

Parent's Guide and Tech Help

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We are developing this short guide to assist parents with their online learning and connectivity for our students and parents of the Norris School District.

Communications

Everyone needs to be [signed up for Bright Arrow](#). (Our school messaging/alert system.) If you are not receiving or need to change how you receive school emails and text/SMS messages through SchoolMessenger, please contact Kristi Kuhns (kristi.kuhns@nsdtians.org)

For questions concerning technology:

- You can email support@nsdtitans.org (This will go to [our entire tech team](#) for the appropriate person to respond to your request.)
- For specific questions regarding PowerSchool, you can reach out to our PowerSchool Administrator, Kristi Kuhns. (kristi.kuhns@nsdtitans.org)
- For questions regarding Chromebook repairs, you can contact our network technician, Mark Hausner. (mark.hausner@nsdtitans.org)
- If you have specific questions or concerns regarding technology, you can contact our technology director, Noel Erskine. (noel.erskine@nsdtitans.org)

Connectivity for families

Free WiFi/Internet:

- Windstream has their LifeLine Assistance Program for Low Income:
<https://www.windstream.com/about/windstream-information/lifeline-assistance-program>
- [Internet or phone assistance for low-income families.](#) ([Website here.](#))
- [Find Low-Cost Internet Service and Computers in Your Area](#)
- Nebraska Affordable Connectivity Program - [details here](#). (If you qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch you can get up to \$30/month.)
- For residents in Hickman & Firth - Take a look at [Nextlink's site here](#).

These Internet service providers may be options in our area:

- [Nextlink](#) (Wireless & Fiber in Hickman & Parts of Firth) - Surrounding areas.
- [Allo](#) (Fiber) - Lincoln - [Qualifying families get 100 Mbps internet service at no cost!](#)
- [Diode](#) (Wireless) - Surrounding areas
- [Zito](#) (Cable) - Hickman
- [Kinetic by Windstream](#) (DSL) - Hickman, Holland, Firth, Cortland, and rural areas.
- [BIG RED communications](#) (Wireless) - Hickman, Cortland, Hallam, Martel
- [Rise Broadband](#) (Wireless) - Unknown as to what communities they serve. [Check availability here.](#)
- [HughesNet](#) (Satellite) - All areas but expensive.
- [Viasat](#) (Satellite) - All areas but expensive.
- [Starlink](#) (Satellite) - All areas. Best satellite choice. More costly, but great connectivity in any location.

- [LTD Broadband](#) - [Coverage map here](#). (Have not heard a lot about this provider.)

Check the [FCC National Broadband Map](#) for providers in your area.

Remember some wireless plans allow you to turn your phone into a hotspot.

Help out your neighbor who does not have the Internet!

We do have a few families that do not have the internet. Now would be a great time to check with your neighbors and share your Internet with them! (You can often set up a WiFi signal just for them and limit its usage, and change the password when needed.)

Free Internet is available at Norris in the parking lot and on the grounds.

Our guest wireless internet will be open and available M-Fri from 3:30 pm to Midnight and 6 am to midnight on Saturdays and Sundays. People can pull up in cars or on nice days sit around the outside campus.

Note: -All of the Internet traffic is monitored and security camera surveillance is in place.)

G Suite Overview

The Norris School District uses G Suite which is an online productivity suite. This free online suite offers a complete environment including mail, docs, sheets, presentations, calendars, forms, classroom ([parent guide to accessing your child's Google Classroom](#)) and many more features. You can access this through a web browser or applications on devices. Anyone who has a Gmail account has these tools available to them. (Most of us would never need to purchase Microsoft Office or other productivity suites.) Our school accounts are very similar to a regular Gmail account but offer us more control and insight into our environment. Every document, folder, sheet, etc... is an online document that allows the creator to share and control who has access. Users can easily import and export documents to different formats as well, so those that need a final copy in a PDF or Microsoft format may do so. The G Suite for Education also complies with all of the FERPA and COPPA laws concerning students. [More information can be found on the G Suite for Education website](#). If you or your child needs to learn more about using G-Suite (Now called Google Workspace.), [this is a great resource](#).

Chromebooks Overview

We utilize Chromebooks at Norris. We were the first district in Nebraska to deploy Chromebooks within a school district. Since that time, it's become the number one device in education. You are required to log into a Chromebook with a Google Account. (Gmail address.) Our school-managed devices require our students to log in with a Norris-managed Gmail account which ends with **nsdtitans.org**. (On school-owned devices we do not allow a regular Gmail account to log into the device.) Basically, a Chromebook is a laptop that runs a Chrome Browser. (It is a Chrome OS device and not a PC or MAC.) We have some models that are flip touchscreen units and some that are simple clamshell non-touch units. You do not install programs on Chromebooks, but there are many extensions to the Chrome Browser and many add-ons to each of the G Suite products that add functionality. Chromebooks can work offline, so you can create new documents and emails offline. Once Internet connectivity is resumed those documents and emails are then synced to the account on the cloud.

If you own your own Chromebook that is not district managed anyone with a Google Account (Including nsdtitans.org accounts) can log into the device. The first person who logs into a Chromebook is the owner.

Personally owned Chromebooks can be power washed (by the owner) to restore them back to factory defaults. It's been our experience that these devices are the most trouble-free device that a person will use, short of any hardware breakage or other hardware-related issues. [Find out more about Chromebooks here.](#)

Other Devices

Do you have to have a Chromebook for your remote learning needs? We highly recommend it. You can use other devices but it will be much simpler if you are not tech inclined and there may be a few resources on iPads that may not be accessible. Logging into a Chrome browser on a MAC or PC gives you the same experience as a Chromebook, so there is no difference once you get logged into Chrome. (Going to gmail in a browser is not the same thing as being logged into a browser. When you log into Chrome it will sync. ([Directions here.](#)) You can use many apps on phones and tablets that can accomplish classroom tasks as well, so often an iPad or other device will work but not as streamlined. (You may have to load apps like Google Drive, Gmail, Zoom, Specialized reading apps, etc...) If you use an iPad or iPhone (IOS devices) you will need an iTunes account for that device so you can load the needed apps.

GoGuardian

We run a program called GoGuardian that filters students and protects them. The GoGuardian product is installed on all Chromebooks and is available for use K-12. GoGuardian filters and reports all devices that are logged into the student's Google Account. It also allows teachers to view and control students' Chromebook screens during the time when students are in a classroom session. When a student logs into Chrome, GoGuardian is loaded and active. When you log into a Chromebook, students are automatically logged into Chrome. On a PC or MAC, people have the option of logging into Chrome, so it may or may not be active since the student may or may not be logged in. (Go Guardian does not run on an iPad, phone, or other tablet devices.) This is one more reason we recommend using a Chromebook and having that device signed into the Chromebook with the student's Norris Gmail account.

Note- If a PC or Mac has Chrome logged into the student account **anyone** using that Chrome browser is being filtered and monitored by the district.

Teacher and Parent's guide for the Norris Clever Portal including the Online Curriculum

[Checkout our support document](#) to assist you in logging into Clever as well as accessing our Curriculum.

Protecting kids at home

We utilize several products that protect our students that will be active at home as well. (They must be logged into Chrome for some of these to be in place.) If your child is logged into a Chromebook they are logged into Chrome automatically. On PC or MAC', users are not logged into Chrome automatically. (Checking Gmail is not the same as being logged in to Chrome.) [How to article](#) on logging into Chrome.

Note - These monitoring tools will be in place when a student is logged in with a nsdtitans.org account.

We utilize several products that scan students' emails for self-harm, bullying, and other issues. GoGuardian monitors all student's internet activity. As noted above, they must be signed into Chrome. This is another reason we like Chromebooks... they are always signed into Chrome.

Along with the school products mentioned above, we have developed an informational document to assist parents with monitoring their children. [You can find that document here.](#)

K-3 Parents

Normally our students in Grades K-2 log in with a badge. (They show a QR code to the camera on the Chromebook and they are automatically logged into the Chromebook with their Google account.) Since that is not an option at home, at the start of each school year we send out a secure document message to each K-3 parent with their student's login. If the username does not include the @nsdtitans.org you will want to add this, so it is the student's email address. (This is their email address and password. This has always been available to parents who want this by reaching out to the building offices.) This login was needed for any personal-owned Chromebooks as well. Many of the items in the K-3 area may not require this login, but we wanted to share it with parents in case they will be needed in the future as well as for those who own a personal Chromebook.

Video Conferencing

Teachers may be using a combination of Zoom and Google Meet. We use Zoom with our staff since we utilize this for our Parent Teacher Conferences. There are IOS and Android apps available for both of these platforms. If required, our teachers will be working with students and families when they need to connect via video conferencing.

On Chromebooks, Hangouts Meet does not require any installation to work. Zoom will require students to use the Zoom app. ([Located here.](#))

Troubleshooting:

- Zoom [Troubleshooting Steps](#)
- Fully power down your device and try it again.
- You can test your camera operation on your device by going to this site: <https://www.onlinemictest.com/webcam-test/> (Follow the instructions to allow camera access so you can complete the test.) You can also test your camera by taking a picture with your Chromebook [This article will assist you with this.](#)
- You can also test your microphone on this site: <https://online-voice-recorder.com/>
- (You will have to allow the Mic on this site via a pop-up on your browser.)
- If your camera and microphone work and you are still having video/microphone issues when videoconferencing then you have a setting in Zoom or Meet that has that device muted.
- Normally this is not an issue, but it's also worth checking: "[How to manage the microphone and camera privacy settings on your Chromebook.](#)"

Cleaning your Devices

We recommend using a solution of 70% rubbing alcohol. (Dilute the higher ones down to 70%. It provides better virus and germ-killing properties.) Spray on a soft or microfiber cloth and wipe all surfaces. The key

is to use enough... but do not get the electronics too wet. Avoid using Clorox wipes since they often leave a residue and are often too damp which can damage electronics.

There are a lot of great resources available on the Internet to assist parents

It would be impossible for us to list the many great resources available to you, but we encourage you to explore and find the many tools available to you as parents. Feel free to reach out to your teachers for assistance and resources that they have for you as well.

Common Sense - has a great free collection of resources for educators and families.

CommonSense Media has put together a great free list of resources. [Check them out!](#) They have launched a brand-new, free online resource to support families and educators with remote learning. [Wide Open School](#). <---Check it out! Curated and coordinated by the experts at Common Sense, Wide Open School is the result of a collaboration among leading publishers, nonprofits, and education and technology companies. Wide Open School features a free collection of the best learning experiences and activities for kids, organized by grade band and subject. You will also find daily schedules with creative breaks and recommendations to keep kids engaged and exploring, one day (or one hour) at a time.