

# Remsen St. Mary's Schools

## Personal Device Recommendation for Incoming Freshmen

2026–2027 School Year

Our school uses Google Workspace for Education — including Google Classroom, Docs, Slides, Sheets, Gmail, and Drive — for nearly all coursework. Any device you purchase should work well with these tools.

### Which Device Should I Buy?

We recommend one of two options depending on your budget and your student's needs:

	Chromebook (~\$250–350)	Windows Laptop (~\$400–550)
<b>Best for</b>	Google Classroom, web-based tools, general schoolwork	Students who may need Windows software, or plan to use for college
<b>Google Workspace</b>	✓ Excellent — built for it	✓ Works great via Chrome browser
<b>Battery life</b>	Typically 10–12 hours	Varies; look for 8+ hours
<b>Durability</b>	Generally rugged, easy to replace	Varies by brand/model
<b>Software limits</b>	Web and Android apps only	Full Windows app support
<b>Our recommendation</b>	Good choice for most students	Better long-term investment if budget allows

### Minimum Specifications (Windows Laptops)

If you choose a Windows laptop, look for these minimum specs to ensure it runs smoothly for four years:

- **Processor:** Intel Core i5 or AMD Ryzen 5 processor (or better)
- **Memory:** 8 GB RAM minimum (16 GB preferred)
- **Storage:** 256 GB SSD (avoid eMMC storage — it is much slower)
- **Battery:** 8+ hours battery life
- **Operating System:** Windows 11 Home

**Brands we trust at this price range:** Lenovo IdeaPad, Acer Aspire, HP Laptop 15 series. Avoid no-name brands from Amazon.

**Tip:** Avoid any laptop with less than 8 GB RAM or eMMC storage — these will be slow and frustrating within a year.

## Chromebook Recommendations

Chromebooks are a great fit for our Google-based environment. If you go this route, look for:

- **Recent model:** Any current-year model (avoid older/discontinued models with expired software support)
  - **Memory:** 4 GB RAM minimum, 8 GB preferred
  - **Storage:** 64 GB storage minimum
  - **Brands:** Brands: Lenovo, Acer, HP, or ASUS Chromebooks are all reliable choices
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## Important: Personal Devices and School Filtering

Personal devices purchased by families are not managed or monitored by RSM's technology department. This means:

- The school's content filtering (Securly) does not apply to personal devices used at home.

We strongly encourage families to set up parental controls on personal devices, especially for home use. Google (Family Link), Microsoft (Family Safety), and Apple (Screen Time) all offer free built-in tools for this. WestTel customers can also use the CommandIQ app to manage and filter internet access for every device on your home network — a great option regardless of what device your student uses.

## What About a Mac?

Macs work well with our Google Workspace environment — Google Classroom, Docs, Drive, and Meet all run great in Chrome on a Mac. If your family already uses Apple products and is comfortable with them, a Mac is a perfectly fine choice.

### A few things to keep in mind:

- **Cost:** A base MacBook Air starts around \$1,099 — more than double the cost of a capable Windows laptop or Chromebook.
- **IT support:** Supporting personal devices is more difficult for our technology staff, and Mac repairs typically require an Apple Store or Apple-authorized service provider, neither of which is close to Remsen.
- **Software compatibility:** Macs do not run Windows software natively, which may matter for occasional classroom tools.

## What the School Provides

RSM maintains a supply of school-managed Chromebooks available for student use. Students who need a device for homework or forget their personal device can borrow one through the IT office. Our school Chromebooks are filtered through Securly, which restricts social media, games, and other content inappropriate for school use.

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## Questions?

Contact the RSM Technology Department - [Kristin Connors](#)