

Summit Christian Academy

Secondary Student Technology

Requirements

Elementary students at Summit are provided with age-appropriate technologies, but Secondary students are required to purchase and maintain a portable computer as part of their educational toolset. We require students to have relatively new computers that are easy to use, maintain, and with few support distractions to students and staff.

Browser-based Computing

Updated/current Chrome browsers (or equivalent – Edge, Brave, etc.) are used by all our cloud-based educational tools. Summit will occasionally provide additional computing tools and platforms to complement these during technology classes and labs.

Costs

Computer component (CPUs, LCDs, memory, etc.) prices have always been volatile and computer prices fluctuate as a result. If you find a laptop you want in advance, waiting for a good sale can often yield savings of \$100+. Typical costs for a laptop recommended below are around \$500-600. A cheaper laptop will likely sacrifice power or reliability. Higher costs are unnecessary for basic educational laptops but can improve gaming or other uses for it.

Warranty/Insurance

Good computers don't require extended warranties or service contracts – 1 year is typical and sufficient in most cases. If your student is prone to dropping or mistreating their electronics, then opting for a contract that includes damage can help you avoid re-purchasing a computer mid-year.

Recommendations

New(er) Computer

We recommend purchasing a new computer for your student at Summit – or using a recent model less than 2 years old – for a few reasons:

Newer computers tend to:

- Have longer battery life – students spend less time looking for power outlets
 - They're more power efficient and have newer batteries with more charge capacity
- Have fewer maintenance issues – students spend less time troubleshooting hardware and software compatibility issues
- Be more easily maintained - both the software and hardware

Minimum Specifications

Display Size

13-15.6 inches: display sizes smaller than 13 inches tend to constrain the visual usability of the computer when using complex applications; greater than 15.6 inches tend to become bulky carrying in a backpack and finding desk space. Larger laptops weigh more but might also have a bigger battery.

Memory

8 GB RAM is an absolute minimum – your student won't require more.

Windows

- CPU: Intel Core i5 (*maybe* can use an i3)
- Sufficient ports – multiple USB, Audio, Display
- Brands – the only reliable ones I've used are HP and Dell (and *maybe* a Microsoft Surface)
- Storage: 256 GB SSD (minimum size, don't get a HD/*hard* drive)

Mac

- CPU: Intel Core I5
- Storage: 256 GB SSD (*maybe* can use 128 GB instead)
- Ports: newer Macs tend to have few ports (for audio and other devices) and generally require the purchase of wireless versions or adapters– keep this in mind when purchasing them.

Audio

Students need a way to listen to audio presentations without disturbing their classmates. A pair of inexpensive wired headphones or earbuds are recommended. Wireless ones can be used but must be charged periodically.

Mouse

Many applications requiring regular manipulation of text and graphics are much easier to use with an external mouse instead of using a built-in trackpad. A inexpensive 3-button USB mouse addresses this perfectly. Again, wireless ones can be used, but must be charged periodically.