



# Westborough Public Schools - 1:1 Technology FAQ

## Frequently asked questions regarding Westborough's 1:1 program

### Overall Program FAQs

1: Why a 1:1 program?

A: Watching this [Teaching with Today's Tools](#) video may help clarify.

2: What will the program look like?

A: As currently planned, the program will start in the fall of 2015 with all students in grade 6 having access to a district-owned iPad for their exclusive use and all students in grade 8 having access to a district-owned chromebook for their exclusive use. In the fall of 2016 students in grades 4-6 will have access to a district-owned iPad for their exclusive use, students in grades 7-9 will have access to a district-owned chromebook for their exclusive use, and students in grades 10-12 will be expected to bring a suitable family-owned device that is dedicated to their exclusive use.

3: Will students be on their devices all day every day?

A: No. Teachers will decide when devices are used or not and will balance appropriate use of the device as they would any educational resource. Watching this [1:1 Technology in Westborough Public Schools](#) video about classroom use in the Gibbons Middle School may help clarify.

4: Will a range of non-primary devices be available?

A: Yes. Schools will have some desktops, Chromebooks, and iPads for students to use when needed.

5: **[updated]** How is the district paying for all this and is it sustainable?

A: The tech budget was increased and has cost savings, we're reallocating funds internally, the state awarded us a Digital Connections Grant, and community groups have raised funds for technology. Additionally, when families purchase devices for their 10-12th graders to bring to school for the BYOD program, it reduces the pressure on the tech budget which helps the district fund 1:1 devices for students in grades 4-9.

6: **[updated]** Is the plan sustainable?

A: The ramp-up phase puts short-term pressure on the budget but that reduces and stabilizes as the program reaches equilibrium.

7: Will we continue to have computer labs?

A: We expect they will become specialized labs, flexible learning and maker spaces.

8: Will my student be expected to use the device in school?

A: Yes, classroom instruction will be designed with these tools in mind.

9: **[updated]** Will having WiFi and internet at home be useful?

A: Yes, having WiFi and internet at home will be convenient for assignments that need it, but without it they can still be completed at school, the public library, or other locations with wireless internet access.

- 10: **[updated]** What if a student doesn't have access to any technology or WiFi outside of school?  
A: We are working to build community capacity and information resources to allow students and families to permanently resolve their access issues. The district will be able to assist with short-term issues as they arise.
- 11: **[updated]** How will OS and software upgrades be handled?  
A: Our technology staff will direct the updating of district-owned devices as needed. Students bringing their own devices will be in charge of managing them and will have access to the Ranger Tech Squad for assistance.
- 12: **[updated]** Is the device going to distract my child from their school work?  
A: Managing distractions is a learned skill that will be returned to as part of Digital Citizenship. District-owned devices will not have games installed. In-class use of all devices will be purposeful and teacher directed. Outside of class, the same strategies families use to help students focus on their work will apply to their use of the devices.
- 13: **[updated]** Can families purchase a device from the district?  
A: While the district is not able to sell devices, we are working to make value-oriented packages available from third parties.
- 14: Will our students be working and talking together as much in school?  
A: We value relationships and so expect that our students will work and talk together as much or more than they currently do without the devices.
- 15: I worry that it is not healthy for my child to have so much screen time. Does this mean he/she will have even more at home with their device?  
A: Only if you let them. Using computers and tablets is already a common part of homework, especially for the upper grades and this is an opportunity to exchange time they spend consuming media for time spent learning and creating.
- 16: Where in school can the devices be used or not used?  
A: The faculty will clearly articulate where and when the device can be used, and where it is off-limits. Areas like the gym, locker room, bus, etc. will be "device-free" areas.
- 17: Is the Internet filtered at school?  
A: Yes, all Internet access through our network infrastructure (WiFi) is filtered.
- 18: How can I filter Internet content at home?  
A: [www.OpenDNS.com](http://www.OpenDNS.com) is a free option for content filtering at home.

## Grades 4-9

19: Why iPads for grades 4 through 6?

A: In accordance with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, the iPad's strong multi-media access and creation tools allow iPads to support different ways for students to take in information and demonstrate understanding.

20: Why Chromebooks for grades 7-9?

A: As students get older more of what they produce to demonstrate understanding is text-based so a device with a built-in keyboard may be a better fit. Teachers in these grades have been using Chromebooks extensively with students this year with great success.

21: **[updated]** Can my student in grade 4-9 bring our family-owned device to school instead of using a district device?

A: No. Managing and configuring the device for school use requires features only available with devices purchased by the district.

22: Can the student or family add or install apps to the device?

A: To keep the focus of the devices on learning the district will install the apps required by the teachers or direct the students to do so.

23: Will the family be liable for the device?

A: Yes. Like all district property in the custody of a student, families will be expected to reimburse the district for repairing or replacing the device if it gets damaged or lost.

24: What happens if the device is broken or damaged?

A: To help limit families' liability in the event of damage, the district has purchased a protective case and Accidental Damage Protection on all district-owned devices that go home with students.

25: What are the limitations of the iPad Accidental Damage Protection?

A: If the iPad is damaged it will be exchanged for a factory refurbished one and the family will be required to reimburse the district for the \$49 service fee assessed by the vendor for the incident. The plan allows for up to 2 repair incidents over the three year life of the device.

26: What are the limitations of the Chromebook Accidental Damage Protection?

A: If the chromebook is damaged it will be repaired free of charge up to a cumulative repair cost of \$199, the initial cost of the chromebook. Families will be required to reimburse the district for all repair costs after the \$199 threshold has been reached.

27: What happens if the device is lost or stolen?

A: If a district iPad or Chromebook is believed stolen the police should be notified and a report filed. If an iPad or Chromebook is lost or stolen it is important to notify the school right away. The more quickly we can start tracking it down, the more likely we are to find and recover it. The district will work with the family to lock the device and activate geotracking. Families will be required to reimburse the district for a replacement unit if it is not recovered.

28: Can we get the device repaired ourselves?

A: No. To preserve the district's investment in the devices they must be repaired by the district using an authorized repair agent.

- 29: What if reimbursing the district for a repair or replacement represents a financial hardship?  
A: Please contact the school if a reimbursement will pose a hardship to your family.
- 30: Will insurance be available through the district?  
A: No. Families wanting additional insurance should purchase it through a third party insurer such as Securranty, Worth Ave Group, and GoCare or contact their insurance agent about including it in their homeowners or renters insurance.
- 31: How much does insurance cost?  
A: Typically we've seen rates in the neighborhood of \$40-60/year depending on deductible, length of contract, and cost of device.
- 32: **[updated]** Will I be required to purchase anything for my student in grade 4-9?  
A: No. The school district is supplying the device and the software/Apps. Any insurance you may want will be optional.
- 33: What security features are available? Can the device be locked or located if it is lost?  
A: iPads and Chromebooks can be tracked on the school WiFi, iPads can be locked and located through "Find my iPad", and Chromebooks can be locked and located through the device manager. All devices will have an asset tag and identifying numbers will be recorded.
- 34: **[updated]** What about the built-in camera?  
A: Video communications and still photography present both an opportunity and a challenge. Our plan is to start with the cameras shut off and turn them on when we feel the students are ready to use them purposefully and safely.
- 35: Can the camera and/or microphone be activated remotely?  
A: No. We have no remote camera or audio capabilities nor would we want to.
- 36: What will students do if their device is out for repairs?  
A: We will have loaner devices available for them to use until their device is repaired.
- 37: What will students do if they leave their device at home?  
A: Students who leave their device at home may be determined to be unprepared for class by the teacher and will have to get by as best they can without it.
- 38: When will grade 6 students start taking devices home?  
A: When we determine that they are ready, probably in the November-December timeframe.
- 39: Which version of the iPad will be distributed to students?  
A: For the academic year 2015-2016 students will use the iPad Air 2 w/WiFi, 16Gb and no 3G/4G cellular capabilities.
- 40: Will my student be required to take the device home?  
A: Taking the device home opens up many learning opportunities that may otherwise be unavailable. Please contact your school if you have specific concerns about your student's ability to take the device between home and school safely.

## Grades 10-12

41: Why Bring-Your-Own-Device (BYOD) for grades 10-12?

A: High school students are more varied in how and where they focus their studies and we believe that by grade 10 they should know what works best for them and be able to use it in school.

42: **[updated]** What if students in grades 10-12 forget their device?

A: While we will have devices available for students to check out and use at school for the day, there will not be enough to cover large numbers of students without devices.

43: Will the school be liable if a family-owned device is broken, damaged, lost, or stolen while at school?

A: No. The school, the district, and its employees will not be responsible for student property and will be held harmless in the event of loss.

44: **[updated]** What types of devices will be suitable for students to use?

A: For a consistently good student experience we feel it is necessary for student to bring devices that are able to access the curriculum through Google tools, have screens and keyboards (physical or virtual) that are large enough, have long enough battery life, and are secure and up to date. Specific criteria devices must meet are:

- Laptop/netbook/chromebook/tablet (e-readers are not suitable)
- 9.7" or better color screen (tablets w/smaller screens are not suitable)
- 802.11 n/ac Wifi capable (devices with older, slower 802.11b/g WiFi are not suitable)
- Recent and up to date operating system that is authorized & licensed (devices that are jail-broken or have counterfeit or unlicensed operating systems are not suitable)
- App or full feature browser capable of accessing Google Drive/Docs/Sheets/Slides/Classroom/Gmail, streaming videos from YouTube/Vimeo/other major sites, viewing PDFs
- Chrome browser
- Student's name is clearly and conspicuously visible on device
- Can operate for at least 2 hours between charges
- Protected from malware and viruses
- Free from illegal and inappropriate material

45: **[new]** Our family hasn't yet acquired a device for our child, what should we buy?

A: If your family doesn't already have a device to dedicate to your student and you don't know which computer you want for them that is fine because we will soon be releasing more information about the BYOD program and descriptions, specifications, and approximate costs for a range of representative devices. Families can expect that appropriate devices will range in cost from \$200 - \$1,200. We are committed to equity and making sure everyone has a device.

46: **[new]** What if my family can't provide a device for my child?

A: If your family can't provide a device for your student then contact district administration for assistance in resolving long and short term challenges.

47: What if I still have questions?

A: Contact your school with any questions you may still have.