at least 6 hours of battery life, enough for the school day
- **Keyboard:** A keyboard for taking notes, completing assignments and researching is strongly recommended
- The device must have WIFI/wireless capabilities
- Suitable CPU, Memory and Storage capabilities
- **Screen size & graphics:** Screens larger than 9"
- **Durability:** Is the device built to last with solid construction and parts
- **Latest version:** The newer the device, the less you'll have to worry about compatibility and the next upgrade
- **Software:** Buying additional software packages is not required. All Louis Riel School Division students are eligible for the Microsoft Student Advantage program. This program provides **Microsoft Office** to all students who attend Louis Riel School Division free of charge for up to 5 computers (Mac or PC). Students will be directed how to download and install the Office suite at the beginning of the school year.
- Used devices that meet the basic requirements will work providing they have batteries capable of at least 4 - 6 hours.

When to Purchase

Purchasing the device as close as possible to the start of the school year (July-August) will have a couple of advantages:

1. Historically there have been great back to school specials available from computer vendors.
2. The device will not have an extra few months of use and drain on its battery life.

What to Purchase

Purchasing a new laptop or tablet can range in price from \$300.00 and up. As mentioned above, a device in the \$250.00 to \$600.00 range will be enough for this program. While LRSD doesn't recommend the purchasing of any specific type of device, below is a purchasing guide with examples of devices that are getting favorable reviews over the past few months:

There are three main categories of devices to consider:

Laptops	Tablets	2 in 1s
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laptops are the best, most cost-effective choice for this program. • They come in three types: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Windows based devices 2. Macs 3. Chromebooks <p>Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry level: \$250 (HP Stream Laptop) • Mid-level: \$600+ (Asus ZenBook) • High level: \$900+ (Mac Air) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A touchscreen without a keyboard (you can connect one using Bluetooth) • May include a digital pen • They come in roughly two types: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. iPads 2. Android tablets (Samsung) <p>Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry level: \$400 (Samsung Tablet) • Mid-level: \$600 (Samsung Tablet) • High level: \$900+ (iPad) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A laptop that converts into a touchscreen tablet • Typically, more powerful and quicker than a tablet, but with a touch screen • May include a pen • More expensive • These are all Windows based devices <p>Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry level: \$500 (Acer Switch 3) • Mid-level: \$800 (Acer Spin) • High Level: \$1000+ (Surface Go)

- *All Windows based laptops and tablets must be running **Windows 10**.* If you have a Windows laptop that is running Windows 7 or 8.1, LRSD students can download Windows 10 for free from our web store. <https://lrsd.onthehub.com> Students must fill out the registration form first before they can sign in.
- All Mac and Chromebook laptops should have the newest operating system installed to ensure that the device is compatible with all our online systems. This is also true for all iOS and Android tablets.
- Only Chromebooks that can access the Google Play Store should be considered for this initiative. Chromebooks manufactured in 2018 fall into this category.

Devices NOT Compatible with the School Program

The following devices will not work with the school division's internal systems and are not recommended. Several factors including; limited screen size or screen resolution, the inability to connect and use LRSD online documents, assignments or software are factors with the devices listed here:

- Devices with screens less than 9 inches
- Older Chromebooks – Chromebooks made in 2017

Purchasing Used Devices

Used laptops/tablets are a great option for families to consider. Please consider the following:

- Used devices that meet the basic requirements will work providing they have batteries capable of at least 4-6 hours.
- Used devices must meet the minimum requirements detailed in the "General Information" paragraph on P.1.

Vendor Partnerships

Louis Riel School Division is proud to announce that it has 3 partnerships with stores/vendors that parents can make use of:

1. Powerland Computers – LRSD is proud to offer a purchase program for used, off-lease laptops at a very affordable price point. These devices are for families who need assistance purchasing laptops. To learn more about this program please contact your school for more information.

Purchasing Software

No additional software will be required beyond the device's operating system and an internet browser which all systems ship with. As stated before, all LRSD students are eligible to download Microsoft Office for up to 5 personal devices that they have for their school laptop or at home. <https://www.lrsd.net/schools/DCI/News/Pages/Office-for-Students.aspx>

Virus Protection

If you purchase a Windows device, you do not need to buy an Anti-Virus program. There is an antivirus program already built into the operating system (Windows 8 or higher). If your laptop is running Windows 10, we recommend you use Microsoft Security Essentials (Free). You can find a link to install the software here <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/products/security-essentials>.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: Will the students have open access to the internet?

A: No, Louis Riel School Division filters its internet feed blocking around 25 categories of information on the Internet. Students that are connected to the school's wireless system use the exact same filters that we have in place for all school owned devices.

Q: What if our device gets stolen?

A: Theft of personal items can be a concern in a building housing a great many people like a High School. Students need to take responsibility for safeguarding their personal property by not leaving any valuables unattended.

The School Division is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items but has put in place several measures to help secure student belongings;

- The school has provided individual student lockers in an area that is monitored by security cameras which will increase security while items are stored in these lockers.
- Louis Riel School Division will also register student devices purchased for the 21st Century Learning Initiative in the “**STOP Security Plate**” program <http://www.computersecurity.com/stop/> based on parental requests. The Stop Security Plate Program helps to deter the theft of devices and help to identify lost or stolen devices. Parents must notify the school that they wish to be registered.
- The school has also provided several charge lockers where students can securely store and charge devices overnight if they chose not to take the devices home.

Q: Do I need to have access to the internet at home?

A: No, internet access at home, although beneficial, is not necessary for students working in this program. At school the Division will provide free wireless access to the Internet throughout the building.

Q: Will the students do all their work on their devices?

A: We do not expect, nor do we encourage the use of student devices 100% of the day as this is impractical from a technology perspective in terms of battery life and not applicable as many classroom activities do not lend themselves to technology infusion.

Q: Do I need to buy a special Laptop case?

A: We don't encourage the use of Laptop cases for the program. Students typically have a backpack for carrying school supplies which they can also use to carry their device. Please insure the backpack has sufficient space to hold all the items a student will need to carry and if possible, has some padding or protection for the device. Laptop cases, although designed to carry and protect laptops, also inadvertently 'advertise' their contents and are more prone to be stolen if left unattended.