

Dear Parents,

We are meeting this evening to announce some really exciting news in regard to our 6th, 7th and 8th grade curriculum this school year.

In October, Saint James School will roll out a 1:1 Chromebook deployment.

What does this mean?

This means that our teachers will be adding Chromebooks to their arsenal of learning tools.

Each student in the sixth, seventh and eighth grade will be assigned a Chromebook that will be theirs to use just as they utilize textbooks.

They will use them in class, take them home to do homework, and turn them in at the end of the school year just as they do their textbooks.

The only difference with the Chromebook versus the textbooks is the Chromebook they are assigned this school year will remain with the student until they leave Saint James School. Even though they will turn it in for maintenance at the end of the school year, they will receive the same Chromebook back when they return the following year.

With the Chromebook deployment, Saint James School will also be utilizing G Suite for Education that works hand-in-hand with the Chromebooks.

G Suite for Education is a suite of tools that can help increase opportunities for critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, all while supporting the learning objectives that our teachers have for our students. These tools are free, ad-free, reliable, and secure. They are already used by millions of students in schools around the world. Of course, free is great but the best thing is that these tools are relevant to students, easy to use, and open doors to many new ways to learn.

Let's take a look at the G Suite for Education starting with the tool purposely-built for schools - Google Classroom.

Google Classroom is a collaboration tool for teachers and students that helps organize and streamline the classroom experience. With just a few clicks, teachers can create a class, add students, and create assignments or announcements. Teachers are able to see who's completed an assignment, who's still working on it, and assign grades when it's finished. Teachers can also instantly offer feedback to students and see their questions or comments on their assignments.

Google Drive is like an online hard drive where students can store all their files - stories, designs, drawings, recordings, videos - anything! As part of G Suite for Education, Google Drive has unlimited storage so our students don't have to worry about full disks, deleting old files, or losing anything if a computer crashes.

Students can access their files from any device with internet service and, best of all, they never have to save: Drive automatically saves every time they make an edit!

G Suite for Education also includes a number of Google products that promote collaboration among students and their teachers. Students can work together, in class or at home, to complete assignments and group projects. All their work is auto-saved, and they can even edit without internet service.

- Google Docs: documents come to life with smart editing and styling tools to help students easily format text and paragraphs. They can choose from thousands of fonts, plus add links, images, drawings, and tables – similar to Microsoft Word
- Google Sheets: spreadsheets for analyzing, visualizing, and charting data – similar to Microsoft Excel
- Google Forms: quick & easy surveys to gather information
- Google Slides: a presentation tool that makes it easy to tell stories – similar to Power Point and Microsoft Sway
- Google Drawings: Graphics and flowchart creation with shapes, text, and images – similar to Microsoft Excel

There are additional G Suite for Education tools that can be used to save teachers and students time and increase student engagement. These include:

- Gmail: Email, contacts, tasks, and communications
- Google Calendar: Scheduling, calendars, and appointments
- Google Hangouts: Live video conferencing and messaging only within SJS's domain
- Google Sites: Webpage creation and publishing
- Google Groups: Group communication only within SJS's domain

Each student will be given their own unique Saint James School username. These usernames are unique in that no one else will have your student's username and their username will stay with them throughout their years with us here at Saint James School, but more importantly by utilizing this username to access their Chromebook and Google Classroom, each student is protected on the school campus and off by Go Guardian and Google for Education security software. These security suites filter content, monitor usage and even have the ability to locate a lost or stolen Chromebook.

We will be able to provide the same level of security for your student that we have always provided inside the school, on your student's Chromebook.

To learn more about Go Guardian go to www.goguardian.com

To learn more about G Suite for Education go to gsuite.google.com

We have come together this evening not just to announce the deployment of the Chromebooks but to also try and answer any questions you may have.

We very much would like you to understand that the addition of the Chromebook to the 6th, 7th and 8th grade classroom is just one more way that we at Saint James School continue to blend traditional teaching with 21st century education.

Your student will still be using textbooks; they will not go away. Your student will still be required to write. As you know, we strongly believe that writing is very important. That is why we still teach cursive writing. Your student will still engage the teacher and their fellow students in the classroom through discussions, questions and answers.

The Chromebook is just one more tool to help prepare your student for the future.

Our belief is that while here at Saint James School it is important that each student have access to each of the three major operating systems. Your student will still be going to the computer lab and working in the Microsoft environment. There are still iPads in the school for their use in the Apple environment. The Chromebook will help us to teach them the Chrome operating system and how to work in the Google environment.

No one can predict the future, we can only prepare for what it might bring.

Thank you for joining us in helping your student prepare.