

Technology Guidance

As mentioned in **Installment Three**, all students TK-8th grade will be using **Zoom** and **Google Classroom** with their own school accounts. Specific Zoom instructions and Google Classroom account information will be sent Sunday. **All students will need to have access to a dedicated device to use for distance learning.**

How can I prepare for Distance Learning at home?

1. Check in with your **Internet Service Provider (ISP)** to ensure your internet speed and bandwidth is sufficient for your family's needs. Consider how many people will be using their devices at the same time and for how long (i.e.: mom and dad working at home plus 3 kids in Zoom calls with their teachers).
2. Ensure each child has **access to a dedicated device** to use that can support both Zoom and Google Classroom functionality. *(Note: As we anticipate a return to campus, it may be helpful for students, grades 3-8, to bring devices. We are currently investigating how our network infrastructure can support this possibility. As you are evaluating which devices your students should use, durability and portability are important factors to consider.)*

The following devices should support student learning:

- PC (desktop or laptop)
- MAC (desktop or laptop)
- **Chromebook – Recommended** (see below)
- iPad
- Android Tablets*

*Ensure that the tablet will support Zoom and Google Classroom

If you have questions about your device, please reach out to the Tech Support Team-see below. We are happy to help you test your device.

3. Provide each child **a dedicated space** to work.

Each family is different, and each student is different. It may take a few days to find a groove that works best for each student. Some families have all of their students working at the table while others have each child in their own room at a desk. Either way, ensure each student is seated at a table or desk with space to write and to store their school supplies.

4. Ensure each child has a set of working **headphones with an attached microphone**, especially if they will be working in a shared space. [See an example here.](#)
5. Ensure you have access to a **working printer**. Our goal is to minimize the need to print, but there will likely be occasions where printing will benefit your child.

Frequently Asked Questions

What type of device do you recommended?

We recommend using a **Chromebook** because:

- Chromebooks works best for Google Classroom.
- Chromebooks allows students to multi-task. Students can have their Zoom window open and be able to work on their class assignments simultaneously. While iPads are excellent devices for students in some ways, they do not work well for multi-tasking.
- Chromebooks function like a laptop providing students with a strong introduction to computers.
- Chromebooks have a keyboard and a trackpad.

Is it possible to borrow a Chromebook from the school?

Yes, we have a limited number of school Chromebooks available to loan out on an as-needed-basis, though these do come with known limitations regarding video conferencing since they are older, lower-end Chromebooks. They were not built to handle the level of use with video conferencing and internet browsing required for distance learning, but we've found a solution! Students can **use a separate device for the Zoom Room** (smartphone or tablet) while using the Chromebook for Google Classroom.

To request a Chromebook, please contact Tech Support.

If I were to purchase a Chromebook, what would you recommend?

We recommend mid- to high-level Chromebooks that are capable of handling video conferencing and web browsing simultaneously.

One challenge for students can be the trackpad, especially for younger students. A device with a touchscreen and/or the addition of an external mouse may help minimize frustration.

Being mindful that once on campus it may be helpful for students to have a device with them, durability and portability are important factors to consider.

These are our top recommendations based on price and functionality:

- [Acer Chromebook 712](#) - \$300 on CDW. This mid-level Chromebook is made for younger students with a durable, spill-resistant keyboard. It has lower screen resolution and because of high demand, may take longer to receive.
- [Acer Chromebook Spin 11](#) - \$309 on Amazon. This mid-level Chromebook will enable multi-tasking. It is a smaller screen with a lower resolution.
- [Lenovo Chromebook Flex 5](#) - \$409 on Amazon. This mid-level, touchscreen, 2-in-1 laptop/tablet offers a lot of bang for your buck! This had the #1 recommendation from wirecutter.com.
- [Google Pixelbook Go](#) - \$650 at Best Buy. This is high-level touch-screen Chromebook is smaller, lighter, and faster and has a longer battery life than other Chromebooks. It's more expensive, but highly reliable.

If your purchased device is on backorder, we have limited school Chromebooks available. To request a Chromebook, please contact Tech Support.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I already purchased a non-Chromebook device for my child?

We realize that many families purchased devices for their children recently that may not be a Chromebook, and **that's ok!**

If you're concerned about how your device will work for distance learning, please reach out to the Tech Support Team for help weighing the known pros and cons and solutions.

How do I access Tech Support?

If you have any more questions or need to consult with someone on the Tech Support Team for advice, please feel free to contact us at techsupport@ncapschool.org.