



Frequently Asked Questions about the Use of Instructional Technology in Classrooms

Q: Why did the Mariemont City School District make the switch to a one-to-one technology plan?

A: Mariemont City Schools has been a one-to-one district since the spring of 2012. As with any district program or practice, administrators and staff have been constantly monitoring the one-to-one program and the EdTech landscape to remain current and keep our students competitive. The district began its transition to a one-to-one common device program in the fall of 2018 with each student in grades K-8 (K-9 beginning in 2019) using a common iPad device.

With that in mind, the decision to use technology in our classrooms was an easy one. Teachers and students need access to technology in the classroom – it is today’s textbook. Our students need technology to compete in college and the global marketplace.

Q: Does the added emphasis on technology in classrooms hinder the staff/student relationship?

A: Technology is never a replacement for a teacher. Our teachers are professionals who are educated in strategies to integrate technology as a way to amplify a lesson. Using instructional technology improves a teacher’s ability to provide personalized and individualized support and attention to students.

Research shows that when teachers integrate instructional technology it improves learning for the student by allowing the teacher to react in real time. A teacher can:

- Better accommodate different learning styles
- Accelerate learning by giving personalized instruction
- Receive immediate feedback about a learner’s progress

Q: What is the district’s philosophy regarding technology in the classroom?

A: In Mariemont City Schools, we believe that instructional technology use should be intentional, purposeful and amplify the learning experience. We believe in a blend of high-quality instruction and hands-on experiences that are enhanced by various tools and resources.

The greatest resource and tool in the classroom to impact student learning and achievement is the teacher. Technology will be used, and should be used, as an instrument to amplify the learning.

Q: Does the district have set limitations on screen time in the classroom?

A: Mariemont City Schools does a lot to limit and focus *active* student screen time and we encourage families at home to do the same. In the classroom, we focus on *active* screen time, not *passive* screen time. *Active* screen time is spent creating, collaborating, sharing and learning new skills. *Passive* screen time such as watching non-educational videos or playing non-educational games is not allowed in our classrooms, whether during class time, recess or free time.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, screen time is defined as time spent on a device for entertainment purposes, which *does not* include school work.

Q: What is the district doing to improve the one-to-one program and the use of technology in classrooms?

A: We are always willing to make improvements and implement changes when it makes sense to do so and as long as it does not hinder our ability to teach students.

That is why the district has created a Technology Advisory Committee comprised of parents, staff and community members. This group meets on a regular basis to discuss research and district practices regarding technology.

Q: What precautionary steps has the district taken to ensure students are safe online and staying on task during class?

A: Student safety is our top priority. That is why all school devices are all on a cloud-based filter called Securly. This means that, no matter where the iPad is taken and whichever internet it connects to, a filter is present. Inappropriate and potentially dangerous searches are flagged by the school district and discussed with the student and parents/guardians. Families are also able to create a Securly account to receive a weekly report of items searched on their student's devices.

Additionally, students in grades K-8 do not have access to a traditional App Store and are only able to download district-approved educational apps. YouTube is prohibited for students in grades K-4 and the strictest filtering setting is in place for older grade levels.

Teachers use the Apple Classroom app which allows them to monitor student screens at any time during school hours. It also allows the teacher to lock a student into a screen, freeze the screen or navigate a page or app open for students on their devices.

Q: What is the district's philosophy on digital vs. print text during literacy instruction?

A: The district has invested heavily in classroom print libraries at both elementary schools and the junior high school. The district also purchases subscriptions to digital text libraries and online literacy programs.

Both print and digital resources have a purpose and use in the classroom to increase student literacy and personalize the learning experience. Digital literacy programs, in particular, provide teachers with important data that print material cannot to help support students' growth in specific literacy areas.

If a parent does not want their child to use digital resources during literacy instruction, it is important to have a conversation with the classroom teacher to discuss potential options and accommodations.