

Basic Troubleshooting



BEFORE you experience a problem you should backup everything that is important. School computers are property of CCSD and should not be used for personal file storage. If a computer has to be re-imaged, all files will be lost. Always back up files on a CD, flash drive or floppy disk. (Please note that a floppy disk is the least reliable method of file storage).

Before calling the help desk try these troubleshooting tricks:

1. Make sure there really is a problem.

Can't start your computer? Check the basics. Examine the cables, connectors, and power cords to make sure they're plugged in securely. Check any Surge protector, and the monitor to make sure they're turned on.

2. Reboot your computer. Turn your computer off, let it sit for two minutes, and reboot it. **See Ctrl-Alt-Delete below.**

3. Check a list of common problems below.

If nothing seems to apply to your problem, Call the Help Desk. **308-8181.**

1. Can't get on to the network or the Internet?

- Check to see if anyone else around you is having a similar problem. If so, there may be a service outage affecting a wider area
- Check to make sure the network cable is connected to both the computer and the wall or modem.
- Check where the network cable connection is made to the back of the computer, you should see a little green light right where the cable connects. If the light isn't on or flashing, then you are not getting a signal to the computer. If rebooting doesn't fix it, contact the Help Desk or your ISP.

2. Error Messages - Write them down.

- What tipped you off to the problem? Sometimes it's an error code or message displayed on screen. Be sure to write it down — it may describe the problem and how serious it is. Be sure to document the exact wording of any error messages. This can make the job of the Help Desk much faster.
- Other times you get no warning — everything just freezes. Message or no message, be sure note what was going on when the problem occurred. Were you starting your computer? Were you on the Windows Desktop? Were you in a particular application? Surfing the Web?

3. The computer is on but...

1 Everything on the screen is frozen and the keyboard and mouse are not responding.

Try tapping on the Num Lock key. It's located on the right-hand side of the keyboard above the number 7. While tapping the Num Lock key, notice whether or not the Num Lock light goes on and off. If it doesn't, the computer is completely locked up. You'll have to REBOOT the computer. If the light does go off and on, wait a minute before giving up hope. It may come back to life on its own.

2 Pressing Alt + F4

If a software program stops working or freezes up, try pressing the ALT+F4 keys to close the window that you're currently working in. This can shut down a frozen window and bring the computer back to life. If the keyboard is frozen as well, you'll have to reboot.

3 The "Blue Screen" has appeared.

The dreaded "Blue Screen of Death". There's not a lot to be done except to reboot the machine. If it keeps occurring, this is an indication of a major problem with the computer.

4 The computer is on, but there is no sound.

Is there a speaker icon next to the clock on the taskbar? (It's in the lower right side of the screen) If you can find it, double click the **speaker** icon to bring up the audio controls for the computer. See if any of the volume controls have been muted or turned all the way down. Uncheck any **Mute** boxes that are selected.

5 The computer is on, but the keyboard or mouse doesn't work

Swap the keyboard/mouse or try plugging the keyboard/mouse into another computer. If it doesn't work on the other computer, there is likely something wrong with the keyboard/mouse. If it does work on the other computer, there is likely something wrong on the computer or the connection to the computer. (Never plug or unplug the keyboard or mouse while the computer is running. This could blow the port. **Always turn the computer off first.**)

6 CTRL-ALT-DEL

When you press the Ctrl-Alt-Delete buttons together, you will bring up a control panel where you can select "Task Manager" and see if any of the programs are shown as "not responding". You may be able to shut down the offending program from there. If you can't get to this screen, you'll have to reboot.