

GOUSD Bring Your Own Device Program Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is “Bring Your Own Device”?

A: BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) is just as it sounds. Students will bring their own portable devices such as a laptop or netbook. Bring Your Own Device allows schools to bring technology into the classroom. Such an approach can save money, allow students to use their own devices, and encourage a student-centered approach to learning.

Q: Will access to a personal computing device make my child a better student?

A: Portable computing programs are very effective at engaging students in the learning process and have a large number of success stories to report. Access to a personal device gives students access to “anywhere, anytime” learning and collaborative platforms such as Google Docs and Edmodo.

Q: Does my child really need to bring a device to school? Isn’t a home computer adequate?

A: A desktop computer at home can certainly be an asset for any student. However, instruction that supports technology tools focuses on the benefits students receive from having a personal information access tool that enables anytime, anywhere learning. It’s not just about having access to a computer; it’s about having a computer available whenever needed to assist learning. Research has shown that, even in situations where there is a desktop computer at home, students use their laptop more and in different ways than they used the desktop computer.

Q: I am concerned that my child will abuse the Internet and/or be targeted by a predator.

A: While connected to the Internet from school your student must pass through GOUSD’s firewall, which includes Internet filtering, monitoring and site blocking. Although it is not 100% foolproof, it does an excellent job of keeping the Internet safe for the majority of students. GOUSD cannot monitor, filter or block Internet sites when the computer is connected to the Internet at home. GOUSD cannot monitor and review each student’s activity, nor can it block every loop-hole that a creative and tech-savvy student might be able to find. If you are concerned about your child’s activity on the Internet at home and/or at school, you can purchase software such as eBlaster, which sends a daily e-mail of your child’s activity on the Internet, including time spent at each site, E-mail, instant messaging, words typed, sites visited and more.

Common Sense Media – <http://www.commonsensemedia.org> – is a free online resource with educational parent videos that can help open a dialog between parent and student regarding Internet safety, privacy and ethical use.

Hardware and Software Considerations

Q: What types of computing devices may my child bring to school?

A: In general, Students may use any device that has the following characteristics:

- 10" or larger screen size
- Keyboard (on-screen keyboards not included)
- Wireless Access

This includes devices in these general categories:

- Laptops
- Netbooks
- Some Tablets with accessory keyboards

Q: How can my child's computing device connect to the Internet?

A: Gold Oak Union School District provides a wireless network to which students may connect while using their devices in the building.

Additionally, Students will not be allowed to use their own data plan while at school. **GOUSD recommends that parents do not purchase a device with a data plan.**

Q: Are there suggested accessories?

A: A protective sleeve or cover is suggested. This will provide more protection for the day to day use of these computing devices. A headset with microphone will be useful when accessing a website with audio and/or video. Please be aware that while carrying a computer in a bag from class to class, care and caution must be exercised.

Q: What are the most important features to take into consideration?

A: Almost any portable computer that is three years old or newer should be fine. A good general test is if the computer will run Microsoft Office it should be sufficient for most tasks. Because we have a wireless network, the speed of the wireless card is something to take into consideration. Also, any personal device must have some sort of updated and reliable virus protection: For personal computers, free antivirus/spyware software includes:

Avast: <http://www.avast.com/free-antivirus-download>

Microsoft Security Essentials: <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/products/security-essentials>

Q: Are there any specifications for the type of laptop, netbook, or tablet my child may bring to school?

A: Buying a computer is a personal choice. Ultimately, each person will need to choose the device that works best for his/her child.

Generally speaking, as long as the device is able to connect to the wireless network and access the World Wide Web, it should suffice.

Q: How long will this tool last my student? Will it take them through (middle school, high school)?

A: There are many new technologies such as cloud computing and web based applications that may affect the long-term usefulness of your student's device; although these factors cannot be controlled, GOUSD will not make any infrastructure changes that will cause devices to become obsolete.

Q: Will the district technology department provide support for the devices that my student brings?

A: No.

GOUSD will provide support information and documentation on the District website to assist your student to connect to the GOUSD WiFi. If the student experiences issues with their device, they will need to bring it home to get it fixed.

Whose Responsibility Is It?

Q: Who pays for the technology brought to school?

A: These devices will be purchased by and remain the property of the family.

Q: Who is responsible for any repairs or updating to personal computing devices?

A: Students and/or their families are responsible for their personal computing devices at all times.

GOUSD will not have the technology support staff to repair or update personal computing devices.

Q: Who is responsible for damage, loss, or theft of devices your child brings to school?

A: Families must stress the responsibilities their children have when bringing their own computing devices to school. Any devices students bring to school are their sole responsibility.

Gold Oak Union School District takes no responsibility to search for lost or stolen devices nor is there any assumption of financial responsibility by GOUSD for damaged, lost or stolen personal computing devices.

Q: Will the family need to have Internet access at home?

A: No.

It would be helpful, however, to have some form of Internet access (wired or wireless) in order for a child to make full use of school resources from home, as well the multitude of resources available on the World Wide Web, but, it is not required in order for a child to use a personal computing device at school.

Miscellaneous Information

Q: How will a child's education differ if the family does not have an Internet-connected device to bring to school?

A: Many lessons are collaborative allowing students to work together, sharing information accessed through personal devices. When the work is individual, students may use computers and other mobile devices located in classrooms and/or in the Media Center.

No child's learning experience or academic performance will be affected because he or she does not have an Internet-connected device to bring to school. GOUSD is committed to reducing technology inequity so every child has access to technology-supported learning.

Q: Will my child need to have a signed Responsible Use Policy on file?

A: Yes. In order for the Gold Oak Union School District to supervise student use of the computer network and the Internet, both the Student Responsible Use Policy and the Bring Your Own Device Student Addendum forms must be signed by all students who want to have access to educational resources. Parents/guardians are also required to read and sign the agreement. Signing the document indicates that the student and parent/guardian have read and understand the expectations of the Gold Oak Union School District.

Additionally, parents must specifically authorize their student's use of the Internet and the release of **Personally Identifiable Information** inherent with the use of Google Apps for Education and other online services.

Q: When can my child use the electronic device at school?

A: Students may use their electronic devices in class as instructed by the teacher or other school employee.

Students may use their electronic devices during classroom instruction or when otherwise authorized by school personnel provided that the devices are being used for academic purposes only.

Q: Will my child be expected to use his or her computing device both at school and at home?

A: As with traditional assignments, some assignments may need to be completed at home.

Q: Will students be able to print documents from their personal computing devices?

A: Students will not be able to access printers at GOUSD schools from their personal computing devices. We will provide alternatives as follows: (1) printing capabilities from school computers, and/or (2) electronic delivery of documents through email or other online methods.

Q: Where will my child's work be stored?

A: Students will be encouraged to store their work on their district provided Google Docs accounts. In so doing, the student will have access to their work wherever they have Internet access.