



STATEMENT ON TECHNOLOGY

At Geneva, we believe that technology is a powerful and important tool. As with most tools, technology shapes us as we use it. It is important that students are taught to use technology at age-appropriate times in the forms that are most conducive to learning and provide the least opportunities for misuse and harm. To this end, in Rhetoric School, Geneva offers Computer Science and AP Computer Science, Robotics Club and graphic design in Journalism, and provides laptops for student academic use. We also encourage families to provide a laptop or desktop at home in a family shared space for **supervised** student use beginning in Logic School.

Geneva cares deeply about student flourishing. Smartphones, smartwatches, tablets are designed for individual and private use. Adolescence is a time of particular vulnerability to these devices and their potentially addictive content. Current research demonstrates that these screen-based devices as well as computer access to social media apps, unsupervised online scrolling and online multiplayer (MMO) video games handicap students academically and pose serious emotional, social and safety risks to students.

These technologies:

- are designed to sell your child's attention and be addictive.
- are particularly dangerous for adolescents (ages 11 -18).
- decrease attention and academic performance.
- increase ADHD symptoms.
- decrease literacy and deep thought.
- risk serious mental, emotional and physical harm.
- rob teens on average of 4.8 hours daily of sleep, homework or extracurricular time.
- put young drivers at increased risk of serious accidents.

Because of these, and the many other documented harms, Geneva does not allow students to have smartphones, smartwatches, tablets and any other connected personal devices on campus or off campus at any Geneva event. This includes Rhetoric students who may not have these devices in their backpacks or in their lockers.

In addition, parent partnership with Geneva means taking the time to understand the harms and risks of these devices. We strongly urge all our parents to refrain from giving these devices to their students outside of school. Specifically:

- **We ask parents of students who do not yet drive to partner well with the school by not giving their student(s) cellphones, smartphones, smartwatches or access to social media or MMO video games.** Geneva asks that parents only give students access to technology on a computer (laptop or desktop) in their home's common areas where they can and are monitored. If a parent believes a student needs a phone for communication with the parent or for safety, we urge only non-"smart" phones which provide voice calls, text and navigation without broader access to "apps" and the internet.
- **Parents who have concerns about student drivers are asked to limit personal devices to non-"smart" cellphones, which provide text, phone and navigation capabilities, until at least the student's senior year. New drivers, and those around them, are at a much higher risk of serious accidents from distraction.**

Research shows the presence of a smart phone, even unanswered, is a serious distraction. Any device given to a student driver must be left in his car during school hours and school activities. Students are not allowed to go to their cars during the school day to use a device.

- **Any time that a parent allows a student access to any type of device, including a computer, we urge the parent to prohibit social media apps and games and regularly monitor the usage of the device, including texts.**

Geneva provides students access to phones in the Logic and Rhetoric offices if they need to contact their parents during the day.

Please be aware that starting in the 2026-2027 school year, students who violate our no phone policy will have their device withheld by the school for two weeks on the first offense and four weeks on a second offense. They will also continue to receive other disciplinary penalties including demerits and potentially behavioral probation.

In addition, because these technologies exacerbate many academic, mental and social struggles, removing any access to technology may be a necessary element in your partnership with the school to help your student if he or she faces either academic or social difficulties.

We hope that you understand all these policies stem from a desire to provide the best education and environment for your student and to equip you with the information necessary to do the same at home.

Read and acknowledged: _____ **Date:** _____

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