Good Day CSS Middle School Students and Families,

I hope this letter finds all of you having a wonderful June and enjoying the first weeks of summer. I wanted to touch base to clarify your child’s tech device needs at the middle school for the 2021-22 year. After discussion, I understand the current practice to be that middle school students have been expected to have access outside of school to a desktop computer or laptop that allows them to work with a variety of sites and apps online, that gives them the ability to conduct research through the internet, and that enables them to create demonstrations of their knowledge such as essays and presentations. It also seems that, over the past 18 months, as we met the challenge of online learning during the COVID pandemic, teachers and students have come to rely on each student in the middle school having access to a device while at school.

The middle school has two computer labs consisting of iMac computers which students will be able to use, and their computer science classes will be held in our newly updated lab with brand new desktop units. We also expect that students will bring their own devices for easy access in all classrooms and learning spaces. CSS DOES NOT EXPECT ANY PARENT TO BUY A NEW DEVICE FOR THEIR CHILD BASED ON THIS EMAIL; however, parents who are looking at buying a device for their child should understand some minimum requirements in order to make an informed purchase.

In order to ensure that we benefit from the lessons learned through our “Bring Your Own Device” experiences, here are some guidelines for technology that will best support the learning experience when we return to school in August. Devices that do not meet these guidelines have been struggling to effectively run Zoom meetings and other learning apps used in CSS classes.

**Bring Your Own Device guidelines**

Each device platform (Mac iOS or Windows) comes with its own minimum requirements. All devices must have the ability to connect to both 2.4GHz and 5GHz wifi networks and be able to go 2.5 hours or more without recharging. All devices must be able to run at least Chrome version 90 and the most recent version of Zoom.

*Apple MacOS devices:* Any Mac Laptop capable of running at minimum MacOS High Sierra (10.13) with a functional battery and charger. Student devices must be updated
to MacOS High Sierra (10.13) or higher before the school year begins. The majority of school iMacs are now running Catalina (10.15) and new Macbooks run Big Sur. It is recommended that the device be built after 2015 for functionality. To see if a device is compatible with High Sierra, [click this link].

**Apple iPadOS (iOS) devices**: Any iPad capable of running iPadOS 14.6 AND with a keyboard or keyboard case. The iPad should be able to run Zoom without issue in the event of remote learning needs. It is recommended that the student have the iPad in a case to prevent damage and that it be covered under a service plan in the event of damage. To see if a device is compatible, [click this link].

**Windows devices**: Intel Pentium, Core i, or Xeon Processor with at least 4 cores; AMD processors with 4 cores built after 2016. The device should have at least 8GB of RAM, keyboard, and be able to run the current version of Windows 10. NOTE: Celeron Processors are not supported on campus due to difficulty running multiple applications at once. Minimum device specifications are based on a Microsoft Surface Go or Higher. [More information can be found here].

**Chromebook devices**: Chromebooks are acceptable on campus but some applications, such as the CollegeBoard AP Testing Software, are not supported on them. In addition, CSS has noted a higher than average level of issues during e-learning from students using Chromebook devices, particularly while running Zoom. Therefore, a Chromebook that will be used for e-learning needs to have a processor with at least 4 cores/1.1GHz (Pentium or Core i processors), 4GB Memory (RAM), and a minimum of a 32 GB Hard Disk (often called SSD or HDD). While functional with Google Apps for Education, Chromebooks that run a Celeron processor will struggle during e-learning and should be avoided. Chromebooks should be manufactured no more than 3 years ago and capable of running ChromeOS Blink 91 (v9.1.269).

Some examples of recommended devices and specifications.  
**Apple:**
- [Current Macbook Air](#)  
- [Refurbished Macbooks](#)  
- [Current iPad Models (Must purchase keyboard separately)](#)  
- [Refurbished iPad Models](#)  

**Windows Devices:**
- [Surface Go and Keyboard](#)  
- [Microsoft Certified refurbished Devices](#)  
- [Many Functional Laptops can be purchased at Micro Center in Denver](#)