

## **Bring Your Own Device Program Overview**

### **Announcing MetsConnect – Bring your own technology to school!**

eStem has reached another technology milestone with the implementation of the MetsConnect program. Beginning with the 2014—2015 school year, all eStem students are able to bring their own internet enabled devices to school. This includes laptops, netbooks, tablets, and any device that meets minimum system requirements. Students will not be able to use smartphones. Students who choose to bring their own device will have access to a guest wireless network similar to the current hotel models you may experience when you travel or when you visit a Starbucks or McDonalds. The Internet will be filtered the same as if the student was using a charter school owned computer. The use of the technology in the classroom will be at the teacher's discretion and the student will be responsible for any applications and support needed for their device.

The goals for the MetsConnect program are simple - to better engage and prepare our students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We also hope that through the program we are more equipped to support a true anytime, anywhere teaching and learning environment. The next generation of assessments are computer based and it's critical eStem students learn are using the same types of devices they will be tested on. To better prepare for this program, eStem staff will be participating in numerous professional learning activities. In addition, all students and staff will sign a new Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) now and at the start of the new school year.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

#### **Am I required to participate in this program?**

No. This is a completely voluntary program. There are no requirements that you bring any device with you to school.

#### **How do I connect to MetsConnect?**

You will be given a code after you have turned in your parent permission form and your device documentation. Once you have your code you will then select "Mets" from the list of available networks on your device and choose connect. You will be redirected to the page shown below where you will enter the code given to gain access to the Internet.



### **I can't get my device to connect. Where can I get help?**

Students will be given a unique user id and password to access MetsConnect. If a student is having a technical issue with their device their teacher may be able to provide guidance but are not expected to know how to connect every type of device to the network. Staff is only allowed to provide guidance and will not be allowed to work on a student owned device.

### **What are the minimum requirements for devices for MetsConnect?**

To connect to MetsConnect, a laptop/mobile device must have an 802.11a/b/g/n wireless network card and use a current Internet browser such as Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer or Safari.

### **What device should I buy for MetsConnect?**

**If** you are purchasing a new device, we highly **recommend** you purchase a laptop and stay with the major, nationally recognized brands. Dell, HP, Apple, Sony, Toshiba, and Acer are all known to make good, reliable machines. Repairs on electronic devices like these tend to be very expensive, therefore we urge you to also purchase an extended warranty that includes damage protection.

Please take note that we do not have a particular recommendation for the Operating system installed on the machine. eStem uses Microsoft Windows 7. The operating system must provide the capability to connect to the wireless network and get on the Internet.

The specifications below are intended to help guide you in the purchase of a new laptop. You are not required to purchase a laptop that meets or exceeds these specifications, but doing so will help to ensure that your laptop remains useful for a number of years.

- Any major brand laptop purchased within the last two to three years should be fine. *You will primarily use your laptop for accessing the Internet. This process is not particularly processor intensive, so there's no need to pay a premium for a top-of-the-line processor.*
- A 60 gigabyte or larger hard drive. *Many laptops have larger hard drives ... the choice is yours.*
- CD/DVD+RW drive

- At least 4GB of RAM (memory).  
*Again, more is better. This is the corner that most people cut, but we feel at least 4GB is necessary for your laptop to have a three-year useful life.*
- Three-year extended warranty  
*A warranty package usually adds two years parts and labor to the manufacturer's warranty. Some companies offer an optional screen damage warranty that covers the replacement of broken screens.*
- A carrying case or backpack  
*You may want to consider some added options, such as an extra battery, a security cable and/or theft insurance.*
- Antivirus Software  
*No computer today should be without this valuable piece of software. There are many packages available at little or no cost. Most new laptops come with a trial version pre-installed.*

### **What about Apple's iPad or other tablet?**

The iPad and Android tablet will be able to connect and access the Internet. (Remember these devices must have a traditional keyboard.) These devices may be limited in their capabilities. At this time, much of the content on the Internet is still in Flash format. The iPad/iPad2 devices **DO NOT** support Flash and therefore may limit some of the sites you can visit. Android based devices **DO** support Flash. There is an amazing amount of change going on within this market segment. Therefore, there is no real definitive answer on which device is better than the other. It is all a matter of personal preference and how you plan to use the device.

### **I already have a laptop computer. Do I have to buy another one?**

Not if it meets the minimum specifications listed in this document. If it does not meet these specifications, you may upgrade the computer or purchase a new one.

### **What happens if a family cannot afford to buy a computer for their child?**

We currently have charter school owned computers that are dedicated to the students. Students who come to school without a device will have access to these computers in the same manner they access them today. There are also laptop carts that are checked in and out for classroom use.

We are absolutely dedicated to the goal of putting tools into the hands of students to help support and enhance learning. eStem Public Charter School will begin to purchase laptops and carts instead of desktops for each campus. These carts and devices can then be checked in and out during the day.

**Will the students be allowed to share their personal device with others?**

Students **will not** be permitted to share their devices with other students. Each student must use their own device or those devices owned by the charter school. This will prevent students from being held responsible for damage to another student's device.

**What happens when the personal device breaks? Who fixes it?**

The upkeep of student owned devices will be the responsibility of each student and their family. eStem staff will not be allowed to work on non-charter school owned devices.

**Does eStem offer an insurance policy for personal devices?**

eStem does not offer an insurance policy for personal devices and recommends parents check with their own insurance providers.

**How will you handle stolen or damaged laptops?**

eStem accepts no responsibility for personal property brought to the school by students or staff. Students who choose to bring a personal device to school assume total responsibility for that device. Students should take all reasonable measures to protect against theft or damage of their device.

The following measures are recommended as a means to protect their device:

- Personal devices should have a label or other identifying marks to indicate the owner of the device.
- Personal devices should be carried in padded cases or backpacks at all times.
- Personal devices should never be left unattended for any period of time.

The Student Owned Device Information Form must be filled out. This form allows you to record the device's serial number in case of theft. Any time a theft occurs, you should contact a campus administrator to inform them of the offense.

**Will there be a safe place for storage of the machines when going to a class where a device isn't needed?**

Students should carry their device with them at all times. Teachers will inform students when they need to bring their device to school.

**Are there any software packages available to help track my device in case of theft or loss?**

There are several different packages available to help track devices. [LocateMyLaptop.com](http://LocateMyLaptop.com) or [LoJack for Laptops from Absolute Software](#) provides software primarily for laptop devices. [GadgetTrack](#) offers software for laptops as well as Apple and Android based devices.

**How will you handle students accessing inappropriate websites during school?**

All traffic on the MetsConnect network goes through our filtering server for monitoring and reporting. This is a requirement of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). The filtering takes place automatically and is the same as if a student was logged into a charter school computer. Keep in mind that we are not installing any special filtering software on your personal machine. Therefore, if parents wish to filter their child's activity while at home, they should install filtering software on the personal device.

**Am I still held accountable for the Acceptable use Policy even though I am using my personal device?**

Yes- The Acceptable Use Policy remains in effect regardless of the device you are using. Violating the terms of the AUP is a code of conduct violation and will be dealt with the same as an offence using a charter school computer.

**Am I able to connect my device to an eStem network port and gain access to the Internet?**

eStem only provides access from personal devices via the MetsConnect wireless network. It is a violation of the AUP to plug any non-charter school equipment directly into the wired network.

**Am I expected to use my computer both at school and at home?**

One of the goals of the laptop computer program is universal access. This means access to the learning tools on the computer at home and school. Not all lessons are designed in such a way that the product a student creates needs to be made using a computer; nor do all students prefer to use a computer to create every product. There may be times when it is an expectation of the assigned work, and if that is the case, the students may use their personal device (if available) or one owned by the campus.

**Will I need to have Internet access at home?**

While it is a preference, there is not a requirement for you to have internet access at home. In addition to the eStem school locations, there are several public areas that offer free wireless access (Starbucks, McDonalds, public libraries, etc.).

**May I install software on my computer?**

You have administrative rights to your computer and may install your own applications, provided that such applications do not violate the school's acceptable use policy. eStem staff will not be allowed to install any software on personal devices.

**What if my computer battery is out of power?**

You are expected to come to school with your laptop computer fully charged. This is part of class preparation. Teachers will inform students when they should bring their devices. Classrooms **are not** equipped with power strips for students to use if their battery is running low.

**Will computers be used in every class?**

Whether or not a laptop computer is used in class on any given day depends entirely upon your teacher's judgment about the best tools to use for instruction. Sometimes teachers lecture, while at other times they engage you in discussions, panels, or simulations, ask you to read silently or aloud, work in groups, or go on field trips. A computer is a very powerful tool, but it is not the only tool that teachers use to deliver high quality instruction.

**As a parent, how will I be notified if/when to send a device with my child to school? How will the campus communicate with me?**

Each campus will develop the procedures for communication with parents and students that works best for them.