**Watershed School Technology Requirements**

Watershed School is a technologically advanced school. Students have electronic portfolios; each Expedition has a website with updated information, blogs and photos from the course and fieldwork; and teachers are expected to assign and accept homework online. We have a one to one laptop to student ratio. **High School and Middle School students are required to have their own laptop.**

All students must have access to a computer and the internet at home. Any entry level computer (and many hand-me-downs) will be sufficient to meet the needs of Watershed students. Specifically the two tasks that Watershed students use for school are to: conduct research on the Internet and access cloud-based services like Google Apps. Please consider small notebooks like the Asus EeePC, Acer Aspire, or Acer Swift. These computers often have smaller hard drives and screens, allowing them to be portable, cheap, and reliable (as low as $300). Both Costco and Best Buy are excellent locations to find these economical laptops. Online, you can shop those same stores, as well as Amazon.com, TigerDirect.com, and NewEgg.com, just to name a few.

Students with particular interest in music editing, photography, or video editing should consider an entry level Apple Macbook. Not only are these generally the industry standard for artistic pursuits, they are often more reliable and last much longer than their cheaper (or equivalently priced) PC counterparts. Macbooks start at $999 with a student discount, and often offer free accessories as a back-to-school special. You can purchase Mac computers at the Apple Store in the 29th St Mall or from Apple.com.

Whenever possible, please AVOID purchasing or using Windows Vista for Watershed School. We have found Windows VIsta to be difficult to maintain and often incompatible with our network. While students who already own VIsta laptops are welcome to continue using them at Watershed, limited resources will be available to provide any technology support for Windows Vista issues.

At Watershed School we take great pride in the ways that computers are used in our classrooms: technology is seldom the core topic of our classes, but rather--as in most of our lives--an invaluable tool. Computers are now an essential tool in business, government, and education, and we would be negligent in the preparation of our students if they were not becoming adept users of technology. Students and parents are expected to sign a contract before entering school each year agreeing to the school’s expectations for use of technology hardware and software, including social media, games, software, computers, school copy machines, cell phones and iPods. The use of such technology at school is considered a privilege, one that can be regulated or removed by the school at any time if the privilege is abused. The technology contract in the Student Handbook details the conditions of school use and revocation of the privilege.

If you have any questions or concerns about the ways the technology is utilized at Watershed School, please feel free to contact the school directly.