



BELLAVISTA
• SCHOOL •

A VIEW TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

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31 August 2020

Dear parents

Re: Schooling and device needs

As we wend our way forward in education, worldwide, one thing that is becoming clear is that technology and devices are now hard-wired into the process of teaching and learning. At Bellavista School, we have been working towards this shift steadily over the years, with our particular interest being how technology – software and hardware - can assist a child with learning disabilities to access the curriculum and also 'show what they know'. On the journey, we've better understood the difference between "edutainment" and "technology empowered learning" as well as the opportunities to work collaboratively, access information and manage ourselves socially and organisationally on the various platforms. We've become more convinced of the promise and better able to discern and circumnavigate the pain points. We have also had a chance to grapple with the issues of screen time and distractibility. School wide, we were pleased to be in this position in terms of our development when school closures hit in March this year.

Bellavista is well resourced in terms of communal use iPad labs and laptop devices when positioned in a traditional timetable mode. Through the reintegration on to campus in recent months, we have been able to use these resources to support families who did not have devices available. What has become apparent, however, is that each child does need their own, *personalised device* to participate with maximum benefit. As an adult, you will know that we set up our mobile phones and laptops as we like these and to work on someone else's

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WE Marshall (Chairman)

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device to complete a task creates a dissonance in our ease of function, even though we can 'get the job done'. It is the same for children.

We have strong recommendations that we believe will satisfy the answers that we have pursued for our kids – neurologically, ergonomically and functionally.

By when do you need it?

This letter serves as advice that *from January 2021*, each child will need to be equipped with their own device. Many parents have already equipped their child with such. Unless there has been age-of-device compatibility or battery issues, please do continue to have your child use this device.

What do you need?

For Gr1-2, iPads have proved best ergonomically. The touch screen, size and responsiveness of the tablets work for the age of learner and the manner in which the child must access information, annotate and respond to tasks. These devices can be used in Grade Three, with the introduction of a keypad. In all instances, we would prefer *WiFi only* functionality, so we can safeguard activity over our network.

We request an iPad no older than v6 for your child. Old operating systems fail over on the network and run into difficulty with the software we are needing to run.

For Gr3-7, a laptop device offers superior functionality to read, annotate, generate answers, complete quizzes, take tests, generate presentations, develop touch typing skills, access textbooks and read etc. Google Chrome is a required installation on the device. We request a Chromebook (first prize- **specifications**) or other 13" laptop device no older than two years for your child. Old operating systems fail over on the network and with the software we are needing to run.

We recommend the following options

Acer Chromebook 311

Model Name: Chromebook 311 C733

Part Number: NX.H8VSM.002

Intel® Celeron® (N4100, 1.10 GHz, 4 MB) - 29.5 cm (11.6") LED - 16:9 HD - LCD - ComfyView - Intel® UHD Graphics 600 - 4 GB LPDDR4 - No - Colour Shale Black - Weight (Approximate) 1.25 kg - Maximum Battery Run Time 12 Hour (no flip screen)

Acer Spin 511

Model Name: Spin 511 R752TN

Part Number: NX.H93SA.001

Intel® Celeron® (N4100, 1.10 GHz, 4 MB) - 29.5 cm (11.6") LED - 16:9 HD - LCD - In - plane Switching (IPS) Technology - Intel® UHD Graphics 600 - 4 GB LPDDR4 - No - Colour Shale Black - Weight (Approximate) 1.26 kg - Maximum Battery Run Time 10 Hour

OR

other basic device with Chrome set up.

Fit to task and secured

Each device should be viewed as the child's "tool for work" and not serve as a recreational toy; i.e., the apps and software on the machine are ONLY for school work. No gaming or social media apps should be loaded. This has proven enormously effective in regulating *focus*. As such, the school will prescribe the contentment and software we need and manage any subscription based programmes that we believe enhance learning. The devices should be insured and strict parental controls applied.

Additional Hardware

Your child needs

- headphones
- a charger
- a cover sleeve/ bumper/ pouch/ slimline carry case to protect it.
- optional – a slight incline board/ attachment

If you have any questions about device specifications, our IT Manager, Cameron Doyle is the right person to respond. Please contact him on cameron.doyle@bellavistaschool.co.za.

Your child sits in the midst of massive change in the education space – a shift that astute educators have envisaged and pursued for year. Education is, traditionally, a dinosaur to shift

in terms of paradigms. We are excited for this generation who will experience the power of positive disruption in teaching, learning and schooling. In the case of a child at Bellavista, the shift is a gift and will assist the system in making the curriculum accessible for children who struggle with barriers to learning. It is all happening swiftly, but we are delighted!

Yours in education,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AS Scott', with a stylized flourish.

Alison Scott
Executive Principal

