

Frequently Asked Questions iPad Initiative

This document was developed as a point of reference for families at St. Xavier High School looking for more information about our technology initiative. If you have questions that are not covered here, please email Jim Schurrer, Director of Technology Integration, at jschurrer@stxavier.org

1. What is the mission of technology at St. Xavier High School?

St. Xavier believes that the effective use of technology is necessary to live, work and thrive in today's interdependent society. As a result, we are committed to creating a learning environment for students that fosters creativity, collaboration, innovation and productivity. Students will be taught the appropriate, ethical use of technology and will be expected to use technology to take responsibility for their own growth and education. Finally, St. Xavier recognizes the potential of technology and will model for students how to use technology to fully live out the principles of the Grad at Grad.

2. What is the plan for iPads at St. Xavier?

For the incoming class of 2018, iPads will be a required device. Students in the classes of 2015, 2016 and 2017 may continue to bring a device of their choice, if at all.

An iPad2 or above is required. iPad Mini's are acceptable, though it's important for students to be comfortable with the smaller screen size. In regards to space and storage, a 16GB will be fine, but students will need to be aware of how much room is available. A 16GB iPad might not offer enough room for the student's eBooks, files and his personal music.

3. But why iPads? Why not stay with Bring Your own Device or select another device?

Over the course of our three years with Bring Your Own Device, we learned three important lessons that compelled us to move toward a one-to-one (1:1) environment with iPads. They are:

- a. Having a variety of devices led to much uncertainty for both the teacher and student. Teachers often stated that they could not effectively plan for student use of technology in class because they did not know the capabilities of the students' devices. As a result, the extent of technology usage in class often was to simply turn to the internet for quick research.

We know that technology can be used as a greater tool to promote higher-level thinking and want to enable our students and teachers to integrate technology in a way that will enhance their learning. By moving toward a single device model, we can focus on best practices for students and teachers for collaboration and creation

- b. Because we were an optional Bring Your Own Device, not every student had a device, which led to the inability for all students to use technology during classroom activities. Also, due to the variety of

devices being used in the classroom, not all students were able to complete the requirements of all assignments, based on device functionality.

- c. Under our optional Bring Your Own Device program, there was no financial aid offered for students, which resulted in a disparity. With our iPad initiative, we will offer financial aid towards the purchase of a device to families that qualify for tuition assistance. This is an important part of the program, as we want to ensure that all students have equal access to technology.

Selecting iPads as our primary tool allows us to harness the potential when each student has access to a device. Teachers can use the devices to help individualize instruction and create new ways of assessment.

Frankly, tablets were preferable to laptops due to portability, quick start-up time and battery life. An iPad could potentially last the entire day without needing to be charged. Further, when using an iPad in class, there is no educational time lost in the boot-up. In terms of comparing iPads to other tablets, the discussions centered less on performance, as many devices can do what an iPad does, but more around educational value. Given the developed educational apps and the large repository of curricular information in iTunesU, the device offers much more potential to be used in the educational environment than other tablets. Within the scope of the classroom environment, a teacher could easily find materials to help the struggling student or further engage the advanced student in independent learning.

4. What considerations have been made for those on financial aid?

While the details are still being set in stone, students on financial aid will have the option to receive an equivalent percentage of aid towards an iPad.

5. How are teachers preparing for the iPads to be used?

The 2013-2014 school year is being spent as an exploratory year. All teachers received their iPad in September and are spending time in departments learning how to best use the device in their classroom. Professional Development opportunities are being offered on a continuing basis, allowing teachers to explore the applications of the device in the classroom.

In addition, each teacher is part of a departmental learning team that meets on a regular basis. One of the learning team goals for this year has been to explore methods of iPad integration in the classroom.

Further, a majority of the classrooms have been equipped with the technology that allows teachers to project their iPad to the class. Thus many have already begun to use the iPad in the classroom.

6. How will my son be using the iPad in class?

The iPad will serve as your son's tool and one of the primary ways in which he accesses course content. The teachers will be posting their content on Edline or Moodle for the students to access in advance of class. It could serve as his notebook and will serve as his textbook for a variety of classes. On top of that, the iPad will be a tool for classroom discovery and exploration. While each teacher will use the device differently, it is our goal to have the device function as an important tool for your son in his daily learning at St. Xavier

7. Will my son be distracted? If so, how will St. X manage that?

Yes! Of course he will be distracted. Students are distracted in the traditional classroom and adding a device is one more potential cause for distraction. However, we recognize that as the students matriculate and enter the workforce, they will be using devices on a regular basis. Part of our rationale to move towards a single device model is that we recognize this as a major obstacle to success and need to teach the young men appropriate self-discipline and time-management behaviors.

Teachers will create their own policies for their classrooms and students will need to understand and abide by those policies.

8. What if my son has another device, can he bring that?

While your son is certainly welcome to bring another device, we are requiring that all freshmen make the iPad their primary device.

9. What happens if something better than the iPad comes out?

In today's technology world, there will always be a product that's advertising more speed, memories, pixels, etc. We realize that what makes sense for St. X now might not be the same in five years. As a result, this program will be evaluated on a yearly basis to determine its appropriateness, as well as the appropriateness of the device.

10. Will my son's textbooks be on the iPad?

Over the course of this school year, freshmen teachers and departments are working with publishers and our director of technology integration to assess the ebook offerings. We will move to digital books as appropriate and acceptable.

11. How will you train my son and teach appropriate usage?

An important part of this conversation will be how the students use the device appropriately. Up until their freshmen year, many students use iPads or other devices solely for gaming, and media consumption (Netflix, Youtube, etc). Thus even though your son might know how to use the device, we believe that he needs to be taught how to use it for educational purposes. We will spend time with the students at freshmen orientation as well as during their Information Processing class discussing effective strategies for use and self-discipline. During the optional study skills course in the summer, appropriate usage of iPads will be a significant part of the course, including a focus on appropriate behavior.

12. Who will he go to for help during the day?

In conjunction with the director of technology integration, a student help desk will be created to offer support during Flex and before and after school. Students can visit this desk for help with basic functionality of the iPad and various apps.

13. What happens if it breaks, is lost or is stolen?

Just like any other school supply, we will ask that your son repair/replace the iPad as soon as possible. St. Xavier will provide a small pool of loaner iPads in the interim, but because the device will be your son's primary method of content delivery, it is important that he has his own personal device.

If an iPad is lost while St. Xavier high school, we ask that all students report this to the AP's office as soon as possible.

If you are purchasing a new device, Apple offers an insurance called AppleCare+. This insurance is \$99 and is a two year extended warranty for the device. It will cover two instances of accidental breakage, such as a broken screen. For the first instance, there is a \$49 deductible. For the second instance, there is a \$99 deductible. However, this is only available for newly purchased iPads.

If you are interested in insuring a device that you already have there are a few third party insurance companies that will insure against breakage and theft. Worth Group is one such company.

14. I don't want my son on certain social media sites. Will this be an issue? What happens if a teacher wants my son to use Facebook or Twitter?

Currently there is a social media policy for all faculty and staff. St. Xavier encourages faculty to use social media with their students, however we also recognize that family rules and norms supersede. As a result there is a line in our social media policy that reads "Students can not gain any undue academic advantage from interacting with an adult on a public social networking site." Essentially, teachers cannot post something on a social media site that would directly affect a student's performance in class. Thus we ask all teachers to put official communication (such as homework assignments) on Edline. While your son might miss out on posts reminding him of upcoming due dates, your son's performance in class will not be adversely affected.

15. I don't have internet access at home. Will this put my son at a disadvantage?

If internet is not available at home, remember that St. X is a fully wireless campus. Hopefully your son might be able to use his time during Flex or after school to complete all work that requires internet connection. The ebooks your son needs for class will be downloaded on the device, meaning that your son can read them without internet, in the car, on the bus, etc.

16. What should I purchase with my son's iPad?

We recommend that all families invest in a sturdy case that protects all four corners of the iPad. Accidents do happen and it's important to have a case that will help the device withstand a drop or two. As you consider a case, consider your son and his activity level.

Many of our students find that external keyboards are helpful in using the device for word processing capabilities. While that is certainly not a requirement, your son might find it helpful. There are many brands of keyboards at different price points. One important feature to look for is how long the keyboard can last between charges.

Like keyboards, a stylus is an item that some might find helpful but is not a requirement.