We have just completed our fifth year of The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program. These devices, along with Google Apps for Education (GAFE), allow students to access their materials from home or school, collaborate with other students and correspond directly with their teachers.

A summary of the basic requirements for BYOD devices in the 2018-2019 school year for incoming 7th grade students or 8th grade students purchasing new devices can be found below:

- Any Windows 10 laptop (Digital pens are helpful with Google Keep, Microsoft OneNote and/or other note taking apps, but are optional.)
- Any Apple MacBook with OS X (High Sierra is the latest, but not required)
- Chromebooks, new this year to the list, as there are several that come with touchscreens and a stylus that make it comparable to more expensive machines. These run all the Google Apps for Education perfectly.

   AND

- A protective carrying case is **required.** The device itself does not necessarily need a case, but a protective case is required for traveling to and from classes and home.
- Antivirus software is **required** to be installed on the device. Avast is what the school uses and is free for personal use, however, other products, such as McAfee and Norton may be used as well.
- Additional monitoring software may be required to be installed on your student's device for the two years they are using their personal device on our network. This is not optional and is a condition of the BYOD program.

One thing to consider when purchasing a device is where your student may go to high school. For example, the Academy of Entertainment Arts at Dixie Hollins High School uses Macs, while St. Petersburg High School uses Windows machines in their computer labs. LCC Day School introduces and teaches skills to students that help them succeed in high school, college, and extend beyond the classroom. We, and most parents, hope their device lasts well beyond its time at LCCDS, however, technology changes quickly and some devices, such as the Chromebooks are becoming a less expensive alternative for their two years in the BYOD program.

Please note: Students are encouraged to purchase devices like the Microsoft Surface Pro with a digitized pen or a similar device with a stylus. The stylus is especially beneficial in science and math for drawing diagrams, charts, and math formulas. However, some students prefer to use pencil and paper to draw or type their notes in their device, so a digitized pen or stylus is not required. It will be up to the student and their family.

Some other issues to look for are size, processor speed, memory, and software.

SIZE: The 8 to 10-inch tablets are small and can be easily stored. The 11 to 17-inch tablets are a little larger, but still very mobile. It is really a personal preference. Test out a keyboard on the different sizes to see which best fits your student.

PROCESSOR: Generally, the faster the processor (GHz), the higher the price. Try to find a good deal with the fastest processor you can afford. Intel m3 and i5 processors are all very good, with the Intel Core i7 being the best. There are other processors like AMD Ryzens, however, do your research and shop around.

MEMORY: Devices with at least 4GB of RAM are recommended, but the more the better. Also, look for machines with Solid State drives. They access memory faster and withstand quite a bit of banging around. For hard drive memory space, it depends on your software needs. If your student stores most of their files in the cloud and uses online programs, you can purchase 64GB machines for less, but 128GB machines are recommended if you want the device to last through high school and beyond or load additional software packages (Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office Suite) on the device. Chromebooks don't require as much memory as they use Google Drive for storage and very little on the device itself.

SOFTWARE: No additional software is required by LCC Day School as we are a Google Apps for Education school. Students may use Google Keep or Microsoft OneNote to take notes on their device or they may choose to type their notes in a Google Doc. Many students have purchased a subscription to Office 365 or bought the Student version of MS Office to have Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, and OneNote. However, it is not necessary, as Google Apps offers basic, comparable features in Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, and Drawings, and is linked to their school email accounts.

Please do your research! Read the reviews, good and bad, on Amazon, CNET, TechRadar or PCMagazine before purchasing your machine. You'll feel better about making an informed, educated decision. When you talk to store representatives, remember they do not normally use these machines the way your student is going to use them.

Once you have made your purchase, please consider the accidental damage insurance. Quite a few of our students used theirs in the past and were glad they had it. Also, purchase a padded protective carrying case. Students may not use a drawstring backpack or bring their normal backpack to class. They may have a carrying case for their device only (device must fit snugly) with a shoulder strap.

We are excited to continue the BYOD program with all we have learned in the past few years. Please email all technical questions or concerns to Felicia Mendenhall, our Technology Integrator at fmendenhall@lccdayschool.com.