

## Technology @ GIS (beginning with grade 9)

Beginning with 9<sup>th</sup> grade, the application of digital technology and computers will be integrated in the school day. We have developed the concept “BYOD” – bring your own device – which means students will use their own laptop or tablet (i.e. iPad) in school.

We are convinced that it is the responsibility of the school to prepare students to be competent in technology and to value the capabilities of computers. Tablets and laptops are popular, easy to carry from class to class, fast and reliable. Technology adds a new dimension to learning exercises regardless of whether the students work individually or in groups. The content is always up-to-date and students are engaged. They experience the web, create presentations, podcasts or short films and can document their learning exercise. Social media is used to promote communication and exchange of the students’ work.

It is particularly important for a German international school abroad with the mission to prepare students for success in the global community that we value our students’ competency in technology. GIS is now taking the next step with our students and integrating technology use into our classrooms.

We believe that our students require specific learning goals and competencies and modern technology is part of this process. Included in our core values are the following points:

- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Communication and cooperation with diverse partners
- Creativity and innovation
- Critical evaluation and correct use of information
- Media competence, i.e. learn to research and use information correctly, assess authenticity and relevance
- Competency in designing presentations

We decided to introduce the policy **BYOD**, i.e. **bring your own device**, since most families have iPads and laptops in their household and these devices can also be brought to school. Students will have the option to organize and store all their files on one device allowing them to work not only at school but also from home. Our experience also shows that students who own a laptop or iPad are more responsible with their devices.

We do not want to ask you to buy a specific device but instead ask that **each student** in 9<sup>th</sup> grade has a device that he/she can bring to school beginning with the 2016/17 school year. There are many arguments that support the use of laptops but just as many that supports the use of iPads. We have discussed this in detail and were not able to select a preference. We also do not want to suggest that you purchase a new device. However, we do ask that the device have basic software installed including **Microsoft Office and for iPads Office 365 (German version)**.

Overall we would like to emphasize that the integration of iPads and laptops in the classroom will only be an additional tool to expand our learning methods, innovative learning and teaching. We also developed a technology curriculum as well as an update of our school rules and regulations for computer and internet use.

We will ask parents and students at the beginning of the school year to sign an agreement with the school outlining how to use social media, messages, netiquette (internet safety tips). Of course, the devices should only be used in class if the teacher instructs the students and should be turned off during the breaks. The school will make accommodations through web filters and other safety measures to insure that the internet is not misused.