

New York Mills Public Schools
Independent School District #553

Chromebook Policy
& Usage Handbook
2024-2025

Introduction

All students attending New York Mills Public Schools in grades K-12 are issued Google Chromebooks for educational use, to be used in every classroom throughout the curriculum. This device is the property of the New York Mills School District.

This document provides students and their parents/guardians with information about the general use of technology, “ownership” of the devices, rights and responsibilities for possession of the device, educational use, care of the Chromebook and being a good digital citizen. Additionally, the last page is a Chromebook Agreement form for parents and students to complete.

This handbook may be updated, changed and modified at the sole discretion of the New York Mills Public School Technology and Leadership teams. We will provide advance notice of any changes through regular school communication. Any changes to the policy will be effective for the next school year or semester.

Students and their parents/guardians are reminded that the use of school technology is a privilege, not a right, and that everything done on any school-owned computer, network, or electronic communication device may be monitored by school authorities. Inappropriate use of school technology will result in loss of computer privileges, removal from class, loss of credit, failing grades and/or legal action as stated in our school’s handbook.

The policies, procedures, and information within this document apply to all Chromebooks used at the New York Mills School District by students, staff, or guests, including any other device considered by the Administration to fall under this policy.

Teachers may set additional requirements for Chromebook use in their classroom.

Ownership

New York Mills Public Schools retain the sole right of possession of the Chromebook. New York Mills Public School lends the Chromebook to the student only during the academic year and only for educational purposes. However, exceptions to this rule may be made by the administration in the event that a student has an academic need for it over the summer. Additionally, our administrative staff retains the right to collect and/or inspect Chromebooks at any time, including via electronic remote access and to alter, add or delete installed software or hardware. **Students should not share their Chromebook with another student or leave the Chromebook unattended.** Chromebooks may be taken home for educational purposes but must come back to school **fully charged** every day.

Receiving Your Chromebook

Student and Parent/Guardian Orientation

- All parents/guardians and students will be asked to attend orientation sessions to learn about and sign the New York Mills School District Chromebook Policy and Usage Handbook before a Chromebook can be issued to a student. All previous fines and fees must be paid before a Chromebook and peripherals will be issued.

Distribution

- Chromebook distribution will take place during the orientation and the days that follow once documentation is secured.

Transfer/New Student Distribution

- All transfers/new students will pick up their Chromebook from the Information Technology (IT) Department. Students and their parents/guardians, must read and sign the New York Mills School District Chromebook Policy and sign the Usage Handbook before picking up a Chromebook and peripherals.

Returning Your Chromebook

End of Year

- At the end of the school year, students will turn in their Chromebooks and all issued peripherals. Failure to turn in a Chromebook and peripherals will result in the student being charged the full \$340 replacement cost. New York Mills School District will also file a report of stolen property with the New York Mills Police Department. Unpaid fines and fees may be turned over to a collection agency.

Transferring/Withdrawing Students

- Students who transfer out of or withdraw from New York Mills School District must turn in their Chromebooks and peripherals to the School Office or Information Technology Department on their last day of attendance. Failure to turn in the Chromebook and peripherals will result in the student being charged the total replacement cost. Unpaid fines and fees of students leaving New York Mills School District may be turned over to a collection agency. New York Mills School District may also file a report of stolen property with the New York Mills Police Department.

Bring Your Own Device

Juniors and Seniors with proof of enrollment in local college classes may request to bring their own device. Requests will be individually evaluated by the Information Technology Coordinator and High School Principal. Request forms are located in the high school office. The Information Technology Department will not provide support for personally owned devices. This is a privilege and can be taken away for violation of New York Mills School District policies.

Opt-Out of Take-Home Privileges

Some students and parents/guardians may not wish to risk bringing their devices home. This may be designated on the final form of this plan. The student will still be required to utilize devices in school for classroom purposes. A Chromebook will still be assigned to the student, and they will be responsible for its care as designated by this document. The student will check their device in and out of the High School Media Center, where it will be stored and charged overnight. The responsibility of the device will transfer to New York Mills Public Schools when it is checked in.

Disciplinary action will be taken if a student signed up for opt-out privileges does not return their device at the end of the day.

Chromebook Damage and Replacement Plan Insurance

New York Mills Public Schools recognizes that with the implementation of the Chromebooks for grades 7-12 initiative, there is a need to protect the investment by both District 553 and the families. There are no upfront costs or requirements to participate in this plan.

The Chromebook damage and replacement plan insurance will provide coverage for accidental damage (drops/spills), vandalism, fire, flood, natural disasters, and power surges due to lightning. **Cracked screens from closing an object in the Chromebook, resulting in damage to the screen and/or keyboard, is not covered under the replacement plan.** Loss, theft, damage by negligence, and intentional damage of the Chromebook are not covered by the Damage and Replacement Plan. If a theft occurs, the Chromebook must be declared stolen, and a report must be made to Ottertail County Sheriff's Office.

Repair Costs

Each claim covered by the damage and replacement plan insurance will be assessed an incremental deductible within the current school year. The first claim deductible will be \$50.00 with the deductible increasing by \$50.00 each time a claim is made within the current school year; the deductible shall not exceed the full cost of the device. If a student withdraws from New York Mills Schools and then re-enrolls later in the current school year, the number of claims made prior to withdrawal still stand. All previous year charges must be paid prior to a student being issued a Chromebook

Damage Claim #1	Damage Claim #2	Additional Damage Claims
\$50	\$100	+\$50

Protective Casing

The cases are there to protect the much more valuable Chromebook. **Replacement cost of the casing, and the damage claim itself, may be waived if the damage is only to the case and is deemed accidental.**

- Students in grades 7-12 must keep their Chromebook in the case.
- If there was a case issued with the Chromebook, and the Chromebook is taken out of the case, this will void the insurance coverage and result in the student and parents/legal guardian being charged the total cost to repair or replace the Chromebook and peripherals.
- Taking the unit apart or tampering with the unit will void insurance coverage.

Repairing or Replacing Your Chromebook

- While undergoing repairs, loaner Chromebooks may be issued to students when they leave their Chromebook for repair at the Information Technology Department.

- If repair is needed due to malicious damage, the school may refuse to provide a loaner Chromebook.
- Repaired Chromebooks will end up with the original factory image as first received. It is important that students keep their school data synced to cloud drives so documents and class projects will not be lost.

Lost, Stolen or Intentionally Damaged Device and Accessories:

New York Mills Public Schools' Chromebook damage and replacement plan insurance DOES NOT cover intentional damage of the Chromebook. Stolen items must be reported to the Ottertail County Sheriff's Office.

A Chromebook or any of its accessories that are lost, damaged due to negligence, or intentionally damaged, are the responsibility of the student and parent involved in the loss of property. The user will not be given another device or accessory to use until the replacement cost of the lost/damaged device or accessory is paid to the school.

The replacement costs are listed below:

- Chromebook \$270
- Case \$40
- AC Adapter & power cord \$30

Failure of the parent/guardian, or student over the age of 18, to pay any fees from an intentionally damaged, lost, or stolen Chromebook and peripherals, will be turned over to a collection agency.

Taking Care of Your Chromebook

Students are responsible for the general care of the Chromebook that they have been issued by the school. Keep the provided case on at all times, it will protect the Chromebook from most common damage scenarios. Chromebooks that are broken or fail to work properly must be taken to the School Office or Information Technology Department. If a loaner Chromebook is needed, one will be issued to the student until their Chromebook can be repaired or replaced.

General Precautions

- No food or drink is allowed next to your Chromebook.
- Cords, cables, and removable storage devices must be inserted carefully into the Chromebook.
- Students should never carry their Chromebook while the screen is open unless directed to do so by a teacher.
- Chromebooks should not be used or stored near pets.
- Chromebooks should be shut down when not in use to conserve battery life.
- Chromebooks should never be shoved into a locker or improperly wedged into a bookbag as this may break the screen.
- Do not expose your Chromebook to extreme temperature or direct sunlight for extended periods of time. Extreme heat or cold may cause damage.
- Always bring your Chromebook to room temperature prior to turning it on.

Carrying the Chromebook

The protective case of the Chromebook will only provide basic protection from everyday use. It is not designed to prevent damage from drops above desk height or abusive handling. Carrying the Chromebook in a padded backpack, or padded book bag, is acceptable provided the backpack or book bag is handled with care.

- Always transport Chromebooks with care.
- Never lift Chromebooks by the screen.
- Never carry Chromebooks with the screen open unless instructed to by a teacher.

Screen Care

The Chromebook screen can be damaged if subjected to rough treatment. The screens are particularly sensitive to damage from excessive pressure.

- Do not lean on top of the Chromebook.
- Do not place anything near the Chromebook that could put pressure on the screen.
- Do not touch the screen with anything other than a finger or soft cloth.
- **Do not place anything on the keyboard before closing the lid (e.g. pens, pencils, notebooks).**
- Clean the screen with a soft, dry anti-static or microfiber cloth. Do not use window cleaner or any type of liquid or water on the Chromebook. You can also purchase

individually packaged pre-moistened eyeglass lens cleaning tissues to clean the screen.

Using Your Chromebook

At School

The Chromebook is intended for use at school each and every day. In addition to teacher expectations for Chromebook use, school messages, announcements, calendars, academic handbooks, student handbooks, and schedules will be accessed using the Chromebook. Students must be responsible for bringing their Chromebook, **charged**, to all classes.

At Home

All students are required to take their Chromebook home each night throughout the school year for charging. The School WILL NOT have chargers available to check out.

- If a student loses their charger, they can purchase one at school for \$30.
- Chromebooks must be brought to school each day in a fully charged condition. Students need to charge their Chromebooks each evening.
- If students leave their Chromebook at home, they must immediately phone their parents/guardians to bring the Chromebook to school. Repeat violations of this policy will result in referral to administration and possible disciplinary action.
- It is recommended that students not carry the AC Adapter power cord (charger) to school. If fully charged at home, the battery will last throughout the day.

Sound

Sound must be muted at all times unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instructional purposes. It is recommended that students bring personal headsets or 'earbuds' for any audio projects they work on.

Printing at School

Printing functionality will be available on a limited basis at school and subject to classroom requirements. Teaching strategies will facilitate digital copies of homework. Students will be encouraged to digitally publish and share their work with their teachers and peers when appropriate.

Storing Chromebook

When students are not using their student issued Chromebook, they should be stored in their locked lockers. Nothing should be placed on top of the Chromebook when stored in the locker. Students are encouraged to take the Chromebook home each day after school, regardless of whether or not they are needed at home. Chromebooks should not be stored in a student's vehicle at school or at home. If a student has opted out of take-home privileges, then they will check it in and out of the high school media center for nightly charging and storage.

Chromebooks left in an Unsupervised Area

Under no circumstances should Chromebooks be left in unsupervised areas. Unsupervised areas include the school grounds and campus, the lunchroom, media center, unlocked classrooms, gymnasiums, and hallways. Any Chromebook left in these areas is in danger of being stolen. If a Chromebook is found in an unsupervised area (e.g. left in the hallway during lunch, left in the library unattended, etc.), it may be taken to the main office.

Opt-out Storage

Those who choose to opt-out of take-home privileges will need to check their Chromebook in and out of the High School Media Center every day, before and after school. When checked into the Media Center, New York Mills Public Schools accepts full responsibility for the device. The device will be securely stored in a locked cart and will be fully charged for the next day. **Disciplinary action will be taken if a student signed up for opt-out privileges does not return their device at the end of the day.**

Operating System and Security

Students may not use or install any operating system on their Chromebook other than the current version of ChromeOS that is supported and managed by the school.

Updates

The Chromebook operating system, ChromeOS, updates itself automatically.

Virus Protection

Chromebooks use the principle of "defence in depth" to provide multiple layers of protection against viruses and malware, including data encryption and verified boot. There is no need for additional virus protection.

Content Filter

The school utilizes an internet content filter that is in compliance with the federally mandated Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). All Chromebooks have Internet activity protection and are monitored by the school both on and off-campus. If an educationally valuable site is blocked, students should contact their teachers to request the site be unblocked.

Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring any internet connection students use, that is not provided by the school, and when using their Google Accounts at home.

No Expectations of Privacy

Students have no expectation of confidentiality or privacy with respect to any usage of a Chromebook, regardless of whether that use is for school-related or personal purposes, other than as specifically provided by law. The school may, without prior notice or consent, log, supervise, access, view, monitor, and record use of student Chromebooks at any time for any reason related to the operation of the school. By using a Chromebook, students agree to such access, monitoring, and recording of their use.

Software

Google Apps for Education

- Chromebooks seamlessly integrate with the Google Apps for Education suite of productivity and collaboration tools. This suite includes Google Drive, Documents, Spreadsheets, Presentations, Drawings, and Forms.
- All work is stored in the cloud, saves automatically, and can be retrieved from any device.

Chrome Web Apps and Extensions

- Students are allowed to install appropriate Chrome web apps and extensions from the Chrome Web Store with teacher permission.
- Students are responsible for the web apps and extensions they install on their Chromebooks. Inappropriate material will result in disciplinary action.
- Some web apps will be available to use when the Chromebook is not connected to the Internet.

Monitoring Software

- Teachers, school administrators, and the technology department staff reserve the right to monitor activity on student Chromebooks via the Google Administrator Dashboard and teacher observation.

Managing Files and Saving Work

Each student has a school-issued Google Account providing storage through a program called Google Drive. The student account ends with [@isd553.org](mailto:isd553.org). Students will access and save documents in their Google Drive. It is recommended that students save all data to their Google Drive. This will automatically back up their data and keep data from filling up the school-issued Chromebook.

Submitting School Work to the Teacher

The Google Drive platform allows students and teachers to exchange course-related materials through Google Drive. Students may also email their teacher their work using their school-issued [@isd553.org](mailto:isd553.org) account, if the teacher wishes to use that method for collecting assignments. Some teachers may use other internet-based services to transfer school information back and forth. Google Classroom, Schoology, and Moodle are common platforms teachers may use.

Cloud-Based Storage

Students may also use other cloud-based storage such as Dropbox, Box, or OneDrive; however, the school district is not responsible for technical support of these non-district provided services or the data that the students may store using these services.

Network Connectivity

New York Mills Public Schools makes no guarantee that our school network will be up and running 100 percent of the time. In the rare case the school network is down, the District will not be responsible for lost or missing data.

Software

The software and applications originally installed by New York Mills Public Schools must remain on the Chromebook in usable condition and be easily accessible at all times. From time to time the school may add software applications for use in a particular course. Periodic checks of Chromebooks will be made to ensure that students have not removed required applications. If a student is missing an application that is required and should be on the machine, the student is responsible for work using the software. The student must see the Information Technology Department to get the program reinstalled. Deliberate or multiple occurrences of missing software will result in consequences.

Students may be required to download additional applications through the Chrome Web Store as instructed by teachers. Any application requiring a cost will be downloaded by the school district and distributed directly to student machines. Students may install personal applications as needed

for the purpose of customizing their learning experience. However, inappropriate use or disruptions during class periods could result in consequences, including loss of the privilege of taking the device home.

Circumvention of Managed Settings

The school district uses management software to set up, secure properly, and update all Chromebook devices. Any attempts by students to circumvent any district management settings through software restoration or jailbreaking will result in confiscation of the Chromebook and disciplinary action.

Inspection

Students may be selected at any time to provide their school-issued Chromebook for inspection. This may commonly be done during advisor times, or study hall periods.

Software Restoration

If technical difficulties occur or illegal software is discovered, the Chromebook will be restored from backup. The school district does not accept responsibility for any loss of software, documents, or data due to the restoration process. In addition, if illegal software is found, this may result in confiscation of Chromebook and further disciplinary action.

Parent Guide

We value our students, and their safety is a prime priority of the district. We want all our children to succeed in learning. We want them to develop and grow into responsible citizens. We work to teach them to communicate effectively using technology and other tools. Parents play a crucial and necessary role in helping our students succeed and grow.

The following are suggestions meant to be helpful to parents when setting ground rules and allowing the use of the school-issued Chromebooks at home. All home environments are different, and we respect the rights of parents to set their own rules for allowing the usage of electronic devices in their homes. Please keep in mind students must follow all school rules and the school technology acceptable use policy even when the devices are used outside of the school setting.

Filter Software

We use filtering software to block inappropriate content on Chromebooks. These filters are set up to block any non-school related material; however, they are not a catch-all. Please monitor the use of the Chromebook while off-campus to help maintain appropriate use of the resources. If students are having issues gaining access to sites needed for class, they can bring those concerns to their teacher, who will, in turn, contact the Information Technology Department.

Set Clear Expectations

Regularly discuss your child's computer and technology usage with them. Discuss the content they view and the amount of time they spend using electronic devices. Discuss proper behavior online and share how being a good citizen should extend to the internet as well. Talk to students about risks if they connect to networks that are unprotected (coffee shop, public library, open wifi). Maintain a regular, open dialogue about internet use and share your expectations for appropriate use and behavior.

Monitor and Limit Screen Time

Experts suggest having teens use the internet in a central place at home, such as the kitchen or family room, rather than away from adult supervision behind a closed door. Know what your child is doing with their Chromebook or other devices and how their time is being spent. Technology can be a great resource, but it also has the potential to be a distractor of valuable time. Take time to view some of your child's student work. Review it and take time to remind them about plagiarism and respecting other people's content. Teach children how to balance their time and use technology as a useful tool. These conversations are crucial and will help your child develop responsibility with your guidance before they face these things in the future when they are on their own in college and the workplace.

If your child stays up late using their Chromebook or other devices, experts recommend having a charging station in a common room rather than in the bedroom. This encourages children to go to sleep and not stay up late. It also prevents unmonitored activity and sleep disruption.

Additional Items to Review with your Child:

- Anything posted online or shared via social media creates a digital record that is difficult to remove. Even if a child thinks what they are storing is private, it can be saved, downloaded, shared, and reposted anywhere.
- Encourage your child to think carefully before posting information, photo, or video. If it is something you would not want a parent, teacher, principal, future employer, or college official to see, it is probably not wise to post.
- Encourage your child to “friend” or only connect with people they actually know in person.
- Talk to your child about never posting any personally identifiable information online. This information includes full name, address, phone number, email, and location.
- Learn about and teach your child about privacy settings on all websites, apps, and social networks.
- Talk to your child about cyberbullying and not participating in that type of behavior. Encourage your child to report any incidents of bullying they see to you or a school adult.

Digital Citizenship

Current Filtering Methods

New York Mills School District complies with all federal regulations regarding filtering as specified under the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA). This law specifies that each school:

- “certify that they have an Internet safety policy and technology protection measures in place. An Internet safety policy must include technology protection measures to block or filter Internet access to pictures that: (a) are obscene, (b) are child pornography, or (c) are harmful to minors, for computers that are accessed by minors”
- “adopt and enforce a policy to monitor online activities of minors.”
- “adopt and implement a policy addressing: (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet; (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; (c) unauthorized access, including so called “hacking,” and other unlawful activities by minors online; (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and (e) restricting minors’ access to materials harmful to them.”

New York Mills School District employs the following methods to enforce each of these requirements:

- The District uses an in-house firewall to block sexual content, gambling, games, as well as many sites identified explicitly by teachers and staff. Our email system is filtered by Google Apps services to help filter out inappropriate content & junk email.
- Who may review the student and staff Internet access logs to find attempts to circumvent blocked content. These logs are also backed up for the purpose of holding an archived record for investigations for disciplinary reasons or illegal activity.
- The District has a Network/Internet Agreement form addressing inappropriate acts, which must be signed with the Student Handbook by all students and parents. When students violate these guidelines, they are addressed by the district’s principals in cooperation with the information provided by the technology staff. These offenses follow the same disciplinary policy as other disciplines at New York Mills Schools. For more information about the District’s Network/Internet Agreement Form, please see New York Mills ISD #553, POLICY #524, INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY POLICY.

Thank you to Bertha-Hewitt, Browerville, Staples-Motley, and Verndale Public Schools for assistance in the development of the New York Mills Public Schools’ Chromebook Policy & User Handbook.

Student & Parent Pledge for Chromebook Use

Parent:

- I agree to monitor my student's internet usage outside of school.

Parent/Student:

- I will not leave my school-issued Chromebook unattended.
- I will not loan out the Chromebook to other people.
- I will know where the Chromebook is at all times.
- I will bring the Chromebook to school each day, fully charged.
- I will keep food and beverages away from the Chromebook to prevent damaging it with spills.
- I will not disassemble any part of the Chromebook or attempt any repairs.
- I will keep the Chromebook in the protective case provided at all times.
- I will use the Chromebook appropriately, meeting all of New York Mills Public Schools' expectations.
- I will not deface or purposely damage the Chromebook in any way.
- I understand that the Chromebook is subject to inspection at any time without notice and remains the property of New York Mills Public Schools.
- I will follow the policies and procedures outlined in the Chromebook Policy & Usage Handbook and the District Technology Acceptable Use Policy.
- I will report any damages, technical issues, or potential theft of my Chromebook to the school immediately.
- I am aware that accidental damage claims will cost \$50 and increase incrementally by \$50 with each successive claim.
- I am aware that a lost charger will cost \$30.00, a lost case will cost \$40.00, and a lost Chromebook will cost \$270.00.
- I am aware that I am responsible for all damage or loss caused by neglect or abuse and will be charged the full replacement of the Chromebook. This includes closing an object in the Chromebook, damaging the Chromebook's keyboard and/or screen.
- I agree to return the Chromebook, power cord, and protective case in good working condition to the school at the date expected at the end of the school year, or I will be responsible for the replacement costs.

Students who withdraw, transfer, are expelled, or terminate enrollment for any reason must return the Chromebook on the last day of their enrollment.

New York Mills Chromebook User Agreement

The following information must be filled out prior to obtaining your Chromebook. Failure to complete the following information may delay your Chromebook being issued. One form per student must be filled out.

Copies of the complete Chromebook Policy and District Technology Acceptable Use Policy are available in the district office and on the New York Mills website:

<https://www.nymills.k12.mn.us/parentforms>

Parent/Guardian

I have read all the policies and guidelines in the New York Mills Public Schools' Chromebook Policy & Usage Handbook. I understand our responsibilities and agree to all stipulations set forth in the New York Mills Public Schools' Chromebook Policy & Usage Handbook, the District Technology Acceptable Use Policy, the Damage and Replacement Plan Insurance, and the Student & Parent Pledge for Chromebook Use. I understand that the district is to be held harmless for any activity conducted with the Chromebook outside of school and it is my responsibility as a parent to monitor that activity.

- I accept all of the above and allow my child to participate in the New York Mills Public School's Chromebook Program. I understand that if I wish for my child to Opt-out of take home privileges it is my responsibility to notify the High School Office.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Student

- I have read and understood the Chromebook Policy & Usage Handbook, the District Technology Acceptable Use Policy, and the Digital Citizenship Policy. I understand that my failure to follow the information and expectations outlined in these documents may result in disciplinary action.
- I am 13 years of age or older.

Student Name (Print): _____ **Grade:** _____

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____