

# **MTCES 1:1 Chromebook Program**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Overview**

#### **Why is MTCES deploying a Take Home 1-to-1 Chromebook Program in grades 5-8?**

For some time the landscape of modern education has been changing. Emerging next generation curriculum differs from traditional textbook based curriculum by emphasizing collaborative learning experiences, demonstration of learning mastery using multiple methods (including non text based means), and use of online digital resources. In order to provide students access to this curriculum and learning strategies and to better prepare them for the digitally enhanced and information rich environment they will encounter in higher education and the modern workplace, MTCES recognizes that every student needs a school-managed educational computing device both at school and at home. The most equitable and cost efficient way to provide this is through a take home 1-to-1 Chromebook program.

MTCES has chosen this moment in time to take this next step due to the COVID-19 pandemic. By assigning chromebooks to individual students, we can eliminate some of the cross-contamination that happens at school.

#### **What is the cost of the program?**

For 5th and 6th grade, the cost of the program is \$100 per year, per student. At the end of eighth grade, the device belongs to the student. \$100 per year includes

Chromebook (including 1 charger) - \$219

Google Admin License (to be a part of the MTCES-Managed domain) - \$27

Extended Warranty and Accidental Device Breakage for 4 years. - \$154

For 7th and 8th grade, the cost of the program is \$25 per year. This is a rental fee intended to off-set the costs associated with the program. Ownership of these devices will not be transferred to the student upon graduation.

#### **Can we opt out of the program?**

There is no option to opt out. Chromebooks will be used as a primary vehicle through which access to curriculum, instruction, and learning will take place.

#### **Can we opt out of the Extended Warranty and Accidental Device Breakage?**

There is no option to opt out. Since these devices will be integral to the students' education, we need to make sure they have maximum operational time.

#### **What devices will students be using?**

Students in grades 5 & 6 will be receiving new Lenovo Chromebooks. Students in grades 7 & 8 will be receiving previously used, but good condition CTL Chromebooks.

In subsequent years, MTCES new Chromebooks will be issued in Grade 5 with the expectation that students keep their device for four years. Taken care of responsibly, Chromebooks should easily last 4 years.

### **What are my options for obtaining a device?**

MTCES will provide a device to your student. The device will remain property of MTCES until the student graduates from 8th grade.

Functionally, you can treat the assigned Chromebook as if you own it. Due to legal and liability issues, we officially transfer ownership when the student has graduated from 8th grade.

### **Can students bring and use personal devices at school (instead of leasing/buying/borrowing)?**

No. For filtering, content control, and asset management reasons, all devices need to be “managed” by MTCES. We are not offering a Bring Your Own Device option.

### **We already have a chromebook at home. Can my student just leave the school device at school?**

Yes! However, if you choose to leave your chromebook at school, you **MUST ALWAYS** leave it at school; if you choose to take it home, you **MUST ALWAYS** take it home. Each homeroom teacher or grade level team of teachers will develop their own system for storing devices overnight.

### **What does “school-managed” mean?**

“School-managed” means that a device that is enrolled in the school’s Google Chrome Management console. Enrollment requires a license to be purchased and assigned to a specific device. Once enrolled, MTCES can push out policies, filter web content, and manage apps and extensions.

Enrollment in the school’s Google Chrome Management console is also an important part of protecting your student’s online/data privacy and assisting students in creating a positive digital footprint.

### **Can students use a personal account on a school-managed Chromebook?**

School-managed devices are limited to logging in only from MTCES accounts (@mtces.org).

### **When will students receive their devices?**

Students will receive their devices within the first week of the school year. However, due to manufacturing, shipping, and increased demand, the new devices for grade 5 & 6 are back ordered and not expected to arrive until later this fall. Students in these grades will be receiving a previously used, but good condition Chromebook until the new ones have arrived. At that time, we will collect the temporary devices and distribute the new ones.

## Why did MTCES choose to go with a standardized school-managed Chromebook instead of a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) model?

There are several reasons for using a standardized Chromebook over a BYOD model:

First and foremost is student safety. Chromebooks were specifically chosen because they are designed to be more secure than laptops, to protect school and student data, and to prevent the introduction of malware. Since 2010, when Chromebooks were introduced, there have been no verifiable attacks on the Chrome operating system. For more information on the security of Chromebooks, please review the following article:

<https://www.androidcentral.com/what-makes-chromebook-so-secure>. We manage all school Chromebooks to ensure only school-approved apps and extensions are accessible to students, web content is filtered, and teachers can monitor student use during class.

Second is student experience. Chromebooks were chosen for their robust design and functionality in the educational setting. Chromebooks were designed with student lifestyle in mind: transporting to and from school, in and out of backpacks, accidental bumps and drops, etc. Teachers can only remotely manage Chromebooks in a classroom setting in order to lock down the computer screen to the task at hand and to guarantee test security when completing online assessments. Other computing platforms do not afford teachers the ability to remotely control, monitor, and push out content to Chromebooks. At the present time, teachers need the ability to be able to monitor and manage what students have access to during class in order to keep them focused on the learning task at hand.

Third, a uniform device platform ensures that a teacher's efforts are focused on instruction and engaging students in learning, rather than trying to troubleshoot a unique personal device. Teachers should not be put into a position of having to provide tech support to a myriad of device types to ensure that classwork can continue in the face of a tech problem with a personal device.

Fourth, MTCES can ensure equity of access when all students are using a similar computing platform. All students can easily be provisioned with the right software, the correct tools, and have similar user experiences without some students having a poor experience because their machine did not meet the proper specifications or have access to the right software tools. Finally, the MTCES Tech Team cannot guarantee support and security for an unlimited number of different computing platforms on a BYOD network. There are some configurations of devices and operating systems which have had problems associating to MTCES' network in the past.

## Registering for a Device

### What do I need to do to make sure my child receives a device?

All MTCES students in grades 5 through 8 will be assigned a device and a charger. You don't need to do anything extra.

## **Warranty & Insurance**

### **Does the school offer Accidental Damage coverage?**

All MTCES-managed devices are covered under a 3-year extended warranty with accidental damage protection. In the event a device malfunctions or is damaged and in need of repair, the school-managed device may be turned in to Mr. Bailey, and MTCES will assist in having the device sent back to the vendor or their authorized repair partners for servicing. The servicing center may choose to repair the broken part or replace the device with an equivalent device in good condition depending on the severity of the damage to the device.

MTCES will typically collect devices needing repair or servicing and send them out to the respective repair partners once a week (typically on Tuesday afternoons). Students dropping off a device for repair will be able to trade it in for a loaner Chromebook to use for the duration of the repair. Most repairs will be completed by the following week and returned to the student ASAP.

Accidental damage protection covers damage from normal wear and tear on the device including a broken screen, or a sticking key, but may not cover intentional or malicious damage, vandalism, or a device that has been submerged in water.

Please note that accidental damage service does not cover theft. You will need to check with your own homeowner's or renter's insurance to see if your policies cover theft of personal electronic items. (Many homeowner or renter's policies do.)

### **What happens if a Chromebook is lost or stolen?**

As with a lost textbook, parents would need to pay for the cost of replacing a lost or stolen device. Some parents may have property insurance or renter's insurance that covers the theft or loss of personal property that may cover such a situation.

## **Technical Support**

### **What if my student's Chromebook needs tech support or servicing?**

If there is a question about a device's use or accessing a particular resource, you can submit a ticket via the MTCES website: [MTCES.org](https://www.mtc.esd.k12.pa.us) -> Current Families -> Distance Learning Support. A member of the MTCES Technology Committee will answer questions as quickly as possible. Please be aware that these tickets are answered by Technology Committee volunteers who have families and jobs of their own. So, please be patient.

If there is a problem with the device's functionality, including damages, please bring the device to Mr. Bailey during the school day. We will work together to get the device fixed as quickly as possible. A loaner device will be provided to any student needing to surrender their device for repair.

### **Will someone be on campus to assist with troubleshooting and basic repairs?**

Mr. Bailey is available to students throughout the school day. If there is a question or an issue with a device, the student should bring the device to the computer lab and we will see what needs to be done.

### **Will my student be provided a loaner Chromebook if their device needs repair?**

Yes. MTCES will issue a loaner device to any student needing to surrender their Chromebook for repair. The loaner device may be a different model of Chromebook than the original device but it will still be able to access all student work.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Does the Chromebook come with a case or cover?**

No, the Chromebooks do not come with a cover. If you would like to purchase a case for your device, please ensure that you get the correct case for your device's specific model.

### **Where can we buy replacement power supplies (power bricks)?**

Replacement parts are not covered under warranty. Please let Mr. Bailey know that you need an additional or replacement charger. We can order it for you and add the charges to your student's tuition account.

### **Can parents of students in grades K-4 take part in the 1:1 Chromebook Program?**

No. The program is reserved for students in grades 5-8 for the 2020-21 school year. However, classrooms in grades 2-4 will have enough chromebooks for each student to have their own. These classroom chromebooks will not be allowed to leave MTCES.

### **Will students need to bring their Chromebook everyday?**

Students will be expected to bring their charged Chromebook to school everyday, unless otherwise stated by their teacher(s). If a student forgets their Chromebook, there will be a limited number of "loaner" chromebooks available. Additionally, each homeroom teacher will have a limited number of chargers available in their room. If students need to use a "loaner" chromebook, they need to see Mr. Bailey. Repeated violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action handled by the administration.

### **Why is the typical "lifespan" of a district managed Chromebook four years?**

While the physical Chromebook may last longer than four years, Google has pre-determined a limited length of time under which a particular Chromebook model will receive software updates. Once it outlives this pre-determined "age," Google will no longer provide regular operating system updates which are required to maintain remote management features and security standards. This prevents MTCES from provisioning network access and utilizing classroom management and device monitoring software on those Chromebooks making them insufficient for school use. For more information on Google's "end of life" policy with regards to managed

Chromebooks, please see Google's Automatic Update Expiration policy. MTCES has found that most Chromebooks will see enough wear and tear after four years that the older devices begin to struggle to provide a reasonable/reliable user experience. For most students, four years with one daily school computing device is a reasonable lifespan for that device. (Some students who take sufficient care of their devices might see those devices lasting 5 or more years, but at some point it may not be in a remotely "manageable" state that MTCES requires for school use because of the expiration of Google's automatic update policy.)

After a Chromebook has "aged out" out of remote management, it may still be adequate for personal use at home even though it would not be usable at school. "Aged out" chromebooks could still be used for personal gmail accounts or accessing student accounts from home in a non school-managed setting.

### **Can my student access video streaming services with their Chromebook ?**

During the school day (7am to 3pm) video streaming services are blocked. Before and After school, filters are reduced down to "CIPA" minimum standards. More information on the Children's Internet Protection Act can be found here:

<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act>.

### **If we go on-line before the new chromebooks have arrived, then is the purchase optional?**

If we have to shut down and go to remote learning, then the purchase would be optional for the 20-21 school year only. The technology fee won't be assessed until about two months after students have received the new chromebooks.