

## Getting Started Guide for Student Laptops



*A laptop is fun to use, but it is not a toy! The laptop distributed to you belongs to Lower Merion School District. It is on loan to you to use as an important tool for learning.*

*Remember that it is a computer and must be handled with care. As the primary user of this laptop, it is your responsibility to maintain its condition throughout the year. You will receive the same laptop each year. Here are some tips to help ensure that you get the most from it and properly care for your laptop.*

- **First Login:** First Login must be done on the LMSD Network. Your very first login will take longer than subsequent logins. Be patient as your network profile is cached (saved) on your laptop during this initial login.
- **Security:** Treat your laptop like a visible pile of cash. Laptops are very attractive targets to thieves. Never leave your laptop unsecured or unattended. Remember, *your* laptop is *your* responsibility.
- **Using Connectors and Ports:** Never force a connector into a port. When connecting a device, make sure the port is free of debris, that the connector matches the port, and that you have positioned the connector correctly in relation to the port. When plugging into an electrical outlet, connect to the outlet first, then the MagSafe connector to the laptop. When unplugging, disconnect the MagSafe connector first, then unplug from the outlet. This order should eliminate potential sparking. Always pull the plug, NOT the cord.
- **Carrying Your Laptop:**
  - If you carry your laptop in a bag or briefcase, make sure that there are no loose items (such as paper clips or coins) that could accidentally get inside the computer through vent openings or the optical drive slot or get stuck inside a port. Also, keep magnetically sensitive items away from the MagSafe power port.
  - When moving or holding the laptop, use two hands. Close the lid before moving or carrying the laptop. If it drops to the floor it will likely break – especially the fragile screen.
- **Sleep and Shutting Down:** You should put your laptop to sleep when you carry it from class to class during the school day. If you log out, be sure to wait for the Login screen to appear. Make sure your hard drive is not still spinning before you move your laptops (put your ear close to the keyboard to listen for a soft whirring sound). However, it is best to shut down your laptop before carrying it for any time or distance – for example, carrying it to and from home. Shutting down and restarting periodically helps the laptop go through internal checks and maintenance routines.
- **Do not remove the ID label** or place any stickers or marking on the laptop. When you return your laptop at the end of the school year, it should look as it did when you received it.
- **Network Home Folder:** When you log onto your laptop, your network home folder will be mounted automatically and a shortcut to your network home folder will be in the lower right side of the Dock.
- **Saving and Local Access:** As the sole user of the laptop, you can save to local folders such as the Documents folder on your district-issued computer. Your account and files will not be deleted when you log out or restart. However, you are not able to login as an Administrator on your student laptop. Administration of your laptop is restricted to district technical staff in order to secure, maintain, and update student laptops over the network as needed.
- **Saving From Applications:** Saving files from within an application directly to a network home folder (when connected to the LMSD Network) can be done by following these steps:
  - From within the application choose File - Save As.
  - Click the drop-down arrow next to the file name so that you are presented with the sidebar.
  - On the sidebar, under DEVICES, click on your computer name.

- You will see a list with Macintosh HD and any shares to which you are connected.
- Choose the home share and browse the folders until you locate your home folder.
- **Backing Up Important Files:** It is your responsibility to back up your important files. You may store normal size files (other than large multi-media projects) in your Network Home Folder. This is backed up daily as part of the network servers. You may also back up files and larger project documents by burning to a CD or DVD or to an external USB or Firewire hard drive if you have one personally available at home. Properly eject external USB or Firewire devices to prevent file corruption.
- **Web Browsers – Firefox/Safari:** Firefox is the default browser instead of Safari. Firefox is the better choice because it integrates with the network login and will significantly reduce the number of times a user is prompted to enter their network credentials during a browser session while on the LMSD Network. Safari is still available on every computer in the Applications folder as a “backup” or secondary browser, but Safari will prompt the user for network credentials (on the LMSD Network).
- **Changing Network Location:** Your laptop is configured for connection to the LMSD Network. In order to connect to the Internet or a network outside of school (at home, at an Internet café, etc.) you must do the following:
  - From the Apple menu (upper left of the screen), position the mouse pointer on **Location**.
  - Then select **Home** from the side menu.
  - You will be able to connect wirelessly or by Ethernet cable to a network with no proxy server.
  - You must reverse the selection to the **LMSD** location when returning to school.
- **Printing:** You will be able to print to a Canon copier in the help center and library (Harriton) and in the library, room 207, outside room 115, and outside room 308 (Lower Merion). There is no need to select a printer – they are pre-configured on your laptop. After sending the print job, go to one of the copiers, enter your network username and password, and your document will print. It is not possible for the District to provide support for home printing due to the wide variety of potential printers, drivers, and connection configurations.
- **Using the Optical Drive:** The optical drive in your laptop supports standard 12 cm (4.7 inch) discs. Do NOT attempt to use any other size disc. Irregularly shaped discs or discs smaller than 12 cm (4.7 inches) are not supported and can become lodged in the drive.
- **Battery Conservation Tips:**
  - When you take your laptop home over night or the weekend, be sure it is fully recharged for the next school day.
  - The amount of work time your battery can provide before you need to recharge depends on the applications and peripheral devices you’re currently using, and the steps you take to conserve power while you work. For the best conservation of battery power, do the following:
    - Disconnect any peripherals when they are not in use.
    - Quit open applications that you are not using.
    - Remove CD and DVD discs when they are not in use.
    - Reduce screen brightness when using battery power.
    - Put your laptop to sleep whenever you can.
- **More Information:** Atomic Learning (available from your school’s library web page) provides many video tutorials about Mac OS X (your laptop is running version 10.5 or Leopard) and almost all of the software titles installed. More information about your laptop and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning initiative are on the District website and will be added continually (click the One-to-One Learning link on the home page).
- **Technical Assistance:** If your laptop is not functioning properly, you may log a Help Desk request and check the status of that request online by visiting <http://servicedesk.lmsd.org>. You may also visit the tech center for assistance. The tech center will be staffed throughout the school day and will have a terminal for submitting helpdesk requests. Please note that you need to be on the LMSD computer network to submit an online helpdesk request.