



# ROBERT TOWNSON HIGH SCHOOL

Friday, 1 September 2017

## Year 7 BYOD laptop program 2017

*This letter is for the parents of students enrolling their children into year 7 in 2019.*

For the past three years, RTHS have been trialling a year 7 BYOD program. This has allowed staff to develop teaching practices that incorporate effective student laptop usage. It also allowed us to speak with students and gather their views. We are now ready to offer that program to all year 7 students in 2019. This letter is designed to inform you about the program and help answer questions. You can also contact your child's year advisor (Ms Logue), Deputy Principal (Mr Farthing) or the principal (Mr Parkes).

- Part 1 This letter is designed to help explain our program in an FAQ style.
- Part 2 Following that is information on the type of laptop needed.
- Part 3 The school option we have organised for parents who may to take advantage of this option.
- Part 4 Space for you to choose a solution or ask questions.

### Part 1

#### ***What is BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)?***

BYOD involves students bringing a laptop that they own to school to use, either instead of (or alongside) an exercise book (each faculty will let you know any book requirements). BYOD is more than taking notes on a computer instead of in a book. It allows students to learn in new ways using today's workplace tools.

#### ***Why do we need a BYOD?***

Research and government priorities agree that today's students need to be prepared for the current and future world of work. Traditional, knowledge based curriculum is insufficient to prepare them. Even the Department of Education is moving to using more "on line" communication and testing. Even the NAPLAN and HSC examinations are being considered for "on line" usage.

#### ***If laptop use is important, why don't schools buy one for every student?***

Purchasing a laptop and software for all students is cost prohibitive to a school. However, we have been working on an affordable solution that we hope will fit every household's budget (see part 3).

#### ***What will my students use their laptops for?***

The answer is more than taking notes. They will be able to work collaboratively (even beyond school hours) undertake immediate research, have access to a large range of multimedia learning programs and understanding the tool they will use in everyday work life when they leave school. Most work can be submitted after hours from home, they can receive teaching assistance and feedback all on their personal storage drives to keep (there are many other examples).

#### ***What device will they need for the BYOD program?***

- Any laptop they can carry that can connect to the school network (specification can be found at the back of this letter)

- Have a battery life that will operate all day (charges will be available but will not be in all classrooms).
- Have updated antiviral software

### **Can I use an iPad, phone or Android device?**

Students may already have a laptop you are happy that they bring to school OR you can purchase the device the school is organising (see details below). Though iPads and Androids devices may connect to the network, experience has shown that they do not work for all applications, so for a few years at least they will not be suitable. Phones are too limited in ability and there is already too much inappropriate phone use so they will not be allowed to be a BYOD tool.

### ***How much will it cost?***

The device the school is recommending will meet almost all of their learning needs. Where they do not, the school will have their own computers in some specialist rooms for student use. These computers run programs such as: coding, design, art and music software. These programs needed specialised computer to run them.

We are recommending a Chromebook (at the time of printing it would be the HP Chromebook). It will cost around \$341 dollars (12 months warranty). We are working with HP currently to buy in bulk and thus reduce the price. Chromebooks have the following advantages.

1. They are cheap.
2. They do not get viruses.
3. They turn fully on in seconds.
4. They are lightweight and the battery last all day.

There will be a range of options you can add but we currently use this base model successfully across the school. Students will be using the free Microsoft and Google software made available by the Department of Education.

### ***Do I have to buy a laptop?***

No. However, teachers will not be able to run a tradition program alongside a laptop-based program. Students without a device will be provided a replacement laptop for the class period where possible. The replacement device will allow them to participate but it will be slower. Students will also need to access their class material after hours. They can use any computer with internet access.

### ***What if it gets broken at school?***

Just like any student material, the school is not responsible for damage or theft of personal property. Experience has shown that even if a student who damaged the device is found it is often accidental or they will not reimburse the owner. We will teach students about caring for the device. There is a range of warranty options when ordering the laptop including accidental breakage – all at extra cost. We will, for the near future, have a Technical Support Officer to assist students with any enquiry and support short of voiding a computer's warranty.

### ***What happens once I make a decision?***

If you choose to purchase the school offer through HP, you will let us know (via the form attached or by contacting the school) and we will give you a website where you can order the laptop and any options you want. Early in 2018 all parents and students will be asked to read and sign a BYOD commitment. It will explain in more details the responsibilities of the school, parents and student when using the laptop. Parent can bring any personal device to the school and speak to our Technical Support Officer – James to see if it can connect to the Department's network.

## Part 2

### Minimum BYOD Device Requirements



The device specifications identify the minimum system requirements/ hardware specifications for student devices and offer guidance on some suggested makes and models so that parents are fully informed about requirements.

While all devices meet the minimum system requirements/hardware specifications, the school strongly recommends that students **choose a laptop device** to ensure that their BYOD maximises their learning experiences.

Device Type	Windows Laptop	Mac Laptop	Windows Tablet+	Chromebook
Operating System	Windows 7	OS X 10.7	Windows 7	any
	Window 8.1	Or higher	Windows 8.1	
Wireless (see note below)	<b>5ghz 802.11n</b>	<b>5ghz 802.11n</b>	<b>5ghz 802.11n</b>	<b>5ghz 802.11n</b>
Min Screen Size	11"	11"	11"	15"
Storage Capacity	64GB Hard drive	64GB Hard drive	16GB	nil
RAM	4GB	4GB	4GB	4GB
Minimum battery life	6 hours	6 hours	6 hours	8 hours
Suggested Accessories	Protective case / cover	Protective case / cover	Protective case / cover	Protective case / cover
	Headphones	Headphones	Headphones	Headphones
	Integrated camera and microphone	Integrated camera and microphone	Integrated camera and microphone	Integrated camera and microphone
Device Example	HP Probook x360 11 G1	11-inch MacBook Air	Microsoft Surface	Chromebooks

**+At this stage Android and iPads applications do not function correctly in the school environment.**

**Please Note:**The DoE wireless network installed in high schools only operates on the 802.11n **5GHz** standard. Devices with 802.11a/b/g or 802.11n 2.4GHz only will **not** be able to connect.

Ask this question **before** you buy a device for BYOD – “The NSW Department of Education has a 5GHz (n) wireless network that uses a full range of channels. Will this device connect on all channels in the 5GHz range?”

**Do NOT purchase a device for BYOD unless the answer is “yes”.**

**Remember no phone are suitable or allowed as a BYOD device.**

## Part 3

### The school option

The school is working with Hewlett Packard (HP) to supply a Chromebook at a reduced price that we have trialled successfully here. The price and details will be reviewed periodically or whenever HP (or suppliers) change the price.

The following table and notes will assist you in determining if a device you supply will meet school needs.

Current model is the HP Chromebook 11 G6

Cost is approximately \$341. Exact options and costs will be available when ordering. Prices vary with time and models and availability fluctuate. This is the base education model.



Base model

It is not touch screen.

1 year warranty

Screen is 11.6 " or 29.4 cm

Weights 1.2 kgs

Battery life is 11 hrs

A search of the product will yield more information.

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## Part 3

This section is to allow the school to plan for year 7 in 2019.

Please tick the appropriate box and/or complete the box below should you require further information.

Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_

Childs name: \_\_\_\_\_

At this stage I,

- Am interested in purchasing the school Chromebook (around \$283 – more information will be sent to you)
- Will bring my own device
- Am unsure
- Do not want to supply a device
- Would like more information to this question. Write question here.