

2019-20 Frequently Asked Questions for Students and Parents/Guardians

What is the purpose of 1:1? The district's vision is to prepare our students for college and careers. Most careers require an understanding of basic technology usage. Increasingly, college students are expected to utilize technology for classwork and homework, including the submitting of assignments. Providing students in grades 6-12 with early opportunities to participate in digital experiences will teach them digital literacy, or the skills associated with using devices for educational and workforce purposes.

Why 1:1 devices instead of classroom sets of computers? There are multiple reasons that 1:1 devices were chosen in place of classroom sets. Some of those reasons are bulleted below.

- With classroom sets of devices, students must check-out a device as they enter a classroom and check-in the device when they leave that classroom. As a result, instructional time is lost for this process every time a student switches classes throughout the day.
- Students are automatically logged into the school networks when their devices are turned on in a CMCSS building. This allows for tracking of student usage while in our schools. The time it takes for students to be logged-in to network servers is less when students are using the same device repeatedly.
- It would actually have been more expensive to purchase classroom sets of computers than it was to purchase 1:1 devices. Each teacher would need to have the number of devices for their largest class size, meaning that smaller classes would have multiple devices not used during the day. Classroom sets of devices would also not be utilized while teachers were on planning periods, without students in their classrooms.
- Feedback sessions were held with parents/guardians and students who piloted the use of 1:1 devices in high school academies. The response was overwhelmingly positive about the increased availability of devices for classroom use when students had individual access to computers.

Where did the money come from to purchase 1:1 devices? When talking with teacher focus groups over the course of the last two years, many expressed frustration with the traditional textbook structure used for purchasing textbooks. Many also expressed that they did not actually use textbooks in their classrooms on a regular basis or that textbooks were not as up-to-date as the materials they could access online. As a result, money that has traditionally been spent on textbooks was reallocated to purchase technology and associated resources.

Why can't my child bring his/her own laptop to use during the school day? Student safety is our first priority. For security purposes, using district devices allows the Technology Department to monitor student use of devices and implement systems and safeguards that will help to block inappropriate behavior while on school grounds, as well as minimize the risk of computer viruses. Teachers have the ability to load unique software or assignments onto student devices through the Technology Department. Additionally, when all devices used by students are issued from the district, teachers and support staff can be continuously trained in how to help students troubleshoot problems that arise from the use of the district devices.

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What will be the expectations for use of laptops and homework? What if a student does not have WiFi at home and cannot complete the work? Expectations for homework have not changed; the device can be used, but will not be required for the completion of homework assignments. WiFi accessibility will not be a necessary component of any required assignment.

Can the laptop handbook agreement and protection plan form be signed and paid for online? Yes. Parents/guardians will be sent a claim code and link via email or text. This link will direct parents/guardians to all online forms and payment portals.

Who should a parent or guardian contact if he or she is having technical problems with the online form or online payment website? Technical problems associated with signing handbook agreements or paying for protection plans should be emailed to studentlaptops@cmcss.net. Please note, this is not an email address for instructional or policy questions; those should be directed to teachers, administrators, or Directors of Curriculum and Instruction.

Is there a grace period for protection plan payment? No. If the parent/guardian indicated interest in the protection plan when signing the laptop handbook agreement and did not pay with a credit card online, the protection plan must be paid before the laptop can be distributed to the student. Students can pay for the protection plan using cash, check, or money order through the bookkeeper at their school until the day of distribution in their building. All unpaid protection plan requests will default to 'declined' beginning the week of August 12 with school laptop distribution. If a parent/guardian changes his or her mind about purchasing the protection plan, he or she can inform their school of their decision so that the school can change the student's protection plan status in PowerSchool to 'declined' before the laptop will be distributed.

Can the protection plan be paid for at the school rather than online? Yes. Payment can be made at the school rather than online. The school can accept payments in the form of cash, check, or money order. Credit card payments cannot be accepted by school personnel and must be made online when completing the laptop handbook agreement. Parents are not required to come to school in person to make cash, check or money order payments, but can instead send the payment to school with their child as long as the Handbook Agreement has been signed.

If a payment is to be made by check, to whom should the check be written? Checks should be written to CMCSS, not the school attended by the student.

Can the protection plan be purchased after the student is issued his or her device? No. All protection plans must be paid in full prior to the student taking possession of the device beginning the week of August 12, 2019. Students cannot opt into protection plans after their devices have been issued.

Why is the online payment for the protection plan \$36.14 rather than \$35? According to Tennessee Codes, state funded agencies, including schools, are required to pass the payment processing fees along to the end user. Schools are on fixed budgets that do not allocate monies to cover these fees.

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When making a payment online, does the parent/guardian get a receipt? Yes. A receipt will be sent to the email address associated with the payment.

Why is the \$35 non-refundable if a student doesn't damage the laptop? This is similar to an insurance plan. The \$35 covers the risk of unintentional damage.

What about theft? Because theft is not covered in the protection plan, students should be intentional about where laptops are left both in school and outside of school. The Technology Department does have the ability to track the location of devices within the school, so students should immediately report missing devices to teachers, administrators, or the SRO to begin the tracking process. Devices stolen outside of the school should be reported to law enforcement officers and the police report should be shared with the school.

What if a parent/guardian cannot afford the protection plan? The protection plan is not required. However, those who opt out of the protection plan will be held financially responsible should something happen to the device.

Can the Laptop Handbook Agreement and Technology Protection Plans be signed on paper rather than online? It is the preference of the Technology Department that all forms be signed online. For parents/guardians who do not have internet access, laptops are available in the front office of each school for this purpose. Extenuating circumstances that do not allow a parent/guardian to come to school to sign these papers electronically should be discussed with the building administration.

Can parents opt out of receiving a device for their students? For the optimal learning experience, all students in grades 6-12 will be issued a device. Many traditional classroom resources, such as textbooks, have been replaced by online textbooks, technology enhanced curriculum, and many CMCSS assessments will be delivered in an online format. For students with extenuating circumstances at either level, parents/guardians should talk directly with school administrators about their concerns.

How will students be monitored? How will we prevent cyberbullying from increasing? All computers used on the CMCSS network are monitored for appropriate usage including content, sites, and keywords. In addition, access to open social media sites and known inappropriate sites is blocked through our district filters. Consequences for both use of devices and bullying are also addressed in the Student Code of Conduct.

How will students safely carry devices between classes in middle schools? Can they carry laptop bags or book bags? The addition of online resources has minimized the need to carry traditional textbooks. Students are encouraged to purchase a padded sleeve for transportation of laptops between classes. Any padded sleeve is appropriate to fit a Lenovo ThinkPad with the dimensions of 11.81 inches x 8.27 inches or a Dell Latitude with the dimensions of 12.75 inches x 9 inches.

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How will the laptops stay updated? The Technology Department can push updates out to student computers as needed through the CMCSS network. Students will be required to turn in laptops at the end of every school year for updates. With the terms of the district's technology lease, devices are replaced every five years.

What is the size and type of laptop? The district supplies two devices depending on the year the student was first issued a laptop. The two devices have slightly different dimensions:

- Lenovo ThinkPads: 11.81 inches x 8.27 inches
- Dell Latitudes: 12.75 inches x 9 inches

If my child is new to the district after the start of the school year, when will he or she be issued a laptop? A parent or guardian will need to wait 24 hours from enrollment for their child to receive a PowerSchool account. Once that PowerSchool account has been assigned, a parent/guardian can request a laptop claim code by visiting <http://studentlaptops.cmcss.net> and clicking on the button at the bottom of the page that looks like this:

 If you do NOT have a claim code, click here.

Once all forms have been signed, and if applicable, fees paid, the student can be issued a laptop.