



PTA Council of Howard County

Student Technology at HCPSS

Survey Report

*Community perspectives on the impact of school-issued devices
on safety, well-being, and learning*

August 2026

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Executive Summary

In Spring 2026, the PTA Council of Howard County Technology Committee conducted a survey on student technology at HCPSS to better understand community perceptions of whether current technology practices are safe, support student well-being, and effectively improve learning outcomes.

There were 560 respondents, including parents/guardians, teachers, and students representing 75 of 78 schools that educate approximately 57,000 students. The survey focused specifically on school-issued devices, which was defined in the survey as “assigned or shared devices (e.g. Chromebooks, iPads) provided by HCPSS to students and the applications run on them. It does not include personal devices (e.g. cell phones) brought from home.”

The key findings for each of the three defined categories – safety, well-being, and learning – are:

Safety

Detailed survey results are available in the Safety section ([pp. 7-12](#)).

- There are notable concerns about the effectiveness of the safeguards in place protecting the district’s network. Many respondents expressed concerns that the current controls do not reliably prevent misuse. 38% of respondents are aware of students bypassing restrictions, including 100% of student respondents, and 68% expressed hesitation about effectiveness of controls.
- Many respondents expressed concerns about student exposure to inappropriate content. Respondents attributed this exposure to a combination of bypassed network restrictions, advertising content, and creative use of approved tools such as Google Docs and YouTube.
- AI safety and governance emerged as a key theme. While respondents generally recognized the importance of AI, they expressed a strong preference for guardrails that promote safe and responsible use. The most widely supported safeguards included clear guidelines and training, content filtering, protections against student data being used to train AI systems, and defined accountability.
- Data privacy and transparency surfaced as an area where respondents had questions: what student data is collected, who has access to it, and how it is used. Respondents frequently expressed concerns about vendor data practices and indicated a strong preference for proactive transparency. They also expressed concern about advertising-supported applications, with 68% of parent/guardian respondents opposing advertising on school-issued devices in exchange for access to free or low-cost educational applications.

Well-Being

Detailed survey results are available in the Well-Being section ([pp. 12-15](#)).

- Excessive screen time was the strongest concern, specifically noting concerns that screen use at school is exceeding recommended daily limits without any personal use being accounted for at home. 60% of respondents cited awareness of screen overuse. Preferences for target screen time limits per *school day*, which could be interpreted as exclusively school hours or include after school hours, were overwhelmingly 0-1 hours for PreK-5 and 2-3 hours for grades 6-12, with a clear message of gradual and intentional use being key.
- Respondents frequently described addictive and compulsive behaviors, including students sneaking devices, obsessing over games, and struggling with self-regulation after device usage. 46% of respondents have awareness of compulsive engagement, prominently mentioning gamified apps.

Respondents also noted concerns about the vulnerability of students with ADHD to overstimulation and compulsive technology use.

- Impacts on mental and physical health were frequently observed, referencing impacts such as focus and fatigue issues, anxiety, depression, emotional dysregulation, sleep disruption, eye strain, and physical discomfort.
- An important secondary finding is the recurring theme among parents about the loss-of-control when it comes to use of school-issued devices at home. There are reports of devices undermining home limits, homework extending screen exposure, and conflict around access and control.

Learning

Detailed survey results are available in the Learning section ([pp. 15-19](#)).

- Many respondents do not perceive the current implementation of school-issued digital tools as substantially improving learning outcomes compared to non-digital approaches; only 9% rated them as “very effective.”
- Respondents frequently expressed a preference for handwriting, printed books, and teacher-led instruction, citing research suggesting stronger retention, reading comprehension, and depth of understanding with non-digital approaches. Many also reported observing reduced handwriting ability, weaker note-taking and study skills, and declining critical thinking.
- Respondents expressed concern that electronic submissions reduce opportunities for meaningful feedback and make it more difficult to assess student thinking and identify gaps in understanding.
- Many respondents expressed concern that current classroom technology use may detract from learning by way of distraction, overstimulation, and fragmented workflows. 64% of all respondents, and within that, 79% of all student respondents, said they are aware of non-academic device usage *during school hours*, describing gaming, messaging, and video viewing during instructional time. There are also comments about confusing workflows while navigating across various apps and inconsistent usage.
- While respondents generally acknowledged the importance of AI, many questioned its role in the classroom. Across all grade levels, respondents favored access models in which AI is *off by default*. Most supported no access in elementary school, while middle and high school respondents favored highly restricted models such as access limited to technology classes or activated by teachers when needed.
- Many respondents described concerns that AI encourages shortcuts and cheating and reduces critical thinking skills, creativity, and stamina for difficult work. There is a desire for students to learn responsible use of AI but in a highly controlled environment that does not impact the learning of the core curriculum.
- A meaningful group of respondents emphasized that technology literacy, accessibility supports, and responsible AI instruction are important components of preparing students for modern academic and professional environments. More broadly, many respondents expressed a preference for intentional and evidence-informed use of technology, emphasizing that digital tools should be used where they demonstrably enhance learning outcomes.

A primary goal of this survey is to help the PTACHC Technology Committee identify its advocacy priorities.

Respondents identified the top three priorities to be (see [pp. 20-21](#)):

1. Reducing screen time in school
2. Strengthening guidelines around use of AI
3. Ensuring access to non-digital learning tools in school and at home

In alignment with these priorities, PTACHC would recommend HCPSS explore the following recommendations to improve the safety, well-being, and learning of its students:

- Establish age-appropriate screen time limits to standardize technology practices in alignment with parent/guardian preferences and current research on student well-being and learning outcomes.
- Conduct a systematic and ongoing review of where technology most effectively enhances learning, prioritizing intentional, evidence-informed usage while minimizing unnecessary or excessive screen exposure.
- Ensure that all curricula include non-digital instructional materials readily available to both teachers and students.
- Provide and allow for non-digital alternatives for assignment completion and submission.
- Develop a more comprehensive, prescriptive AI framework that recognizes AI as a distinct category of technology, one that warrants firmer access limitations, standardized usage guidelines, transparent governance structures, and proactive family communication regarding student data, approved tools, and relevant policies.
- Invest in professional development for educators and age-appropriate instruction for students covering digital safety tools, usage risks, accountability considerations, and current research on the impacts of technology, and especially AI access, on safety, well-being, and learning.

While the recommendations focus on the three advocacy priorities most frequently selected by respondents, the full report also identifies several additional recurring themes that may warrant exploration ([p. 22](#)).

A full capture of all open-ended comments is included in the [Appendix](#).

Background

In spring 2026, the PTA Council of Howard County (PTACHC) established a Technology Committee in response to increasing attention on technology-related issues within the district, reflecting a broader national focus. The Committee presented a slide deck to the PTACHC delegation to introduce its mission and scope. Following this presentation, the delegation adopted a motion stating: “PTACHC advocates for technology use for all students in HCPSS that (1) is safe, (2) prioritizes well-being, and (3) effectively improves their learning outcomes.”

Given the district’s recent update to its personal device policy, the Committee elected to concentrate its efforts on HCPSS-provided student technology. To better understand the community’s experiences with this category of technology and to identify the most urgent areas for advocacy, the Committee resolved to conduct a survey.

Survey Methodology

The survey ran from April 24, 2026 - May 24, 2026. It was voluntary and open to the entire HCPSS community, inclusive of parents/guardians, teachers/staff, and students. PTACHC distributed the survey to its delegation and requested each PTA distribute the survey. Principals were also invited to distribute the survey to their communities at their discretion. The HCPSS administration generously chose to include the survey in their weekly newsletters.

The survey focused solely on “school-issued devices” which was defined in the survey as “assigned or shared devices (e.g. Chromebooks, iPads) provided by HCPSS to students and the applications run on them. It does not include personal devices (e.g. cell phones) brought from home.”

To align with PTACHC’s position on student technology use, the survey was structured around the three categories of safety, well-being, and learning. Participation was voluntary and survey responses were collected anonymously.

Respondents were only required to answer the initial question identifying their HCPSS role(s). The survey was otherwise anonymous. All other questions were optional, resulting in slightly varied response counts across survey questions.

Respondents

There were 560 total respondents, including parents/guardians, teachers/staff, and students representing 75 of 78 schools that educate approximately 57,000 students. No responses were received from Forest Ridge Elementary School, Guilford Elementary School, and Cedar Lane School.

Respondents were asked to identify all HCPSS roles that applied to them. Because this was a multi-select question, role counts are not mutually exclusive and do not sum to the total number of survey respondents.

Role	Count
Unique Parents/Guardians	452
Parent/Guardian - Elementary School	335
Parent/Guardian - Middle School	214
Parent/Guardian - High School	99
Unique Teachers/Staff	72
Teacher/Staff - Elementary School	25
Teacher/Staff - Middle School	24
Teacher/Staff - High School	23
Unique Students	76
Student - Elementary School	0
Student - Middle School	27
Student - High School	49

Survey Results Summary

The results are organized by survey category (safety, well-being, learning, and advocacy priorities).

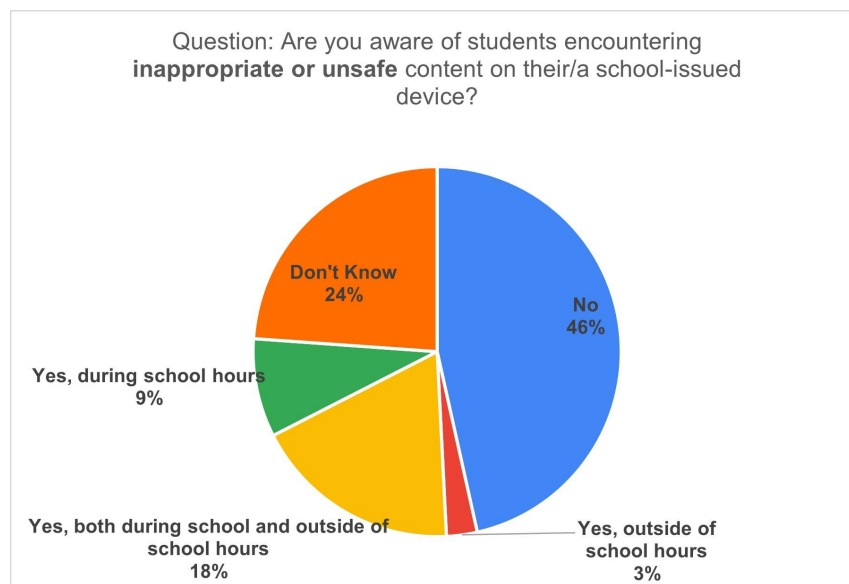
Safety

For this survey, “safety” included but was not limited to data privacy and security, content filtering and monitoring, and responsible use as it relates to student use of school-issued devices and the applications used on them.

Access to Inappropriate Content

An important component of the safe use of school-issued devices is ensuring that all content accessed on the device, whether academic or non-academic, is age-appropriate.

30% of 557 respondents said they were aware of students accessing inappropriate or unsafe content on school-issued devices.



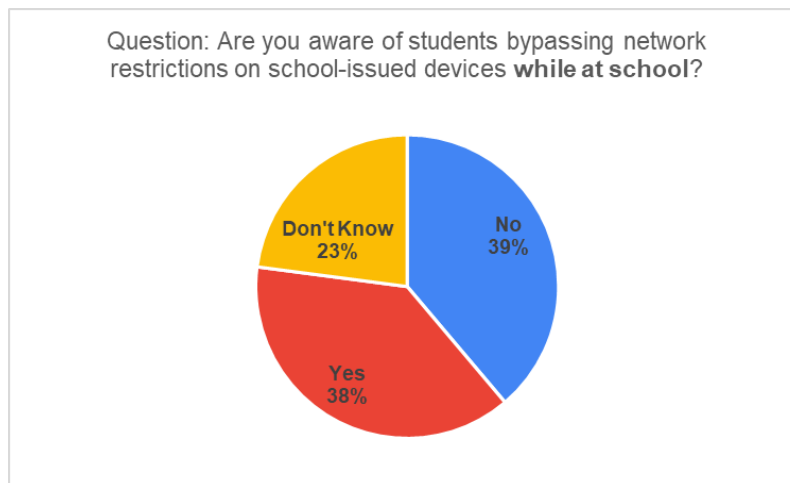
Respondents who were aware of students accessing inappropriate content were asked to explain. Below are representative quotes grouped by theme. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- **YouTube and online content as a major concern**
 - “Kids are on youtube and get commercials that are inappropriate.”
 - “Unsupervised and unrestricted access to YouTube and online content that can be accessed during school hours and at home.”
- **Games and off-task device use involving graphic content**
 - “I’ve seen kids playing video games (including violent games with guns and animated blood) on school issued laptops.”
 - “Students in my son’s first grade class are playing non-educational games during reading centers, including horror games.”
- **Exposure to pornography, sexual content, and other explicit material**
 - “My children have seen peers watching porn on school issued computers.”

- “My oldest son... is now using the Gemini AI they provide... to even try to make nude pictures of real girls without their consent.”
- “I have seen kids through Lightspeed looking at naked anime characters or watching inappropriate movies.”
- “Students accessing a game called ‘5 nights at Epstein's’”

Bypassing Network Restrictions

To better understand the effectiveness of network restrictions as a safeguard against inappropriate or unsafe content, respondents were asked about their awareness of students bypassing network restrictions. **38% of all 554 respondents, including 100% of student respondents, are aware of students bypassing network restrictions.**



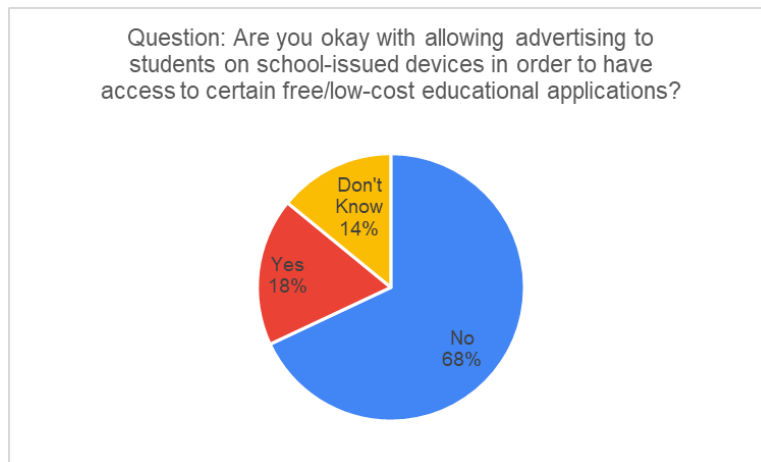
Related to these findings, respondents also shared additional comments regarding **bypassing network restrictions** in the open-ended safety-specific question. Below are representative quotes. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- “They are aware of how to bypass the safety filters in place and share that information freely.”
- “The county cannot keep up with the amount of sites that need to be blocked that the students are accessing.”
- “One of my kids told me how a classmate told her how to get around one of the blocked websites/apps.”
- “Sometimes it’s too restrictive and students can’t access sites they are asked to go to in class by teachers, so they need to use their phones.”
- “My child has also used proxy servers to bypass the restrictions.”
- “My middle school child told me about friends bypassing restrictions to access content on youtube targeted for adult audiences.”
- “Certain restraints and tab blockers make it so that students have to find ways around sites in order to access resources that are needed in order to do assignments, which can cause more time and screen.

The following sections on advertising and data privacy and transparency focus on parent/guardian responses due to the nature of the questions.

Exposure to Advertising

Exposure to advertising content may also present safety risks. Advertising on school-issued devices can appear through web browsing or within district-approved applications. For example, free or low-cost educational applications rely on advertising revenue, resulting in students being exposed to advertisements while using those products. HCPSS has stated that its use of certain ad-supported applications limits its ability to implement network-wide ad blocking protections. **When parents/guardians were asked whether they supported allowing advertising on school-issued devices in exchange for access to low-cost or free educational applications, 68% of 452 parent/guardian respondents selected “No.”**

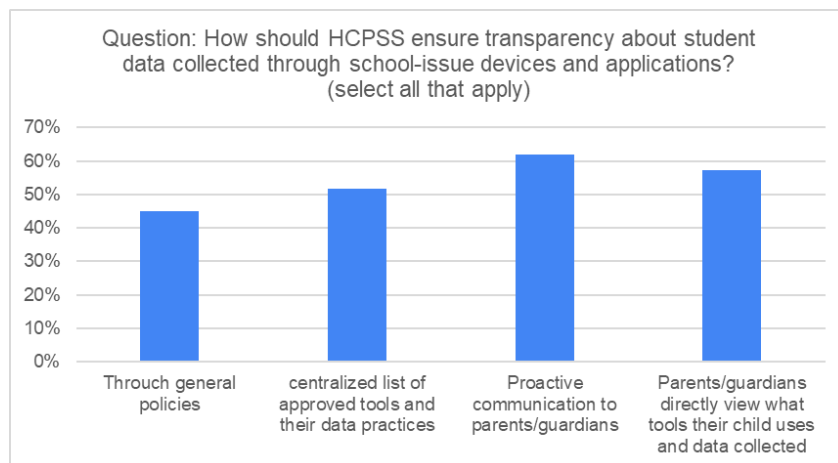


Related to these findings, respondents also shared additional comments regarding **advertising to students** in the open-ended safety-specific question. Below are representative quotes. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- “Ads are not safe content in general as they are typically not monitored well by vendors.”
- “I worry that the web browsing filters are not able to catch inappropriate pop up ads.”
- “I’ve heard many stories of lewd ads reaching kids on their school devices.”
- “Advertisements are shown. Concern for data mining of our students’ responses without consent from parents. Software should not be allowed to have advertisements or mine student data. We need to prioritize paid software to prevent ads and data collection.”

Data Privacy and Transparency

Data privacy and transparency are also critical safety considerations in the use of EdTech applications. Under FERPA, COMAR, and Maryland Education Article § 7-2102, parents/guardians have the right to know what data is being collected through applications on school-issued devices, who has access to that data, and how it is used. To better understand parent/guardian preferences regarding transparency, the survey asked how they would prefer to be informed about the collection and use of student data. **Of the 552 parent/guardian respondents, the most frequently indicated preference was for proactive communication regarding student data practices. Respondents generally favored a multi-channel approach to transparency: 69% selected at least two communication methods, 52% selected at least three, and 34% selected all four available options. 31% selected only one communication method, with preferences distributed across all four options.**



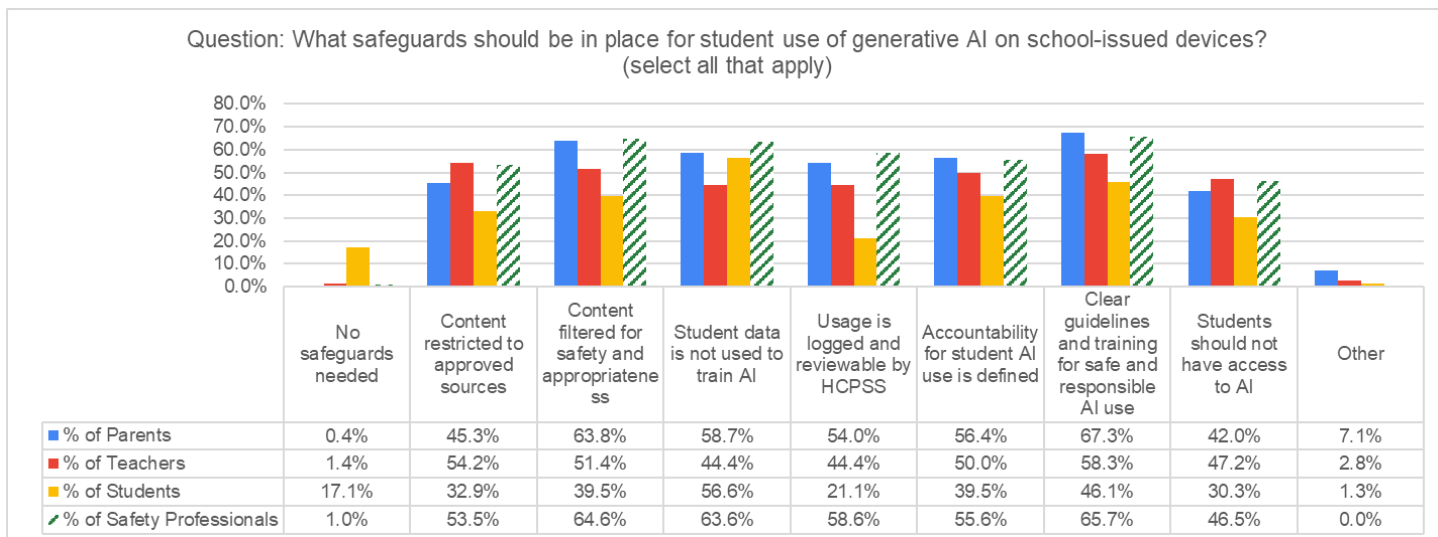
Related to these findings, respondents also shared additional comments regarding **data sharing, privacy, and transparency** in the open-ended safety-specific question. Below are representative quotes. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- “I’m done handing over my child’s personal info and having to trust other entities to safeguard it.”
- “Little/no information has been provided on what student information is collected or how it is used.”
- “Free programs are using our children’s data for profit.”
- “I never received a report on my students’ technology usage or skills development.”
- “Concern for data mining of our students’ responses without consent from parents.”

AI Safety

Generative AI differs from traditional digital tools in that it produces probabilistic, context-sensitive content rather than fixed, transparent, and fully verifiable outputs. Recognizing this distinction, PTACHC surveyed respondents regarding appropriate safeguards for AI tools. **Across stakeholder groups, respondents generally favored safeguards governing student use of generative AI rather than unrestricted access. The most frequently selected safeguards were clear guidelines and training for responsible AI use, content filtering for safety and appropriateness, and protections preventing student data from being used to train AI systems. Defined accountability for AI use was a close fourth. Students were generally less supportive of restrictions than other respondent groups; for example, 17.1% indicated that no safeguards were needed, compared with 0.4% of parents/guardians.** Because respondents who selected “Students should not have access to AI” often did not select additional safeguards, support for the remaining safeguards may be understated.

The chart below displays responses by stakeholder groups. For additional perspective, responses from those who self-identified as having safety-related expertise were also analyzed separately. These respondents included professionals such as data scientists, software engineers, cybersecurity professionals, and attorneys.

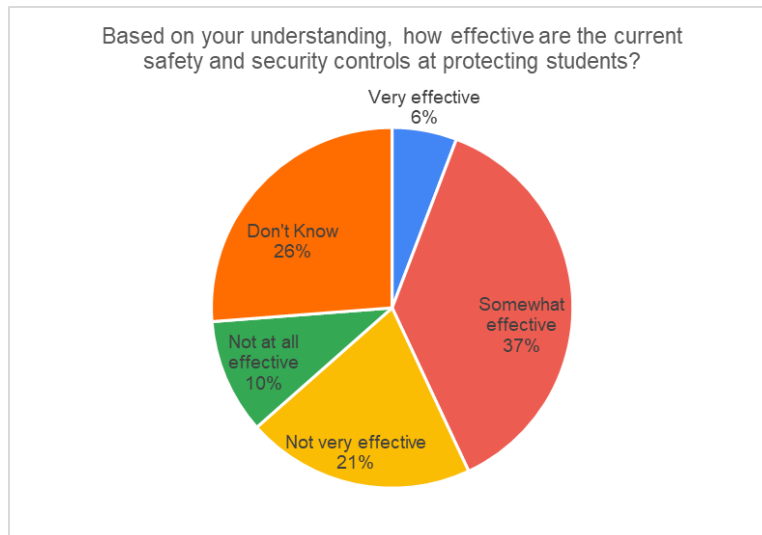


Related to these findings, respondents also shared additional comments regarding **data sharing, privacy, and transparency** in the open-ended safety-specific question. Below are representative quotes. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- “Technology/cyberscurity/AI is so dynamic. It’s changing much too quickly for the slow moving school system to keep up with.”
- “Online safety comes from education NOT restriction. My generation learned to be safe online and how to source factual, reputable information from the Internet from growing up with the Internet. The Internet is a tool our children should be taught to use effectively and safety. This includes the use of AI.”
- “I do not think our society understands the implications of AI and its impact well enough to turn it over to our students at this time.”
- “Limited access in the higher grades with proper instruction seems prudent.”
- “Student AI usage MUST be heavily monitored. Emphasis on heavily. With AI still evolving, there are almost no reliable safeguards to protect our children from viewing appropriate things or stop them from creating inappropriate things. There are several documented cases of AI being used by children to target other kids, create revenge porn, bully, etc. Teachers using AI to find accurate information to teach is one thing - students should not be allowed open access.”
- “Combination of multiple safeguards: Communication, content and usage restriction/monitoring, policies and guidelines, accountability, clear expectations, and training.”

Effectiveness of Safety and Security Protocols

To better understand perceptions of current safeguards, respondents were provided with [HCPSS's overview of its technology policies and practices](#) and asked to assess the effectiveness of the current safety and security controls in protecting students. **Of the 553 respondents, only 6% rated the controls as “very effective.” The remaining responses reflected a mix of uncertainty, reservations, and concerns regarding the effectiveness of the current controls.**



Related to these findings, respondents also shared additional comments regarding the **effectiveness of current safety and security controls** in the open-ended safety question. Representative quotes are provided below. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- “Staff members need to know how to utilize the tools for restricting access while instructing at the same time.”
- “A lot of the time, the content filter does more harm than good. It blocks a lot of what would be resources for students because they are "mature" when in reality they aren't.”
- “Staff and parents should have a way to disable everything BUT the school provided programs.”
- “White list pages should be used vs black list.”
- “Students in my son’s first grade class were able to access a staff account on a device using the password that was just the school’s initials.”
- “The device has a new MAC address every time it logs into my network.”
- “The MDM they use in Chromebooks is not even following the district approved applications list.”

A full capture of all open-ended comments is included in the [Appendix](#).

Well-Being

For this survey, well-being included mental, emotional, and physical impacts as a result of using HCPSS student devices and the applications used on them.

Well-Being Impacts

To better understand the impact of school-issued devices on student well-being, the survey asked respondents whether they were aware of students experiencing any of several well-being impacts identified in existing research as a result of school-issued device usage. **Screen overuse, compulsive engagement with gamified applications, and difficulty focusing or fatigue were the most frequently identified well-being impacts.**

The percentages below reflect the proportion of the 547 respondents who selected each option in descending order:

- 60% Screen overuse
- 46% Excessive or compulsive engagement with gamified apps (e.g., rewards, levels)
- 46% Difficulty focusing or fatigue
- 36% Emotional or mental health concerns (e.g., stress, anxiety)
- 33% Physical health issues (e.g., eyestrain, headaches)
- 27% Exposure to unhealthy content
- 24% Cyberbullying or online harassment
- 15% Emotional reliance on AI chatbots
- 0.4% Other

27% of respondents indicated they were not aware of impacts. Of the respondents who were not aware of any impacts, 69% were parents of elementary school students.

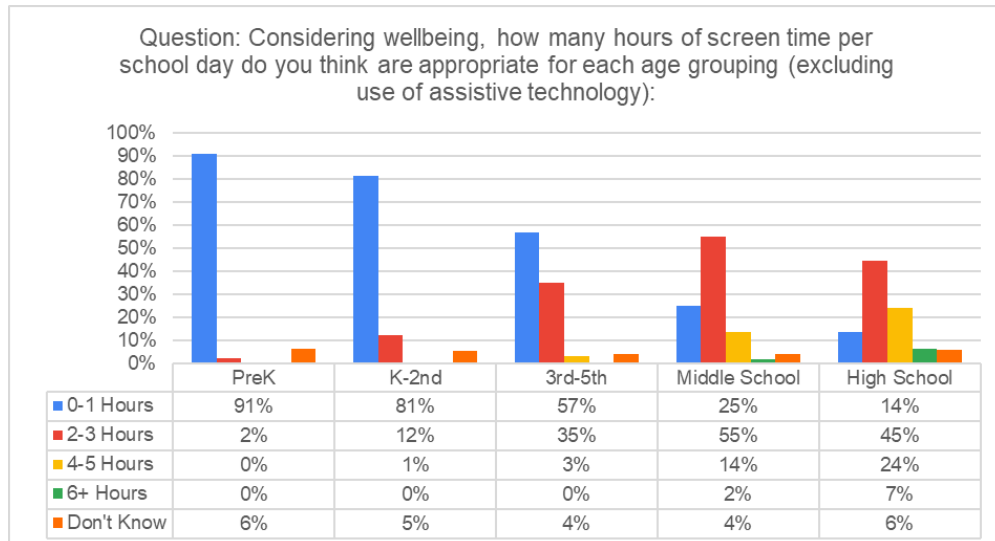
The survey asked respondents to explain their selections. Below are key themes that emerged and representative quotes. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- *Screen addiction and compulsive use*
 - “My son rushes to each class just to open his computer so he can play games.”
 - “Students are addicted to their computers. Teachers see negative consequences of this addiction every single day.”
 - “Kids with ADHD are extra drawn toward these stimulating games. It’s important educators are aware of the research about how the tech impacts students with this disability.”
- *Challenges with self-regulation*
 - “There is a big difference in ability to self regulate and think creatively for the younger grades on days without screens compared to days with screen usage.”
 - “They are addicted and unable to have the self-control needed to remove themselves from the screen.”
 - “Behavior regulation concerns after screen addiction when too much screen time and gamification used”
- *Mental health, emotional well-being, and cognitive concerns*
 - “My son has had trouble sleeping because of the content he was exposed to on a device by another student.”
 - “My daughter’s mental health and physical well-being are WORSE than they were when she was homeschooled.”
 - “Attention spans are limited, motivation to complete their work completely and correctly is poor, and anxiety/stress are high because interactions are funneled through their devices.”
- *Physical health effects of device use*
 - “Eye doctor has noted extensive screen time at school and for homework, which has led to my kids required to wear prescription eyewear or blue light glasses.”
 - “My student... now has to wear blue light glasses at school DAILY with slight magnification to reduce eye strain & headache episodes because of excessive OVER reliance of devices every day.”
 - “Heavy to carry daily; lower back pain.”
- *Cyberbullying and harmful peer interactions*

- “I have heard of more than one incident of group chats being used to bully students and or pressure students.”
- “There was an incident in my child's class in middle school where a boy sent out an email to a bunch of the classmates and it was cyber bullying some of the other kids in class.”
- “Students create inappropriate google slides or docs and share them with other students.”

Amount of Screen Time

Screen time is a key factor in understanding the well-being impacts of school-issued devices. Respondents were asked how much screen time they believed was appropriate for each school level during the “school day.” **Overall, respondents favored very limited screen time for elementary school students, with preferences increasing gradually by age. The most frequently selected response was 0–1 hours per day for PreK through 5th grade and 2–3 hours per day for middle and high school students.** It is worth noting that some respondents identified ambiguity in the wording of the question. Some were unsure whether “school day” referred only to time spent in school or also *included after-school screen time*, such as homework. Among those who commented on the ambiguity, more indicated that they had included after-school screen time in their selections. This ambiguity should be considered when interpreting the results.



Responses from those who self-identified as having well-being-related expertise reflected similar overall patterns, although fewer endorsed four or more hours of screen time as appropriate for middle and high school students.

Related to these findings, respondents also shared additional comments regarding the **amount of screen time during the school day** in the open-ended well-being question. Below are key themes that emerged and representative quotes. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- *Current screen use is excessive*
 - “The amount of screen use for HCPSS students is detrimental to students well-being.”
 - “Students are on screens ALL THE TIME!”
 - “For our middle schooler in particular, we feel like there is ENTIRELY too much use of screens at school and that the vast majority of her education is occurring via her chromebook.”
 - “My child is getting HOURS of screen time per day at school. Well over daily limits.”

- *Recommendations for amount of screen time*
 - “I do not think pre-K thru 2nd grade need access to screen time outside of Technology class”
 - “Given the number of classes children have in middle and high school no more than 20-30 minutes per class is reasonable”
 - “Screen time for freshman and sophomore should be less than 2 hours.”
 - “Children should not be on screens whenever possible.”
 - “Technology use for younger children should be significantly reduced and only used with active teacher involvement.”
- *Call for balance*
 - “I think there is a lot to be said for kids learning to take notes and study with pen and paper. There are advantages to having online access to certain apps, modules, etc., but I think a combination digital/non-digital would be advantageous.”
 - “I think the biggest problem is overreliance, not the existence of the technology itself.”
 - “Technology has a time and place... but students are not being exposed to a wide enough variety of instructional resources.”
 - “Computers are an important part of society, so learning how to use them safely and effectively is important, but there is just too much reliance.”

In the open-ended comment box related to well-being, respondents also added comments about how school-issued devices are being used **outside of school**. The primary theme revolved around the devices creating conflict at home and undermining parenting limits. Representative quotes include:

- “My kid is lying, sneaking, and abusing screen time limits constantly. It is an enormous obstacle to parenting.”
- “School-issued devices are a constant source of distraction for our son and adversely impact his academic achievement. We have limits on screentime and type of usage at home, but having unlimited access to a device at school contradicts this.”
- “I have to physically remove the Chromebook from my kid's possession or he will play games on it late into the evening.”
- “I do not like that all my daughter's homework requires a screen. It means she always has a reason to be on a screen ‘to do homework,’ which makes establishing screen boundaries much more difficult for parents.”
- “Overusing canvas means my child is on a screen for HOURS longer than I would like.”

A full capture of all open-ended comments is included in the [Appendix](#).

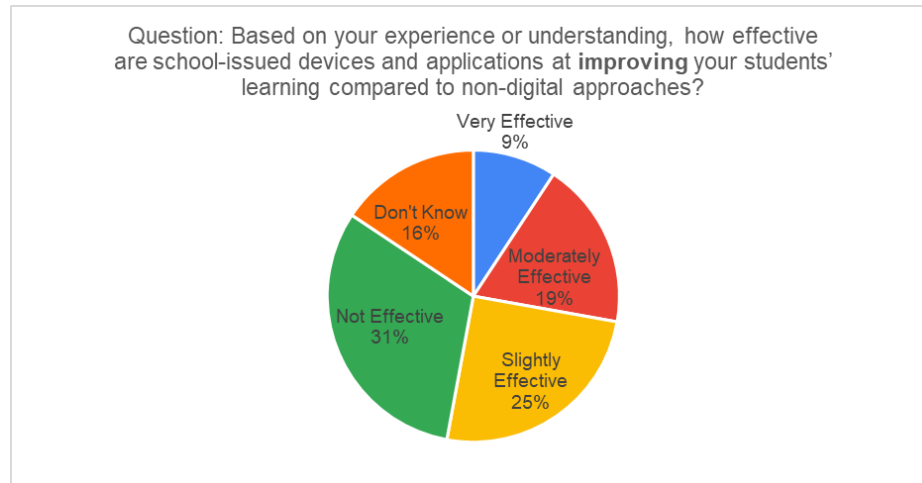
Learning

For this survey, learning referred to the ability to acquire and retain skills or knowledge as a result of students using school-issued devices and the applications used on them.

Effectiveness of Digital Learning Tools

To better understand perceptions of the educational value of school-issued devices and applications, respondents were asked how effective they believed these tools were at improving learning compared to non-digital approaches. **Of the 550 respondents, only 9% rated school-issued devices and applications as “very effective.” The remaining responses reflected varying degrees of perceived effectiveness,**

uncertainty, or dissatisfaction, with 31% of all respondents indicating that digital tools were not effective compared to non-digital approaches.



Sixty-nine respondents indicated that their student uses assistive technology. These respondents were substantially more likely to rate digital tools as “very effective” than respondents whose students did not use assistive technology (22% versus 7%).

Respondents who did not rate digital tools as “very effective” were asked to identify factors that influenced their rating. **Among the 489 respondents who answered this question, the most frequently selected factors were overstimulation, distraction, reduced engagement from frequent use, and limited support for deep understanding.** The percentages below reflect the proportion of the respondents who selected each option in descending order:

- 61% Overstimulating (e.g. gamified tools)
- 60% Too much distraction
- 53% Reduced engagement from frequent use
- 53% Limited support for deep understanding
- 37% Inconsistent or ineffective use in classroom
- 32% Limited access to assignment feedback
- 28% Not aligned with learning needs
- 12% Other (please explain at end of section)
- 8% Don't know

Responses for the “other” option included comments about workflow confusions when using multiple apps and comments about research showing greater effectiveness of non-digital learning tools.

Related to these findings, respondents also shared additional comments regarding the **effectiveness of digital learning tools** in the open-ended learning-specific question. Below are key themes that emerged and representative quotes. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

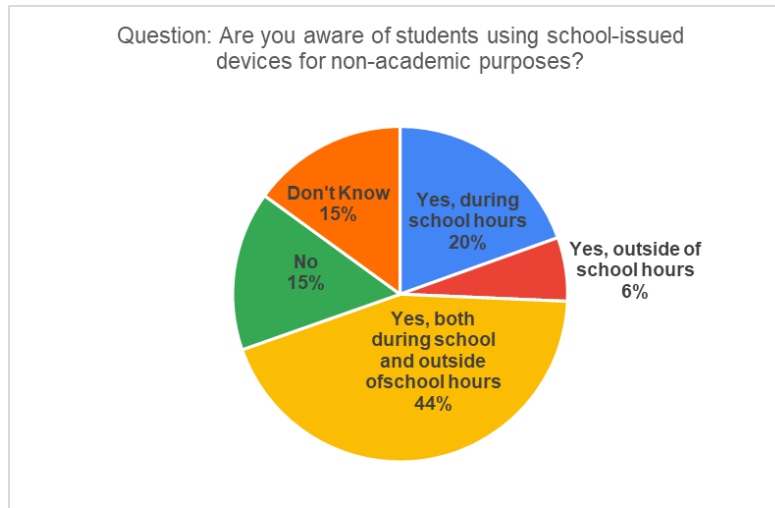
- *Non-digital learning methods are more effective*
 - “The act of writing and reading books creates a tactile response that also stimulates the neurological pathways for better retention and recall.”

- “Hand writing produces greater retention of learned materials than typing. Reading on a screen tends to skim for highlights while reading from a printed text encourages both reading in greater depth and engagement.”
- “Paper for math assignments allows and encourages students to show their work.”
- *Screen-based learning is often confusing and distracting*
 - “Screen based learning scatters pieces of assignments across multiple apps, links, places in Canvas.”
 - “Jumping from tab to tab trying to figure out how to do the assignment is not at all effective.”
 - “My kid learns more when writing, speaking, and listening. During digital devices, his focus turns to wanting to ‘win’ and getting the positive feedback from prizes or awards from winning.”
- *Intentional technology use can be effective*
 - “School should teach technological skills, but the majority of school time should be used for interactions with students and teachers.”
 - “I think that especially at a high school level, students should be learning to work with technology to verify facts and double checking research.”
 - “High school classrooms are so varied. In my classroom, students need daily access to internet sources to accomplish their goals, and depriving them of that access would dramatically increase their at-home preparation time. I make sure that in a given class period, only about half is dedicated to independent work time on their computers. In others, though, tech tools (Common Lit) have replaced print materials that are far superior. It’s important for a policy review to account for the variations in curriculum and level.”
- *Technology use limits feedback*
 - “With the current use of electronic submissions, there is usually no teacher feedback.”
 - “When everything is online, the students are missing out on the critical step of learning from their mistakes and seeing specific feedback on their work.”
 - “A grade is posted in Canvas, but since nothing is being physically returned to the student, it is easy for them to not check their grades.”
- *Learning to use technology is important*
 - “Students can learn a lot from technology and its benefits as it’s evolving day by day and not going away.”
 - “We need to teach students to appropriately use screens for necessary tasks. They need to learn how to use them and manage time for the real world.”
 - “Students in high school are a step away from the world of work or college. Learning how to use technology responsibly in k12 is essential to them knowing how to appropriately use college after they graduate.”
- *Impacts on students with disabilities*
 - “The Chromebook as a learning tool has been an HUGE educational BENEFIT for my children with Dyslexia and Dysgraphia.”
 - “Our kids all have ADHD and these devices make it worse.”
 - “My son has an assigned chromebook for speech to text, but he is embarrassed to use it when others are not.”
 - “Students with IEP/504 should always! receive a print copy of written materials as scrolling up and down through a computer article is not meeting the needs of the student.”

Non-Academic Device Usage

Because non-academic device use can affect the learning environment, respondents were asked about their awareness of such use *during school hours*. **Overall, 64% of the 553 respondents reported being aware of**

non-academic device use during school hours. Awareness was particularly high among students, 79% of whom reported being aware of such use.



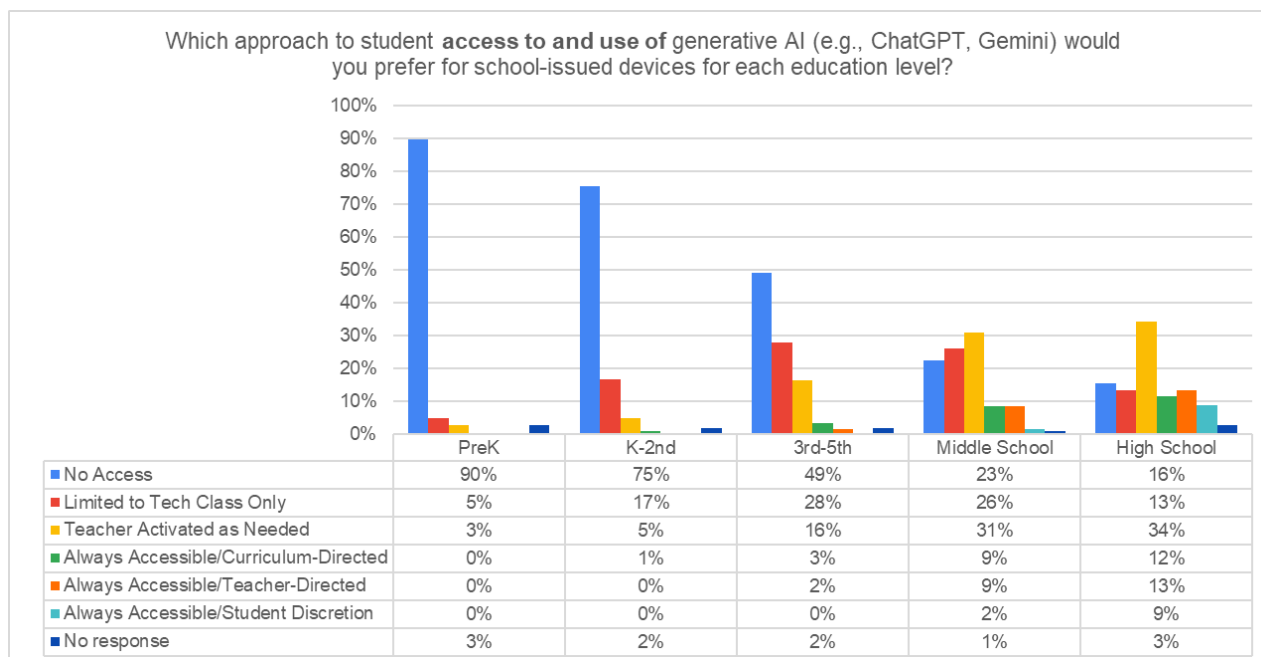
Related to these findings, respondents also shared additional comments regarding **non-academic usage** in the open-ended learning-specific question. Below are key themes that emerged and representative quotes. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- *Playing games*
 - "He's playing Minecraft Ed during many classes."
 - "My middle schooler plays games on his computer in the library instead of eating lunch in the cafeteria."
 - "As a teacher, even with physical monitoring and using light speed, some students work around the restrictions. Gaming is a frequent issue."
- *Watching videos*
 - "Students in my children's science class regularly watch 'Dance Moms' on youtube during instructional time."
 - "A student during MCAP testing was watching inappropriate videos on their computer instead of testing."
 - "Students watching YouTube during class and instruction."
- *Messaging during school*
 - "Students using google sheets to chat together during class assignments and teaching."
 - "Chat groups exist within student communications via Canvas/InBox that have no adult oversight or moderation."

AI Integration in Education

As generative AI becomes increasingly prevalent, HCPSS must consider the appropriate role of these tools within the learning environment. The survey asked respondents about preferred levels of AI access at each school level. **Across all grade levels, the 549 respondents generally favored access models in which AI is off by default rather than always available to students. "No Access" was the most frequently selected option for elementary school students. In middle school, respondents were divided among several restricted-access models, with the strongest support concentrated among "Teacher Activated as Needed," "Tech Class Only," and "No Access." In high school, respondents continued to favor**

restricted access, with “Teacher Activated as Needed” emerging as the most frequently selected option.



Related to these findings, respondents also shared additional comments regarding **AI access** in the open-ended learning-specific question. Below are key themes that emerged and representative quotes. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- *Concern that AI weakens critical thinking and authentic learning*
 - “I have watched my students' ability to learn, think critically, and retain information decline over the years as the reliance on AI has increased.”
 - “Students need to learn logic and critical thinking skills in school. AI and LLMs don't help children learn how to synthesize information and how to think. Instead, AI and LLMs give people the answers they want to hear. We are doing our students a disservice if we don't teach them HOW to think and HOW to learn.”
- *Concerns about cheating, overreliance, and misuse*
 - “AI does not help students learn, it teaches them shortcuts and ways to not use their own brain.”
 - “At the age when adolescents and children are highly suggestible, distractable, and susceptible to ‘easy outs’ (ie, cheating), forcing children to online-only access for both homework and classroom notes regardless of their learning style or distractibility and encouraging them to explore AI is dangerously negligent.”
- *Support for limited, supervised, and age-appropriate AI use*
 - “Should only be permitted under heavy supervision in high school (maybe even 11-12 grades only), and not for younger students.”
 - “I do think proper use of AI is an important skill they should be learning in tech class, and in others, as appropriate.”
- *Using AI should be proactively taught*
 - “AI is the way of the future and we are doing disservice to our students by pretending that it doesn't exist.”
 - “Students should learn how to responsibly use AI and other technologies that is part of everyday life and professional workplaces.”

A full capture of all open-ended comments is included in the [Appendix](#).

Advocacy Priorities

Respondents were asked to identify the school-issued device-related advocacy priorities they believed PTACHC should focus on. **Respondents expressed support for a range of student technology advocacy topics, with reducing screen time, strengthening AI guidelines, and ensuring access to non-digital learning tools emerging as the highest priorities.** Below are the percentages of the 543 respondents who selected each option, listed in descending order:

1. 70% Reducing screen time in school
2. 68% Strengthening guidelines around use of AI
3. 65% Ensuring access to non-digital learning tools in school and at home
4. 60% Defining a balanced approach for the use of digital and non-digital tools
5. 60% Strengthening safety and security practices
6. 46% Validating effectiveness of curriculum-embedded digital tools
7. 37% Increasing parent/guardian choice in technology use
8. 4% Other
9. 4% Student technology should NOT be an advocacy priority for PTACHC

There was one final open-ended comment box at the conclusion of the survey asking for overall comments on the topic of student technology at HCPSS. Below are key themes that emerged and representative quotes. A complete list of responses can be found in the [Appendix](#).

- *Reduce or eliminate classroom device reliance*
 - “Please reduce Chromebooks in middle school. It is a failure of our school system- placing addictive technology in front of our students for 6 hours a day.”
 - “Reduce use of technology during day. It’s addictive and poorly implemented.”
 - “Technology is a poor use of school systems resources since it is not shown to improve students learning outcomes.”
- *Increase non-digital learning tools and feedback*
 - “More books, less screens.”
 - “In particular, I think Math assignments and English assignments should be graded by hand so the teacher can write comments and the students can see the feedback.”
 - “I want to go back to textbooks. Not reading on screens.”
- *Technology should be used intentionally and gradually but not entirely eliminated*
 - “Technology has a place in learning but I don’t believe it should be the main driver.”
 - “Technology is a critical part of the learning curriculum... However, technology should not replace learning.”
 - “I believe it’s a great opportunity for students as technology is advancing rapidly and students can learn to use technology in a responsible manner in a supportive and supervised environment at school.”
- *AI is being misused by both students and teachers*
 - “One of my teachers uses AI to generate all of her assignments and does not review them to make sure they make sense before giving them to us.”
 - “I see people using AIs in ways that violate the current guidelines and nothing happens.”
 - “Students and parents MUST be made aware of the risks associated with using generative AI.”
- *Policies should be grounded in research and expertise*

- “Please follow the data put out by experts to drive policy decisions.”
- “HCPSS needs to consult child development specialists, neuroscientists, and health practitioners to inform your decisions.”
- “Utilize scientific evidence from peer reviewed journals to guide decision making.”

Recommendations

Based on the top three advocacy priorities that emerged through the survey — reducing screen time in school, strengthening guidelines around the use of AI, and ensuring access to non-digital learning tools both in school and at home — PTACHC respectfully recommends that HCPSS consider the following actions to advance student safety, well-being, and learning outcomes:

Screen Time & Technology Use

- Establish age-appropriate screen time limits to standardize technology practices in alignment with parent/guardian preferences and current research on student well-being and learning outcomes.
- Conduct a systematic and ongoing review of where technology most effectively enhances learning, prioritizing intentional, evidence-informed usage while minimizing unnecessary or excessive screen exposure.

Non-Digital Learning Access

- Ensure that all curricula include non-digital instructional materials readily available to both teachers and students.
- Provide and allow for non-digital alternatives for assignment completion and submission.

Artificial Intelligence Governance

- Develop a more comprehensive, prescriptive AI framework that recognizes AI as a distinct category of technology, one that warrants firmer access limitations, standardized usage guidelines, transparent governance structures, and proactive family communication regarding student data, approved tools, and relevant policies.
- Invest in professional development for educators and age-appropriate instruction for students covering digital safety tools, usage risks, accountability considerations, and current research on the impacts of technology, and especially AI access, on safety, well-being, and learning.

While not among the top three survey priorities, the following recurring themes may warrant further exploration:

- The impact of school-issued devices used outside of school hours, including student reliance on devices for homework completion and challenges associated with recreational use and home-based screen time management.
- Parent/guardian desire for greater transparency surrounding student data privacy, data usage practices, and the district's approved digital tools.
- Concerns regarding student exposure to advertising and advertising-supported applications, including the effectiveness of existing protections and the tradeoffs associated with using ad-supported educational tools.

Appendix - Open-Ended Responses

All open-ended responses are included below and are grouped by sub-categories:

- [Accessing Inappropriate Content](#)
- [Safety and Security](#)
- [Non-Academic Device Use](#)
- [Well-Being Impacts](#)
- [Use of Digital Learning Tools](#)
- [AI Safety, Usage, and Governance](#)

Accessing Inappropriate Content

"I've seen kids playing video games (including violent games with guns and animated blood) on school issued laptops at the bus stop and during competitions. My children have also reported kids playing games during class in multiple classes. It has been reported to teachers and the principal, but the school's response was noting that google tools are required and enabled by hcpss policy, and the kids are accessing the games through google."

"Children always find a way to send inappropriate materials to each other. I've heard of these being circulated during school. Additionally, students overuse many of the games that are allowed and are constantly on them "doing schoolwork", in and out of school, until otherwise told not to."

"Hear stories of students accessing inappropriate content in school, e.g., pornography."

"Another issue, I've noticed that the "educational games" that are accessible on the Chromebooks are not helpful or beneficial for our students and contain ad related commercial content to teach kids about brands. One day, I found both my kids playing a quiz game on the Chromebook where they had to identify companies based on their brand logo. I spoke to both of them and explained that those weren't appropriate games to play on the school laptop and they were not in fact "educational games". However, again I am at a loss as to why my kids are even able to access and play advertising related games."

"Students are accessing sexually explicit websites both in school and out of school. Many of them use the Collegeboard App to do so and others are altering the coding of the Chromebook."

"Unsolicited ads in learning software. YouTube ads."

"Five Nights at Epstiens Link: <https://sites.google.com/view/staticquasar931/gm3z/five-nights-at-epsteins-fnae>"

"Games, unfiltered YouTube videos, inappropriate YouTube Music music videos, access to Google Maps and other Google apps even after parental permission/consent was removed or never given via Canvas, students passing links to websites and apps to bypass monitoring and blocking."

"Student searched inappropriate language and was able to find definitions."

"Children are encouraged to play games on websites during technology class. When my kids play the same games at home, I learned that these games involve dressing avatars with clothing where the avatar has nothing on but an underwear and a bra. The clothing choices are extremely suggestive, sometimes involving lingerie. The games feature dating and sexually suggestive themes like selecting behaviors for the avatar to act on so they can successfully secure a date with a boy."

"Students accessing a game called "5 nights at Epstein's""

"A parent friend of a middle schooler is often being given links to inappropriate content and ways to bypass the firewall."

"Students create inappropriate google slides or docs and share them with other students"

"A student working on a group with my son in theater class accessed inappropriate images and incorporated them in the shared presentation. This was addressed by the teacher/school, but cost my son instructional time having to make statements and could have implicated him as a collaborator on the presentation. Students in my children's science class regularly watch "Dance Moms" on youtube during instructional time."

"There is no way to fully block every single inappropriate website."

"I'm aware of a student describing disturbing videos he was watching on his Chromebook"

"Students can access YouTube and YouTube shorts from their computers - inappropriate and harmful in content. We have asked repeatedly that this be helped and admin and teachers alike seem to have no ability to stop it."

"My children have seen peers watching porn on school issued computers. Why are we giving children computers at school? This is developmentally inappropriate. Please look at the research showing how children best develop critical thinking skills, retention of information, and impulse control."

"Guns and sexual content"

"My daughter was able to play a game at home that involved her choosing a "fake" career. She chose "porn star" not knowing what that meant."

"Students are able to access shopping, music, videos, and inappropriate content through school issued device while in school or outside of school which leads to lack of concentration."

"At the middle school level, students have less safeguards in place at home and are able to access information they do not have access to during school hours if teachers are using the appropriate safeguards and diligently holding students accountable."

"I have heard reports from my child in middle school that some of the kids have used their school-issued devices to access inappropriate material."

"I've seen other parents post online about their kids accessing inappropriate sites on their school devices"

"Internet videos, advertisements, gossip, bullying"

"Inappropriate/unsafe internet usage"

"Children able to google anything they want and get search results- Some very inappropriate - even without accessing the page"

"A.i pornography"

"Students can view unsafe content despite restrictions, although it has improved over the years."

“Students use Pinterest to bypass safeguards
And find inappropriate materials”

“Unsupervised and unrestricted access to YouTube and online content that can be accessed during school hours and at home unless the parent sets appropriate controls on light speed. My child has both observed inappropriate content while watching friends online as well as accessed it as well.”

“I have heard that they have access to inappropriate ads that play.”

“To me, anything outside of what the student is told to use to support their work assigned is inappropriate. So when kids share that they are playing games and accessing websites not associates with their work assignment that is a problem.”

“Students have circumvented school internet protections to view pornography. Students have sent each other inappropriate material outside of school on school devices.”

“Videos of inappropriate matter have been spread around the school sometimes”

“People can sometimes do weird stuff using their chromebook because they don't got no personal computer at home.”

“Oftentimes, when I'm playing games (I know that's bad, my bad), I randomly see an "awkward sight" on the cpu screen. This doesn't happen too often though”

“students look up topics on YouTube that are inappropriate”

“I clicked a browser and it led me to another website that wasn't very appropriate.”

“I've seen students on inappropriate websites and creating documents that target other students and staff”

“Kids are on youtube and get commercials that are inappropriate, and kid shave found ways to get to games on the devices.”

“Students have access to Reddit, and these forums are potentially unsafe for students due to content.”

“Someone was looking at some certain infamous files that have been a major issue lately”

“Yes, me and my classmates logged onto Blooket and a inappropriate picture popped up on the website, while on school computers.”

“I work with families in Howard county who have accessed adult websites on the schools' chrome books”

“A student during MCAP testing was watching inappropriate videos on their computer instead of testing.”

“My daughter said she has heard of students getting in trouble for watching porn on their device but she hasb't encountered it directly”

“I have seen kids through Lightspeed looking at naked anime characters or watching inappropriate movies”

“My kid says kids see porn. I know they've written words that my home digital monitoring tools would catch but no one from school has said anything”

“5 Nights at Epsteins, Omoggle, etc.”

"I've heard from multiple parents and students that they've seen students access porn in middle and high school."

"Just yesterday, my child witnessed another student watching South Park on their school issued Chromebook, during class, where a character used the N word. The student was not even trying to hide it, and everyone heard it. A teacher was present and was aware, but did not do anything to reprimand the student or mitigate the situation."

"I worry very much about the advertising. I worry there is direct advertising within educational apps and I worry that the web browsing filters are not able to catch inappropriate pop up ads. YouTube requires advertisers to self-classify the age appropriateness of their ads and this is incredibly dangerous. I've heard many stories of lude ads reaching kids on their school devices and I assume this is just as likely at HCPSS as it is in other districts who are equally well-intentioned to block bad content. Also, AI accountability is very important. I perceive AI as dangerous for children and if something happens, then what..."

"School-issued devices are relied upon far too much and are used in place of actual teaching, rather than teaching students how to use devices safely and effectively as a tool. Students find a way around most boundaries in place. I look at my children's Lightspeed report every day and see the non-educational sites they visit - unblocked (often violent) games, for example. I would like to be able to restrict access and have been told that it is not possible to do on an individual basis."

"Kids have access to inappropriate sexual material. Shame on the county for allowing ongoing use for students whose brains aren't fully developed!"

"Children who misuse their devices should receive one reprimand when it is discovered they are misusing school issued devices. The second infraction should result in Loss of Access to that device. Backup plans should be in place to allow the child to continue learning."

"These devices should not be open to all of the web and the potential of "stumbling" across inappropriate sites. School devices need to access reputable research and training sources, word processing and that's all. It is irresponsible to give 10 year olds and above pandora's box"

"While I have not heard of or seen issues at our MS, I know of several instances especially of children getting around safe guards. Ads are not safe content in general as they are typically not monitored well by vendors. Children can be taught about appropriate content, but may not have the knowledge or maturity level to deal with content if it shows up, especially as part of an ad."

"No limits to access internet and videos that may show inappropriate content. Not enough cell phone rules enforced. Gossip and bullying can be done through many different ways and on different platforms on the computer. Youtube has no filters with what may pop up. Advertisements are shown.

Concern for data mining of our students responses without consent from parents. Software should not be allowed to have advertisements or mine student data. We need to prioritize paid software to prevent ads and data collection."

"Elementary students should not be using chrome books in my opinion. They are a source of distraction. The games are too enticing and even "good" kids use their chromebooks inappropriately.

Second, remove YouTube access. I tried limiting it on my end but my kids and others learned to bypass it."

"Excessive internet use at inappropriate times"

"I have heard of more than one incident of groups chats being used to bully students and or pressure students. These same chats have also been used to share inappropriate links."

"I've heard and seen it all when it comes to improper use of student devices. As such, the individual reliance on these devices is heavily inflated"

"Ads."

"Kids constantly playing games in class or other inappropriate sites"

"I have observed an over-reliance on online content and devices for learning activities and resistance to using paper and pencil methods. He is pretty unwilling to use study methods that don't involve games and reward like strategies. My middle schooler experienced high anxiety when transitioning to heavy reliance on canvas, as being able to navigate it well is critical to their grades. As mentioned earlier, he has been exposed to content that is frightening, sexual and generally inappropriate for children during school hours."

"Misunderstood/unidentified by teacher, glitching in app for teacher-assigned app work — leads to student distress and anxiety, as well as teacher-student stress and/or conflict."

"They are searching Porn on there computers."

Safety and Security

"Unmonitored group chats and or messages sent with links to outside or unapproved websites"

"I think the monitoring is OK, but not enough."

"A lot of the time, the content filter does more harm then good. It blocks a lot of what would be resources for students because they are "mature" when in reality they aren't."

"When my son was at WLMS students constantly figured out workarounds to access gaming sites at school. Putting the responsibility on parents with light speed is ridiculous. It's the schools responsibility to ensure sites are routinely updated and reduce student use of devices whenever possible. We need to return to a less technology focused approach in the schools."

"Allow only school related content"

"Students find ways around and by students having school provided and required devices it takes away parents ability to control how they tech is used at home. For sex ed- families have the option to opt out. Families should have the option to opt out of tech"

"Tech-savvy kids can access whatever they want, all day long, on school-issued computers. It is madness. Get them off of screens, please."

"There is overuse of devices in school. There should be full transparency regarding contracting for software and devices."

"Students can use school devices to contact anyone they choose on the internet without supervision. They circumvent all protective measures."

"Little/no information has been provided on what student information is collected or how it is used."

"There is no safe way for students to have unlimited access to devices. Devices should belong to schools and be used in class as needed, so that they can be properly monitored and used for educational purposes."

“Unless the screen time is specifically scripted and monitored, this will invite more abuse of the device and the related policies.”

“My kids say that lots of kids go to restricted sites.”

“Filters unacceptable and not well set up.”

“My daughter has been found to use her device after her iPhone screen time has expired. She uses it to browse YouTube. I’m aware of light speed but the features are not sufficient.”

“My middle school child told me about friends bypassing restrictions to access content on youtube targeted for adult audiences.”

“My child has been accessing inappropriate content after school hours, mostly on a half day when supervision is not available. We closely supervise when home and able to do so, use the lightspeed portal to monitor websites, and have other safeguards in place. My child has also used proxy servers to bypass the restrictions and I am unsure what she is doing during that time, as it is not available on lightspeed (I have been following up by looking at her history on her chromebook).”

“Students in my school are able to "get around" the firewalls and view whatever they want.”

“These "safety" guards and protocols are really ineffective. Students at Howard County (for the most part) are smart tech-geniuses, so they're always going to find way to surpass or evade the system, at least from my experience.”

“One of my kids told me how a classmate told her how to get around one of the blocked websites/apps. The kids know all the ways to get around all of the protections put in place by HCPSS or whoever. You can't outsmart these kids if they want to get to content they should not see. YOU CANNOT OUTSMART THE KIDS.”

“Middle schoolers are watching YouTube, visiting websites with questionable content, and constantly finding ways to bypass restrictions on their school devices.”

“There is minimal content filtering, and plenty of inappropriate things for kids even on “mainstream” sites like YouTube, much less other sites they can get to, and students have found “hacks” to get around what little protection there is. When I notified the administration of one method I found via my sons history I was told there are too many to keep up with and they (kids) just find another”

“I know my kids learned from his classmates how to bypass school systems to access pirate websites during school and at home”

“People can and will go around whatever blocks HCPSS puts on the chromebooks, all the blocks do is give them a reason to, it's a challenge.”

“They search and share ways to get around the blocks.”

“Students access websites that "override" what the system already blocks”

“There is wide discussion about students across the US finding way to circumvent blocking/filtering on devices school-issued or otherwise, and viewing unapproved materials. Kids are smart and resourceful, teach each other their tricks, learn faster than adults, and have more free time than we do.

Schools should teach technology within the carefully-constrained framework of a computer class, and otherwise keep devices out of kids' hands. Learning to use your brain and your conscience is hard and needs

teachers' guidance. Learning to use technology is easy and kids have done it without help for decades.

Kids should learn typing/keyboarding skills, and how to operate a totally offline Linux operating system. Schools shouldn't use public money to buy kids samples of the addictive products sold by Big Tech in the guise of "education". Teach kids to cook, don't buy them fast food."

"Students use proxy servers to play games and have free rein on web - very frustrating that they learned this at school. Schools taught technology skills, just not the ones they planned to."

"This school year, a fellow middle school student sent my 11 year old and 8 year old children a 40-slide presentation via Google Drive on their school Chromebook about how to play numerous various video games on dozens of different websites and watch tv shows on the laptop. My 11 year old told this to me the day that it happened and I informed the middle school child's parent the same day and contacted the middle school assistant principal the next day. After meeting with the assistant principal to discuss the situation, the assistant principal informed me that the school would look into the matter further to see who else may have received the files and to make sure that the websites/games are blocked. Apparently, numerous students had been playing video games during class and others also received the same 40-slide video game presentation document. Later that day, I was informed by the Assistant Principal that the 40-slide presentations were removed from both of my children's Google drives, that the websites were in the process of being blocked, and the student was counseled on the matter. Overall, I'm very grateful for the school administration's swift response to the incident.

"Classmates have shared ways to override locked browsers and play games"

"I do have a lingering concern that if my child had not personally told me about the document being sent via Google Drive, I would not have known about it as the Lightspeed Systems Weekly Student Online Activity Report email just informs you of websites that your child has accessed not unauthorized content being sent via Google Drive. I have received emails during the school year about students playing games during class and not paying attention to lessons. I've talked to my children about it but I'm not with them in the classroom. This leads me to question whether or not Chromebooks are worth having in the classroom for middle school students as it appears it is difficult to constantly be monitoring student Chromebook use in the classroom, provide the necessary oversight of hundreds of student digital activities, and to implement measures to prevent the transfer and access of unauthorized content."

"I didn't select "yes". It's stupid how so many stuff are blocked, unsafe, inappropriate or no. The world is NSFW - there's no point in shutting it off towards our students. I, a student can accurately testify."

"Most "bypassing" I have seen is games students play vs each other in HCPSS. At least in the MS level"

"Where there is a will there is a way. Students will find a way to circumvent safeguards because they have done so on their own devices or have seen tutorials on how to do so on their own time. Their only way to completely protect students on electronic devices is not to use them. Leading research on how humans learn backs up the need for more tactile and one on one methods of learning between students and educators. Computers are not helping students become smarter, they are helping students become better computer users."

"White list pages should be used vs black list and any additional sites should require adult consent for access."

"Light speed features need to be more robust so that we as parents can set certain time limits, esp after hours and for specific apps"

"Lightspeed controls not being in effect during the school day allows more free use of sites like YouTube. Since teachers can embed videos in Canvas for students, not being able to lock this down is concerning, and contributes to more kids playing around while in class."

"The filter applied to image searches seems overly done. Students see a fraction of the results which makes creating slideshows more of a challenge. Students still manage, but I wonder if less could be blocked."

"HCPSS should Continue to block sites that are deemed unsafe/not appropriate"

"They are aware of how to bypass the safety filters in place and share that information freely. They are doing whatever they want online, which is completely unsafe, as they do not have the capacity to make safe and appropriate choices online. The computers are also used to engage in bullying and other unsafe behaviors towards peers."

"My daughter's data was already stolen after only 9 months in hcpss. How much data will be stolen over all of high school?"

"The devices are stealing students' learning time, thus wasting tax dollar money. They are too addictive and "free" programs are using our children's data for profit. The public sector should not be supporting google and other large corporations that are monopolies."

"teachers should be able to block or limit websites from their classroom computer based on student usage or abuse in the classroom"

"Sometimes it's too restrictive and students can't access sites they are asked to go to in class by teachers, so they need to use their phones."

"The more access (unrestricted use during day and taking devices home) def will increase safety risk no matter what controls HCPSS has. Kids are smart."

"I was not fully aware of all the access students have during school time and while they are using their device at school ,now that I am informed I am getting it that filters are not enough ,but also what about doing their assignments and home works that are not finished at school and if the parent don't have device at home what should be done ?"

"My kid seems to have ability to any page"

"Some issues happen because students need blocks, and some happen because school related content is being blocked and students are trying to find a workaround. Often, I can fix some of these issues by clearing cash and cookies, but many students don't know how those work in web browsers. These issue would benefit from increased conversations with students and teachers report to find individual fixes."

"I don't think teachers monitor students' use of devices in the classroom. I have never seen Lightspeed used"

"Students can, and do, easily bypass network restrictions."

"There isn't enough parental control on school issued devices. There also isn't enough security to keep students from getting to unauthorized sites through a loop hole in the security."

"I am very concerned as students in my son's first grade class were able to access a staff account on a device using the password that was just the school's initials. This is not a secure password. I am very concerned what else these first graders may be able to access on these devices."

"Too many gaming sites are accessible to students and the only way to block is through individually adding sites on lightspeed. Staff and parents should have a way to disable everything BUT the school provided programs."

"To put the scale of the problem in perspective, we've essentially banned/blocked the use of HCPSS Chromebooks at home and, when necessary, provide access to a properly limited/protected computer at home. Unfortunately, that requires significant investment and knowledge of networking and computer security."

"Lightspeed is actually a good tool for retroactive monitoring."

"Many of my answers are based on feedback from parents of older kids. I have heard reports of middle schoolers coding past firewalls - other students know who has the ability to do this and request those students to get their devices past the firewall. At this point they have free access to anything on the internet. There is also growing evidence that the use of computers and devices actually harms the educational process more than it helps. If it were up to me, I would remove Chromebooks from the schools except for in dedicated technology classes and return to "paper and pencil". If Howard County doesn't change its stance in the near future, we may be looking at other educational alternatives for our kids. Please, please, please reconsider the wide sweeping use of technology in our classrooms!"

"HCPSS sucks at it, all you do is tell kids you don't trust them and its basically picking a fight and saying "hey, bet you can't" and they just say "watch me" and it really just makes students more angry at the school system"

"Unblocked Games Are On The Rise."

"Kids will always find a way around things. We have to teach kids from a young age how to handle issues before they arise. You wouldn't give a kid a dog and expect them to know how to handle difficult situations. Devices should be the same."

"Light speed has woefully inadequate filtering and the MDM they use in Chromebooks is not even following the district approved applications list. For instance Minecraft education was listed as being approved for one specific kindergarten use. Everyone has it and can install st their leisure. Also they allow students to make additional emails and even chrome profiles. They aren't adequately managing mobile devices."

"Third party privacy breaches make it hard to answer this question any other way"

"Likely my child and I know a high percentage of other sixth graders are playing video games during class time regularly. They go to sites that are made to replace the blocked sites. They're also given access to Google and are able to surf the web indefinitely. Surely something has to be done about this.. I can't be monitoring my child 100% of the time while they're at home while I have other duties and anytime homework is done with the laptop. There's always a risk of surfing the web and it does happen a lot if I'm not monitoring. The fact that the school system has allowed this for so long is absolutely ridiculous and I'm at my wits end."

"I think data would need to be collected in order to answer about the effectiveness of current safety and security controls."

"The device has a new MAC address every time it logs into my network. Verizon parental controls do not work on it."

"the county cannot keep up with the amount of sites that need to be blocked that the students are accessing"

“Children are using approved platforms to chat and some have even created their own vpns to play games and chat. They will even play the educational games during class when they should be focused on the lesson or doing in class assignments.”

“You gave my child an addictive technology with inadequate filters and safeguards and their grades and focus are suffering. The Chromebooks are an addictive device and I want them restricted and not open and out ALL DAY EVERY DAY.”

“Our kids are too young (kindergarten) so we dont have school issued devices yet, I read about all of the above on a regular basis and am very concerned. I would prefer our kids never receive school-issued devices. I also really question the conditioning exercises they do now like learning their password and they tell us about using computers for games during school ... why? We dont allow them to use tablets or computers at home I would really rather they do not at school either.”

“They aren't learning to write well and spelling continues to be terrible for my children. My middle schooler will flip back and forth between screens on his chromebook while doing homework. His teachers have told me that he uses his chromebook when he is not supposed to at school. Kids will open their chromebooks on the bus and play games. My son finds his way around blocked websites -the kids make a game of this. My son told me that another child in one of his classes would run out of the room if the teacher took away his chromebook so I don't think my kid is the only one with trouble handling the screen-time addiction.”

“cyberbullying from students at her school via snap and instagram; can these be blocked on school grounds?”

“My student is constantly having to complete classwork at home because he does not finish at school because of devices. I have contacted the board of Ed and their reponse was “teachers have lightspeed”. It should not be their responsibility to baby sit devices that are designed to be addictive in nature. It also causes a barrier to relationship building because the teacher now needs to set barriers around this addictive machine and the person consuming.”

“In middle & high school, computers should be used for science data entry, limited research using quality sources, and typing papers. That's it. There's no academic reason to have them in the elementary school for frequent use.”

“certain restraints and tab blockers make it so that students have to find ways around cites in order to access resources that are needed in order to do assignments, which can cause more time and screen. This can also cause stress and anxiety trying to figure it out and overall more time spent on the assignment.”

“Only school related sites should be accessible and no other websites as it really affects the students focus during and after school.”

“School issued devices (of which I think there shouldn't even be any) should be used only for school related activities on a whitelist if approved applications by class and websites”

“What is the intention of this survey and how will the results be used? I'm concerned at the framing of the questions and how the data will be manipulated to meet the intention of the creator.”

“Students are by passing light speed in order to be able to hide what they are doing on the Chromebook during school hours”

“They are able to override all kinds of restrictions including blocked website and lockdown browsers”

“teachers will never be smarter than kids on technology, regardless of your policy. Don't pretend you can create a policy they can't get around. Teachers are using A.I. to lazily create assignments and tests because they are told its a powerful tool but have no idea how to actually use it. Instead of creating assignments they should use it to analyze data from their classrooms to identify areas to reteach or identify issues with their teaching method.”

“Devices have ruined our county education system. Take them away. Kids are using proxy servers to play internet games instead of learn for 6 hours a day.”

“More paper and pencil, especially for elementary and middle school students. Increase safety and security measures. What point is there to lightspeed if they can work around it? They do not have the self-control or skills to manage full, unfiltered access to the internet. I would be thrilled if chromebooks were removed from students in the classroom.”

“Please follow the data put out by experts to drive policy decisions. Parent input is important to know, but these policies should be shaped by experts in the field rather than the emotional feelings of parents.”

“Would it be possible to restrict usage at night, e.g. 10pm to 7am ?”

“Give us phones back, and stop trying to block stuff, we just do it anyway”

“Students should be taught about online privacy and safety on a regular basis if access to these tools is provided.”

Non-Academic Device Use

“Students are accessing games during class time that are not blocked by lightspeed. They are playing these games and that is harming their learning. Some games come through google and they cannot be blocked. My 6th grade son has noted that students frequently play games during assigned group work. This makes it hard to keep students on task. When he asks them to stop, it continues. He notes that students have ways to block what teachers see them doing.”

“We do not use iPads or other forms of technology for kids at home. However, kids use iPads and computers at school to play games, largely non educational, and then come home with tantrums when they cannot play those same games at home. School should not adopt an “iPad and forget it” type of instruction. iPads shouldn't be used at all for non-educational gaming during school. To the extent kids need to use technology, use should be limited to learning how to type on a computer, and learning how to navigate safe websites for the purpose of learning how to use a mouse and other functionality.”

“You tube videos, websites”

“Ask games during free time”

“I've heard that kids are playing games on their chromebooks during class.”

“Rockburn has overly relied on iPads, as the school allows kids to play noneducational, nonproductive games during class time. Activities that do not serve an educational or productive purpose should not be performed during school hours.”

“Students are receiving messaging from other students during class that is distracting. I have heard reports of students watching YouTube during class and instruction as well as cheating during exams.”

"Normally they are searching for something not class related and using the device not for school."

"I have observed students playing video games in class during school hours."

"Open access to Youtube."

"Students in my son's first grade class are playing non-educational games during reading centers, including horror games. Despite notifying his teacher and the principal, students have continued to access these games during class."

"Playing games during class . It's become such a distraction. Kids are becoming addicted to screens"

"kids are often using their chromebook to play games"

"Ability to watch movies on YouTube"

"Child seen others accessing Roblox/Minecraft. Other child aware of Google docs via school accounts being used for chatting"

"When students have an assignment to complete on their Chromebook they are often playing games or watching videos instead."

"Texting parents, voice recording class sessions, taking pictures"

"Video games and other sites that apparently can't be blocked and don't show up in browser history"

"Lots of browser based games are accessible by school provided systems."

"My son said "70% of kids are playing videos during class time". It's also my understanding that laptops are faced away from the teachers, and they cannot see the screens."

"He's playing Minecraft Ed (wtf???) during many classes, using Google Docs created by other students to "chat," searching memes - definitely inappropriate and sharing them."

"Yes YouTube shorts"

"Students watching Youtube videos and being on sites they shouldn't, as told to me by my children who sit near them"

"When teachers aren't looking or during free time"

"Access to you tube from Chromebooks"

"They use YouTube to watch videos not related to school and to play games. This is very common and they are not alone."

"Ways to play games"

"I've seen kindergarten aged students access youtube videos (not from the lesson). Not sure how that is possible for a kindergarten student, so obviously something somewhere is not right..."

"Student should not be able to message each other through school devices."

"I don't know who they are texting. What if they are texting a "friend" they met on Minecraft and not their parent. They are using their smart watches to use a calculator and record conversations their teacher has with them."

“Can you unblock youtube?”

“Kids need to learn that computer use isn't games only. I don't like the computer programs that are more game than learning activity in the curriculum.”

“My middle school child used the Chromebook during class to play games instead of listening to the teacher”

“My middle schooler uses computer to browse Google and YouTube after school hours so we have to take it away.”

“Having access to a device at school is a constant distraction and it contradicts the limits we have in place at home. My son rushes to each class just to open his computer so he can play games. He plays games on his computer, for example when there is a sub, rather than doing the assigned work.”

“All they want to do is play games on their computers during class time.”

“It should have time limit set for usage outside of school hours and no access to any gaming”

“As a teacher, even with physical monitoring and using light speed, some students work around the restrictions. Gaming is a frequent issue and watching live sports or bootleg movies are occasional problems.”

“Overusage of Minecraft which should not be on the laptops.”

“You give kids computers, put all their work on them, and then kids are on computers all the time. wow. but in all honesty, kids play games cause they are kinda just trying to prove they can. even if you don't see it, its really just done out of spite, and then they feel the need to do it all the time, so they are playing games basically the whole time they are in school.”

“Students would rather play games or watching YouTube videos instead of working on assignments they are missing and/or when given an assignment to improve their grade”

“My child describes tech class as playing games. I am sure there are learning objectives but I would like to have more visibility into what those are and how the games contribute.”

“There was a completely unmoderated power point going around back in the fall that hundreds of students were on”

“Schools have essentially given my child a phone/ unfettered access to internet at too young of an age and then are surprised when adults have to spend the whole day monitoring their use of it. HCPSS has failed our students by having everything on Chromebooks at middle school and having kids have them open and on all day and must undo this.”

“The Chromebooks are a joke kids play games on them all day and it is a source of teachers having to supervise the kids.”

“Now that the students don't have cellphones out, they are using the Chromebooks to both play games and mirror their phone screens during class.”

“YouTube”

“Students with personal cell phones having access to social media and internet browsers.”

Well-Being Impacts

"Google docs being shared and used to bully."

"The ability to access devices at all times is directly affecting immature minds. It's unnecessary and the time spent staring at screens isn't good for them either"

"Students should not be issued chromebooks until at least high school. It is not safe for their brain development to be using screens so much according to the latest research."

"Excessive screen time is directly correlated to increased amount of children having lack of focus and energy."

"Kids can use school-issued devices to watch non-school related YouTube shorts, decreasing attention span and focus."

"Am aware of a chat bullying experience that occurred with a friend's child, different school than our own. Have seen reliance/addictive screen behaviors."

"Emotional well-being, sleep quality, cognitive ability to focus are linked to less screen time (see: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6214874/>). "After 1 h/day of use, more hours of daily screen time were associated with lower psychological well-being, including less curiosity, lower self-control, more distractibility, more difficulty making friends, less emotional stability, being more difficult to care for, and inability to finish tasks."

"Concerned about potential invisible impacts"

"While we have not personally had issues, I am well aware of all the stresses technology can add to children/teens."

"My daughter was homeschooled completely in Howard county up until this year, ninth grade. We used very little technology for all of her homeschooling years. Now that she's in school, her mental health and physical well-being are WORSE than they were when she was homeschooled. We thought it would be helpful to be around other kids all day, but attending school and being on her computer constantly during it has made her life worse. I'm happy to share more of our experience with the county."

"My son is not experiencing cyber bullying or harassment but we know others in the school system who have been."

"Talk to any teacher, para, or others directly on classroom (not just leadership or admin or central). Talk to students. This is happening and the difficulty focusing is increasing in younger students."

"I think the dependency on screens is taking a toll on our kids. On example is, our eye doctor mentioned studies showing an increase in kids needing glasses due to time spent on screens for school."

"There was an incident in my child's class in middle school where a boy sent out an email to a bunch of the classmates and it was cyber bullying some of the other kids in class. As stated before she is also reported that there have been times where people have looked up inappropriate material on their school issued device."

"My son has had trouble sleeping because of the content he was exposed to on a device by another student, a horror game called "Granny""

"Screen overuse and difficulty focusing are a big thing - school is so boring these days, us students turn to screens to make us FEEL something. I'll admit that this isn't always good, though. I personally experience

minor physical health issues like eyestrain, but this may be because I am nearsighted. A lot of students in my school have compulsive engagement with certain games, but at this point, are they really to blame? Gamified systems feel much more engaging than reading a textbook in a classroom for 50 minutes every day. Cyberbullying and online harassment is also an issue - gossip and drama is spreading throughout social media, and blocking things doesn't make anything better. Instead, teachers should be ACTUALLY TEACHING about online etiquette and the impacts of cyberbullying. “

“I have heard of these things but have not experienced with my children”

“My middle schooler plays games on his computer in the library instead of eating lunch in the cafeteria. I suspect that he is playing games during class, as well. He has ADHD and simply doesn't have the impulse control to stop himself when there is such easy access to games and YouTube, even during school hours. He has also confessed to using his Chromebook to look up information about topics that are a source of anxiety for him (i.e., serial killers), but this has served to increase his overall anxiety levels. He also gets very stressed out sometimes because he will accidentally submit the wrong document when it is time to turn in his assignments, which will lead to a significantly lower grade. Finally, I have had to go to the lengths of locking up or hiding his school Chromebook at night because he will sneak out to play or watch YouTube on it instead of sleeping.”

“Behavior regulation concerns after screen addiction when too much screen time and gamification used. Advertisements pushing kids to buy items (have been told about toy advertisements popping up- a race car advertisement in elementary school). Students using google sheets to chat together during class assignments and teaching (elementary school through high school doing this). Kids using AI to solve problems and write assignments without using their own literary or critical thinking skills first. Persistently asking for more computer game time ("educational programs" in elementary school) to get rewards or to see the toys and advertisements that pop up.”

“All of the above. Students should not be sitting in screens all day. It is proven to be unhealthy for their development and not a proper teaching tool.”

“I have heard about all of those things but don't have firsthand, direct knowledge”

“The data is already out that screen time has been shown to have impacts on kids social and emotional well-being as well as health implications like dopamine control and posture. It's sad that our educational system has given middle schoolers a laptop with close to full access of the worldwide Web.”

“I think the gamified apps correlate to screen overuse. The more you play, the longer you're looking at the screen.”

“My student (who has 20/20 vision) now has to wear blue light glasses at school DAILY with slight magnification to reduce eye strain & headache episodes because of excessive OVER reliance of devices every day as well as tiny font required by most teachers & assignment requirements.

I already explained about students being observed accessing "5 nights at Epsteins" (my student does not participate in this but has witnessed other male students participating).

Extreme stress is created for my student within the learning environment by teachers misusing due date controls on assignments (looks "late " but in fact ISN'T & points are UNFAIRLY deducted from total possible) and by content glitches that occur within the HCPSS devices during quizzes/test taking/online assignment completion. Grades are affected, content gets erased or disappears but student is responsible for final outcome EVEN WHEN these events have been witnessed by a teacher themselves or several students experienced same situation. These events radically affect overall quarter grades and ultimate GPA.”

"My children are in 2nd and 5th grade; I know they use devices at school but I really am not aware of whether they are creating any negative affects on their well-being!"

"The gamified Duolingo Streak definitely created a problem at our house. Additionally, one night my son spent 70 minutes and shed many tears of frustration on a math problem that the computer kept marking as incorrect. Turns out his answer WAS correct, but the answer field on the computer wasn't formatted to accept decimal places!! That's insanity. Not all the assignments work as intended and add the stress of just trying to get the technology to work. He reports eye strain and I see poor posture from hunching over the computer as well."

"I'm they aren't many but they are still happening. Kids aren't allowed to drive, vote, go to war until certain ages for a reason. Teach them how to handle situations. Be very open to the parents on what you are teaching and slowly allowed them access to devices at the right time."

"Again, my oldest son has had many issues arise from the use of school issued devices. It has gotten to the point we are considering legal action against the district"

"My child does not experiencing any of these issues, but I have heard friends and neighbors that do have children experiencing these. There is no need for screams in school."

"Heavy to carry daily; lower back pain; she uses her chromebook to access content when restricted from her personal devices, bypassing parental online restrictions"

"Eye doctor has noted extensive screen time at school and for homework, which has led to my kids required to wear prescription eyewear or blue light glasses"

"I have to physically remove the Chromebook from my kid's possession or he will play games on it late into the evening. He does not have his own personal device but uses his Chromebook like one if I don't stop him."

"The ability to access devices at all times is directly affecting immature minds. It's unnecessary and the time spent staring at screens isn't good for them either"

"I'm sure that these things are happening to some students. Thankfully it doesn't seem to be happening with our own children."

"I would say what I am aware of is due to personal al devices and not school."

"I know of students who are addicted to the device usage. They put their energy into finding unhealthy content, and they bully others online."

"I feel the game-ification isn't always healthy, and my MS child has struggled with the compulsion to play games or do ANYTHING he can to be on the screen, both at school and at home. We are very strict with screen limits in our home, so he reports feeling guilty or struggling with this, especially because he says teachers allow kids to play games, even though they are not supposed to, and the rampant misuse of the chromebooks for playing games during and outside of school is something he sees. He does not participate, but also feels torn because he wants to, and it seems unfair that all these kids are playing games that are supposedly outlawed. He wishes he could, but at the same time wants to do what is right. I also feel the use of computers for math, with access to the calculator, has totally ruined his ability to do mental math. He left ES with some degree of confidence in doing calculations in his head, and since starting MS, has rarely needed to use that skill, since so much of what they do is on the chromebook - homework on Delta math, etc. I have noticed that he can no longer quickly add/subtract/multiply/divide in his head using all those common core skills they worked so hard to teach them in ES. In general I don't think it's healthy for the kids to spend so

much of their day on these devices. I want them to be tech literate, but I was shocked at how much they are now part of their learning, now that the kids are in MS.”

“As a middle school teacher, the students become addicted to their chromebooks! They constantly are trying to play games or use their chromebooks for non school related things. They are unable to focus because of the tabs they have open distracting them. It becomes an obsession and it is concerning.”

“Kids are developing anxiety and depression, shorter attention spans, and beginning addictive patterns with screen overuse and gaming. We should bring back text books”

“My oldest became addicted to games during over-reliance on games during COVID.”

“Kids have so little stamina for work and get bored very easily if content isn’t “flashing” at them.”

“Students are addicted to their computers. Teachers see negative consequences of this addiction every single day.”

“Eye strain, lack of engagement with the real world and people.”

“Too much reliance on devices to complete school work, causing eye strain and also difficulty disengaging from the screen. Also, easily distracted from school work by having other tabs open to other non-schoolwork sites.”

“My kids complain of eye strain”

“My child is addicted to the Chromebook and HCPSS needs to immediately restrict middle school access to these devices. I am so disappointed in our school system.”

“Screen based learning is detrimental to learning; especially, for ADHD students. Giving these students Chromebooks is the equivalent of putting an alcoholic in a bar and telling them not to drink.”

“My middle schooler is part of a pilot program where they gave back their personal laptops in 4th quarter. In the small amount of time without the laptop, I have seen some huge positive changes. She's more conversational with us and spends more time outside engaging with other kids or just playing around by herself. She's also drawing and reading more. She doesn't have a cell phone so I'm sure not everyone is experiencing these changes but it's made a big impact on us. I do not want to go back to laptops.

We monitored her use to a certain extent but there was a lot of sneaking around and friction over content that I didn't expect her to be engaging with until high school. In middle school, I noticed a huge uptick in attention issues in my girl scout troupe. I can't assume this was due to the laptops but they can't have helped. A year before, many of our scouts could focus long enough to do a simple craft or learn a multi-step task. Now I see them give up and switch off after a minute or two. I know that many kids are doing creative things with their laptops which is nice to see. A lot of them became skilled at making (and sharing) slideshows. That said, they were then told not to use their computers to send each other things like that. It's kind of confusing where the line is.”

“Research about technology use in students has started to show the negative impacts on students overall well-being and mental health. In addition, material is more likely to be comprehended and stored in long term memory when school is multi-modal and tactile.”

“I think mental health and well-being are suffering significantly as a result of technology more broadly, but including use of the school-issued device. Attention spans are limited, motivation to complete their work

completely and correctly is poor, and anxiety/stress are high because interactions are funneled through their devices.”

“When the kids are bored in class they just fart around on the Internet trying to find some dopamine. It's no different than we adults do with our phones, and we know how bad that it for us. How much worse it is for developing brains!”

“As stated above, school-issued devices are a constant source of distraction for our son and adversely impact his academic achievement. We have limits on screentime and type of usage at home, but having unlimited access to a device at school contradicts this. Students are still developing impulse control, sustained focus, and moral judgement and school-issued devices essentially "put a loaded gun in a monkey's hand".”

“Student well-being is not improved with screen based education. You can't replace teachers or change how the brain learns. Chrome books are cheap products that cause great frustration. Get back to pencil and paper and test scores will improve. We can do it HOCO!”

“I do not think it is healthy for students to learn on devices.”

“All the research shows the detrimental impact of screen use is having on childhood education. “Gamification” of education. Impact on dopamine and ability to build internal motivation, ability to focus, executive functioning. Teachers and staff need more help and not through the use of technology.”

“Middle school usage of devices has not individual level well-being...in fact it's been quite the opposite”

“My kid is lying, sneaking, and abusing screen time limits constantly. It is an enormous obstacle to parenting.”

“Any studies that have looked at it have resulted in data that has shown that when children have access to the internet they have lower self-esteem, higher exposure to inappropriate material, higher exposure to cyberbullying, increase in attempted and successful suicide.

“There are a lot of good things that can come from access however we know that there's a lot of bad that can happen and it needs to be controlled and monitored.”

“I am a psychologist and from a developmental perspective, I believe that the vast majority of middle school and high school students do not possess the judgment or impulse control to regulate their use of devices when they are required to use a device all day in school.”

“I would like to see much less screen time for my students and children.”

“Concerned about digital access and lack of regulations. Kids are accessing more content at school than what is allowed at our home. Concern for gossip and bullying increasing anxiety and depression in young kids. The lack of focus during regular class time that is non digital because they are seeking the addictive dopamine rush from the gamification of digital programs. Concern about the lack of critical thinking since access to AI does not have clear boundaries and is starting at too young of an age.”

“The amount of screen use for HCPSS students is detrimental to students well-being”

“Screen time for freshman and sophomore should be less than 2 hours ago, give junior and senior more control on their screen time.”

“There is a big difference in ability to self regulate and think creatively for the younger grades on days without screens compared to days with screen usage.”

"Screen time is reshaping how our kids develop, learn, and socialize - limiting screen time can promote development of more complex thinking and problem solving capabilities as well as social/emotional skills. The over-reliance on technology to do the thinking and socializing for them will have longer-term societal consequences."

"The answer to the above question depends on what students are doing on the device. Screen time is not a good metric here. For example note taking in highschool.

Students still need hard copies. In particular books or long for articles. Reading / note taking in the traditional way is still important."

"I've seen a marked increase in stress and frustration related to screens and laptops as my children have moved from elementary to middle school. And this is without social media, which we block for our children."

"Especially for young children (PreK-2) I believe screen time should be minimized. Once per week for technology seems appropriate. For older children, middle/high school I can see value for some for STEM curriculum, but I still think it should be minimized in most cases."

"They get to much screen time as it is"

"My students complain of eye strain and have a very difficult time staying awake and alert to learn from a human and not a machine "

"Students get more than enough screen time outside of school to stay current on technology. Use school as a break from it."

"More books, less screens. They have no stamina. They have no attention span."

"I worry about screen addiction and a reduction in kids' ability to focus and work towards answers."

"Too much device time during school reduces time for possible physical activities. It causes discomfort, sometimes pain from sitting, boredom, and eye strain."

"My child is getting HOURS of screen time per day at school. Well over daily limits."

"Our students elementary and middle school brains are not developed enough to have a personal chromebook that they have access to all day. It is causing them more harm then good. The are addicted and unable to have the self control needed to remove themselves from the screen. The disadvantages outweigh the benefits."

"No children, especially younger children should be taught primarily on devices, it is so incredibly detrimental to their health and well-being, and will put them at such a great disadvantage in the world. Already it is causing issues with handwriting skills, reading and comprehension skills, and kids cannot focus. It is the job of the schools to nurture student minds and they are instead weakening them."

"My child complains about shoulder pain because the laptop bag is quite heavy to carry during school and on walk home from school."

"If you are concerned about student well-being, get rid of school issues devices at least until high school!"

"Computer/phone or any device creates addiction. Text books should be used."

"This generation has poor attention span and is not smarter than their parents because they rely so heavily on screens. Take screens out of school except for technology/learning to type"

"For our middle schooler in particular, we feel like there is ENTIRELY too much use of screens at school and that the vast majority of her education is occurring via her chromebook. We're incredibly fortunate that she has excellent executive functioning and can largely avoid the distractions of the device (internet browsing, messaging, games, etc) to focus on her work. Even then, she still will send emails during class time or gets distracted. For our younger child who lags in executive functioning skills, this will absolutely not be the case. We limit any personal device usage in our home given the research showing the negative impacts on children, particularly those with ADHD. We would like to understand the research that is supporting the extreme reliance of devices for providing educational content and why HCPSS is making this choice versus other instructional methods."

"Thank you for taking the time to ask parents about their perspective and advocating for the safety and well-being of our kids."

"Reduce use of technology during day. It's addictive and poorly implemented."

"Children are on personal devices at home and with friends and this is where the fatigue on devices can become an issue- parents must address this at home. For school- I wish my middle schooler was actually given homework and then maybe he could experience device fatigue on his issued device. There are problems at many levels."

Use of Digital Learning Tools

"My child describes tech class as playing games. I am sure there are learning objectives but I would like to have more visibility into what those are and how the games contribute."

"It's clear technology is becoming a distraction for our children and they need time off their screens. Also, there is data showing a link between increased use of devices and poor/lower test scores. Screen time results in a dopamine spike which isn't good for their well being. I would like to see less use of technology and more exams on paper and work on paper. It is appalling how illegible middle schoolers' hand writing is and I truly believe it's due to the majority of their work being typed on a device. Also, there is less teacher engagement in a positive way with the advent of AI and Google."

"Students should have more digital citizenship and digital literacy lessons at all grade levels that are developmentally appropriate."

"I would prefer if all students (preK through middle school) were not given computer homework and were also discouraged from using computers for schoolwork away from school. Not all families can supervise access."

"Teachers need more training to understand how technology is advancing and how students are using it to learn and cheat."

"I do not think students should be given personal laptops. Homework and instructional resources for use at home should be offline."

"I am a proponent for eliminating one-to-one technology in the classroom. It is creating an unhealthy reliance and fueling screen addiction. Our students should be learning interactively from the teachers not just referred to the screen."

"Prefer computers not used at all"

“Too much screen time “

“Student should not be using tech devices for learning, the studies show the devices significantly reduce the development of critical thinking skills.”

“Wish these devices did not come home.”

“Device usage should be minimal and specific to things that can only be done on a device. Kids will always find a way to beat safety measures.”

“The use of technology in the classroom for academic purposes should be purposeful, enhance student engagement/learning. Students at the middle and elementary levels should have limited access to all technology period so they can engage/practice skills such as social interactions with peers, organization, building organizers, etc.”

“Our kids should go back to using paper and pencils. They can't write, they can't read but they sure can stare at a screen. BAN these chromebooks, they are hurting our kids, not helping.”

“In general I think technology is used and leaned on too much.”

“Computer training use should be divided into groups starting from: beginners, to standard, reaching immediate levels prior to programming, graphics, computer science, etc.”

“Don't make computers the centerpiece for learning. Have students do more without using computers. More reading and writing outside of them.”

“It is concerning that despite extensive research, HCPSS has been so incredibly slow to react to anything having to do with technology. And the fact that so little is invested in student instruction and teacher training is extremely concerning.”

“I would prefer LESS use of Chromebooks ESPECIALLY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL. WOULD LOVE THEN REMOVED ALTOGETHER.”

“As I stated before, kids don't need help learning to use technology; they need help learning to use their brains and their consciences.

Buying devices from Big Tech is a gross misuse of public money, and is putting baited hooks in the mouths of my kids. There is no safe way for a school to issue an internet-enabled device to a child.

Kids need to spend years learning about psychology, propaganda, media literacy, advertising, healthy relationship dynamics, emotional abuse, sexuality and consent, before we may ASK whether they are adult enough to OWN a device they and their family control.”

“The devices should have never been passed out.”

“My child does not yet have a school-issued device (which I am pleased about, to be clear!)”

“Students are on screens ALL THE TIME! While the use of technology has a time and place, I feel students are not being exposed to a wide enough variety of instructional resources (ie. textbooks, fiction/non-fiction, articles, etc.).

“Please consider alternatives to devices for instruction. So much data exists showing writing by hand and reading hard copy books are better ways to learn than typing on screens.”

"I never received a report on my students technology usages or skills development."

"My student has his Chromebook per his IEP but won't use it because other students are not and this makes him stand out. The negative is his grades because dysgrapha limits his writing which is pushed more than allowing students to use Chromebooks."

"Watching Students using Peardeck and that teachers immediately could see who got it and who didn't was much better than waiting minutes to days to be collected and graded."

"My kids do not have access to individual devices at home. I am well educated on the impacts of screen-based technology on children and it pains me that that goes out the window at school. My kids are still young and their access at school is currently limited but in that very limited time my son who has ADHD has come home showing additive tendencies towards the games used at school. He has begged for me to log in over the weekend so he doesn't lose his points. This has happened with an app used in tech class and Boost. He is super excited on the days he wakes up and knows he gets to play games at school. Is this engagement, yes, is this healthy, no. Kids with ADHD are extra drawn toward these stimulating games. It's important educators are aware of the research about how the tech impacts students with this disability. Jump to the learning research and we know there's less effectiveness there too. It's all upsetting."

"No school issued device, just school use. Not aware of any issues of school use device but also have no way of seeing content, etc"

"Elementary school level does not have school issued devices outside of technology class."

"Most elementary school students do not need devices regularly"

"Too much emphasis on screens for instruction."

"We do almost no screen time at home. I'm irate that it's used in the schools - often with the guise of "differentiated instruction". It's really just an easy way to occupy a student while the teacher is busy helping others. Meanwhile the dopamine hits from "learning" games are real. And screens should never be a substitute for textbooks, development of fine motor skills, or actual instruction."

"I don't see any over use of devices."

"As a parent, I see my child overly rely on google to answer school questions and solve problems (including directly inputting a math problem to get to the answer). They also are severely distracted by the games and apps and rush through work in class to get to the more fun things on their computer. It is completely impacting attention spans and ability to think constructively to solve problems on their own. I also see this in my work as a child psychologist with many of my patients."

"Schools should not have such a heavy reliance on electronic devices. Students would retain more information with greater use of physical books and handwritten assignments."

"Comparing when kids have homework's or practices on paper vs computer, their focus and analysis skills are better on paper. On the computer there is a sense of rush or immediate answer requirement, while on paper they can show their thinking and pinpoint their mistakes."

"Reliance on read aloud text, poor spelling and handwriting, poor grammar, etc with autocorrects, copying, and difficulty of use. Students don't take typing class and aren't taught how to use Google Docs or submission tools properly, so use of tools is slow and many times lead to frustration, multi-copies and incomplete or poor student work"

"Students are using their devices to cheat on assignments. Get rid of digital classrooms and screen based learning already."

"Screen are relied on way too much in schools, especially middle school."

"If allowed, my child will spend a lot of time on her school-issued Chromebook outside of school hours"

"we are not there yet with a 2nd grader"

"I would much rather kids at the elementary and middle school levels have much less access to screens. They need much more kinesthetic learning. I think we're setting them up for disaster and failure in the long run."

"I have a child in kindergarten so I am not able to answer these properly."

"Students are in elementary so they only use school devices sporadically"

"They should not have chromebooks for lessons, provide textbooks pencils and papers and access to work processing ONLY for written responses. If they need to upload assignments that can be done, generally available internet access should not be free reign "

"Middle school students read text books and ELA novels on the computer screen. This is harder to take the information in and leads to fatigue and eyestrain. We need paper text books and novels in school. Computers should still be used to submit work."

"My kids have shared that their technology teacher often discusses the importance of being responsible digital citizens. They bring those points home with them when their personal devices during weekends."

"Students are using CB's too much in school and are losing skills like paper and pencil tasks, reading a book etc. They are exposed to too much screen time daily now through school and parents have no control or option out of it."

"go back to paper, these chromebooks are a plague on our kids."

"They are watching their teacher use screens and they are on screens what feels like all day. It's too much. When in for American Ed week, so much media push."

"First grader has no issued devices that I'm aware of"

"One of my children's teachers uses apps in lieu of direct instruction"

"Child's grades are poor due to Chromebook distraction in class. HCPSS is negligent in their oversight of these devices. I am seriously considering moving to a low tech school system in Maryland. Disappointed in decision to provide kids these addictive devices and inept oversight."

"I don't know what a typical day looks like at school and how much of their Chromebooks they are really using"

"The Chromebook has not been a positive in out household. Prefer putting work on paper. I don't believe middle schoolers are developmentally ready"

"The chromebooks are used too much during the day and the quality of work doesn't seem to be as good as paper and pencil tasks for collaborative posters and presentations. They get too distracted and find ways to get on games or other sites even when being monitored."

"It is incredibly draining and distracting to be around a device at all hours of the day, especially in school. It is a major disservice to children and a horrible future of learning if this is to continue. It needs to be addressed and stopped. It has allowed teachers to become lazy and the use of technology encourages students to be lazy as well."

"It's self explanatory. The cons school issued devices far outweigh the pros. They do not benefit students in anyway. They are hurting students and preventing higher achievement academically. Get rid of them! Go back to textbooks and paper and pencil!"

"I don't know specifics to our county because my kids are so little. However, I am deeply concerned about overreliance on screens. I would prefer that my kids learn to use computers in a computer lab, and not have personal school issued devices."

"Most careers are computer based and college is 100% computers... even book fees are a pass to access online textbooks. Students need to learn to use computers in every class and allowing students to use them would most likely cause more to not use them. This would also allow students with anxiety and autism and ADHD a chance at better grades."

"I'm very worried about my kids moving on to middle school. The research is clear on how unhealthy screen overuse is and I hope we can find a balance."

"Students should go back to text books period."

"We need to standardize the use of canvass and ensure our HQIMs scale up"

"Kids brains are still developing. They need to have physical motor skills better developed to help forge and strengthen connections in their brain. More active learning than the passive learning from computers and devices with screens"

"Let's not sign up our children to be the guinea pigs for more unproven EdTech."

"I think that fact that for decades children were able to learn without technology proves that it isn't necessary. Technology to aid further learning is good. Learning basic programs that are generally used is good for middle/high schoolers."

"Students need to learn face-to-face engagement with school staff and peers. They need to be able to communicate and think in the real world."

"Devices should be used primarily for work submission - I'd encourage research to be done mostly through books / printed sources."

"Screen breaks or paper assignments"

"We introduced computers in our house during Covid virtual learning. I have regretted it ever since. My 2020/21 kindergartener started virtually and when he went back in 1st to in person he would run away from the teachers and go into various classrooms to get chromebooks because he thought the work was boring and obviously the chromebook was more fun. He still loves screentime and computers, thank goodness I have managed to get him interested in other activities as well. Some parents are not as lucky."

"Screens prevent students from interacting with each other at school."

"group interaction can be more valuable than on-line learning"

“Students should not be exposed to screen based learning in school”

“Students also have access to screens outside of school and hours should be limited in school.”

“I do not think pre-K thru 2nd grade need access to screen time outside of Technology class”

“This varies due to curriculum and IEP/504. If a student is taking a programming or CAD program they'll need more screentime. Research shows a difference in using industry specific software (better) and surfing the web/watching short form videos for effects of screentime (worse).”

“I think device use should be restricted to computer lab time and students should go back to other methods of learning and turning in work without devices”

“Think we need more paper and pencil and less computers for high school students. Homework should rarely need a computer.”

“Kids need to play outside more to learn to socialize, practice problem solving skills, and learn independence.”

“Clearly our kids are using these devices way too much. Looking at the recommendations from the Academy of Pediatrics, this is not okay.”

“There is no reason to be on a screen all day AT school outside of word processing and research use books to teach or the teacher can project information. Other than that stop the madness surely our students can learn in different ways instead of stuck to a screen.”

“Given the number of classes children have in middle and high school no more than 20-30 minutes per class is reasonable and that much for 4-5th grade to have them transition to more use as they age up in the school system.”

“Allow parents to opt out of Chromebook use”

“School issued device use needs to be considered with the context that the students are using multiple other devices for hours too. Many parents are buying their kids iPads and cell phones in elementary school and in addition with TV time they are all utilizing technology for more hours than recommended by the APA. If we could cut Chromebooks that would at least reduce their hours and allow parents to be the only ones monitoring their screen time.”

“While we live in a world filled with technology, I'd love to see textbooks/workbooks brought back again. Science proves that students who write information down are more likely to retain their learning. Having hardcopy textbooks/workbooks to refer to provides additional opportunities for creating synapses in the brain that just aren't reached with computers. Leave the technology exploration for technology-based classes and personal time. Additionally, I'd love to see more support going toward the arts instead of taken away. If we are worried about AI take over and the effects it has on a child's ability to problem solve, learning to play an instrument and actually playing it is not something that can be reproduced by AI. Not to mention the vast health benefits that come with music.”

“IN school tasks should be mainly paper, pencil, whiteboard, other activities and NOT solely focused on CB's especially in MS and HS. Kids have no idea how to work in groups, think for themselves without use of tech, spelling stinks b/c of auto correct, lack of handwriting and ability to persevere using low tech (books in hand, paper etc)”

"More and more studies are being released indicating the negative impact of screentime in the classroom, I think we should be using them as little as possible at school."

"BAN the computers being brought home. Go back to paper."

"Depending in screens detracts from our teachers. With the exception of the occasional ed show. There should *not* be daily screen time, with exception of a computer class."

"I don't think the littles (below 2nd grade) need any"

"Students should use computers in order to learn how to type and learn online safety and how to identify reputable sources and that is it. Any other screen time should be done at home and monitored by parents. Books and writing by hand are important. It is helpful to be able to put physical post-its on pages you have a question about in a book. And helpful to be able to flip through pages. And it's useful to have a scholarly articles printed out so that you can highlight/circle or draw/write in the margins to help connect dots for yourself. Doing these things tactilely and by hand is critical to learning how to think critically."

"It is well documented and researched that additional screens is bad for kids. Why would we give kids access to these devices especially since many parents aren't able or equipped to provide protections."

"We should know when lines are being crossed. In this case, the line between well-being and our own desires."

"It would be great to see curriculum across the board move away from STRICTLY ONLINE to book, discussion, note taking, paper content. Students are losing or not learning skills needed for real world application."

"LET ME OFF THE COMPUTERS. like jesus christ i dont freaking care, im on the computed half the time so the teachers don't get mad at me for being done the work. TS is dumb omg"

"Screens should not be used at school except for research and as a typing or presentation tool. Teachers should not rely on online sources for teaching."

"We are losing their creativity by pushing learning and media through screens. What happened to a teacher reading a book aloud instead of watching it on YouTube. I think we can take a step back especially for the elementary students. Collaborative work, creativity, art within their learning. We like pencils and paper!"

"I would prefer an option to have no devices."

"I assume high schoolers would be using the computer for online coursework, eg. HCC, Khan Academy"

"Kids should have more interaction with their teachers and classmates that don't require screen time. Use paper, books and other forms of interaction to promote networking and other communication skills."

"Kids are on video games at school all day and left to do class work at home, more on the laptop. My son does 3 hours of homework daily and has FAR LESS time to play outside in the fresh air and sunshine like he should. He's also watching other kids play video games on their school issues laptops during class time. What a mess."

"Kids of all school age groups are on for hours at home; they don't need to be on for hours at school. Numerous studies show the best way to learn is with pencil and paper. Teacher can use technology to deliver material (like on a slide presentation), but students use worksheets and books and lined paper to complete notes and activities. Kids don't take care of the chromebooks well, becomes a financial burden on parents to pay for."

"Don't do everything on computers. The language arts and English curriculum should be using books and articles not on computers."

"We need to teach students to appropriately use screens and for necessary tasks. They need to learn how to use them and manage time for the real world. Screens and technology are not going away."

"I am not an expert is how many hours is appropriate and I would assume it depends more of HOW and WHAT is happening."

"I think the tech in school opens a pandora's box, and my biggest frustration is that most parents DO NOT CARE and let their kids use tech all the time. So many kids have cell phones and apple watches. Our kids feel like the outliers because we have no intention of giving them phones, and we limit their access to screens in general. I hate that this is a society issue and I feel so bad for the teachers who are trying to strike a balance between families with such different values. Tech and the school issue devices can be great tools, but I think they are over-used and relied upon too much. I think Google Drive has been a great tool for the MS kids to use, so I'm not against all of it. I love that they can message their teachers independently on Canvas and check their assignments and grades. But doing math on chromebooks and doing booklets in school... that seems unnecessary. My kid wants to do booklets over and over again. Some of the ES apps are just video games with very little education value."

"Children should not be on screens whenever possible. School is a good time to learn social skills important for navigating through life. Movement of the body throughout the school day helps promote both physical and mental well-being."

"Not all screen time is created equal, so that question is hard to answer. For example, I write Amplify Desmos Math curriculum and when those digital lessons are facilitated correctly there are two students sharing a computer and the class is talking a lot inter mixed with work on screens. Something like that is differently than playing a game or watching certain things on YouTube. "

"I do not like that all my daughter's homework requires a screen. It means she always has a reason to be on a screen "to do homework," which makes establishing screen boundaries much more difficult for parents."

"While students are still developing social skills, technology is a nice to have but not needed more than general education and interaction or it could create dependencies."

"Over using canvas means my child is on a screen for HOURS longer than I would like"

"The focus on screens and the constant use of Chromebooks limits the development of socialization skills"

"Screens are everywhere in today's world, and using them is often compulsory. I do not want to consign my kids, or anyone's kids, to the "Pixel Prison" I'm stuck with so often in my life, that degrades people's minds and bodies globally.

School is supposed to be a safe and nurturing environment for children to thrive. They need to be free, and modern devices are made to ensnare and consume us. Our kids need all the help we can give them with learning to exist offline - it's where people are healthiest, happiest, and most well-connected."

"I believe the use of screens in school is harmful, full stop."

"Much prefer to do work on paper rather than on a computer. Reading with real books is more engaging than online books. Also the computers make backpacks twice as heavy."

“The kids need to learn how to write with a pen/pencil and their hands. Brain body sync”

“While in school, students should have ample amount of in person interaction with teachers and students, and learning to write long paragraphs with pen and paper, not only by typing. I do not appreciate the amount of reliance on technology my children have for their learning experience. I believe this overuse of technology decreases their human interaction and the possibility for mental health and well-being to be established while at school. They already are susceptible to overuse of technology as it is, and I really hope that instruction could be more manual than digital to help children gain better relationships with each other, face-to-face without a screen in between them.”

“Need to go back to more learning/teaching using paper and pen/pencils so students disengage from technology and normalize it.”

“There is a lot of documentation about decreased I.Q. in Gen Z thanks to digital learning. Kids use screens for leisure, they need human teachers to teach them. “

“Would prefer teachers occasionally to use supplementary to support lessons va all content presented on screen to read and learn by”

“As stated previously computers do not facilitate learning as effectively as manual practices such as writing. The act of writing and reading books creates a tactile response that also stimulates the neurological pathways for better retention and recall. Learning especially in k-12 should be structured to reinforce the brains natural method of obtaining an acquiring new skills, computers only teach computer skills regardless of the subject areas it is being utilized for. Gamification of lessons, engaging content and supplemental content is all achievable with traditional methodologies and more conducive to brain development and growth.”

“The research is clear. Traditional non-digital learning is more effective than learnign through tech. Yes, we need to teach kids HOW to use tech so yes, to Tech Ed but pull back on Ed Tech. Tech is a tool that should be used for typing, research, etc. but videos, games, removeing textbooks, removing paper note taking, no longer sending feedback home for parents to help their kids learn, etc., all of this is hurting our learning outcomes. I implore HCPSS to please invest in looking into the current research and demanding peer reviewed research that shows the tools we use are actually effective. If we're going to force kids on screens, it should be because it's effective and not because it makes classroom managment easier or is cheaper.”

“Studies have shown that (in general) students learn better writing by hand than by typing on a computer. Screen use should be significantly limited to provide students with the best opportunities to learn.”

“Applications at improving learning vs non digital- I think it can be equally helpful and not just one way or another. Students are growing up in the digital age where the standard is everyone has a personal computer in their pocket. I think that especially at a high school level, students should be learning to work with technology to verify facts and double checking research to ensure they are doing their due diligence when writing research papers that are current and accurate.”

“Studies are showing that comprehension is improved when paper and physical books are used vs. screens. This is driving some countries such as Sweden and Finland to roll-back their "digital first" policies.”

“Our students need access to feedback. Thy currently cannot learn from mistakes.”

“Screen based learning scatters pieces of assignments across multiple apps, links, places in Canvas. It is confusing for younger students and makes it difficult for parents to help find all the pieces to help them complete work.”

"My son has an assigned chromebook for speech to text, but he is embarrassed to use it when others are not."

"The math homework platform Delta math has been a great feature as it aligns to what is currently being taught in the classroom, and it provides detailed feedback on how to solve problems. I have not seen any other use of technology across the various classroom subjects that merits constant access to a device."

"Some classes rely too heavily on technology. Jumping from tab to tab trying to figure out how to do the assignment is not at all effective. Assignments are often locked or unlocked at inconvenient times so students can't complete work. And often times my students need help figuring out how to use the website rather than how to do the work. Trying to access or find review comments, sometimes proves impossible, making students unable to learn from their mistakes. Some teachers have stopped using online tests because cheating is too easy, while others still allow online tests, how does that work? The inability to go back and reference old tests or classwork because they've been locked is also troublesome."

"My child has most appreciated the hands on learning experiences he's had in his MS classes."

"I would just like to input that the Chromebook as a learning tool has been an HUGE educational BENEFIT for my children with Dyslexia and Dysgraphia. I understand this is not meant to be a tool to assist neuro-divergence but, for kids who don't want to appear "different" everyone having access to the same tools has been quite lifechanging for my middle schooler and high schooler. In comparison my elementary schooler who has to ask to use a computer during writing but won't because he doesn't like to be different. My high schooler was told by his Neuro-Psych that the chromebook literally saved him in Middle School."

"Technology is changing very rapidly. I'd recommend that the school prioritizes teacher learning at conferences or other learning opportunities on what's changing."

"Everything I read suggests ed tech is harming students ability to learn. I am not in favor of it. I would rather they learn with the teachers and books and paper/pencils and limit the device exposure to technology class for awareness, but it's not how they should be learning the fundamentals."

"I think there is a lot to be said for kids learning to take notes and study with pen and paper. There are advantages to having online access to certain apps, modules, etc., but I think a combination digital/non-digital would be advantageous."

"Students can learn a lot from technology and its benefits as it's evolving day by day and not going away. Best to learn in a learning environment versus in an unstructured or unsupervised environment."

"Recall that this is the first year my daughter has consistently used a computer for her schooling. She is learning considerably less than she learned in previous years without a computer, and she does not retain the learning that does happen. I've seen this myself, and she's reported it to me as well without my asking."

"Decrease in hands on feedback from teachers to ensure the best learning experience."

"As stated many times already, school-issued devices are a distraction to learning. Scientific research has proven a connection between brain and hand when learning. I can see that my children are not learning math effectively by using tools like Delta Math or Desmos versus actually doing problems by hand on paper. We use the device at home to watch math instructional videos (Mr. J, Mr. Morgan) to actually explain the concepts that are not adequately taught in school. Games like Kahoot or Blooket do not reinforce actual learning or correct responses, but rather response time, or "game strategy" (i.e. trading places with the student in first place). Rather than teaching students how to use AI productively it is treated as taboo (making it only that much more appealing) and teachers are "out to catch them cheating".

"My middle schooler does NOT see the feedback the teachers provide him via Canvas. It always comes at odd times and I feel this is a very ineffective system for the his learning. I am sure it's convenient for the teachers though. I do think that having the assignment list on canvas and access to homework sheets electronically is EXTREMELY helpful for our ADHD students (and their parents to make sure they are completing the work!). I'd hate to lose this option for these kids."

"students do not know how to take notes and edit essays based on too much computer usage. They do not receive feedback on assignments, specifically written assignments. Teachers should be able to add comments to paragraphs on student written assignments and this is not being done because students submit ALL written assignments via canvas. Students do not know how to highlight important information, summarize or take notes based on the use of computer assignments verse reading a hand held document or print source. It is almost impossible for students to read a small font computer article vs a hand held written article and develop a deep understanding of what was read. Students with IEP/504 should always! receive a print copy of written materials as scrolling up and down through a computer article is not meeting the needs of the student. Technology is not always better and we have become lazy with our standards and expectations."

"High school classrooms are so varied. In my classroom, students need daily access to internet sources to accomplish their goals, and depriving them of that access would dramatically increase their at-home preparation time. I make sure that in a given class period, only about half is dedicated to independent work time on their computers. In others, though, tech tools (Common Lit) have replaced print materials that are far superior. It's important for a policy review to account for the variations in curriculum and level."

"Students do not develop deep critical thinking skills when tech devices are introduced in the classroom, which means fundamentally learning is not happening."

"Most students do not need school-issued devices. Screen-based learning is making students less intelligent. Testing scores, retention, and critical thinking skills are behind nationally. Please return to pre-Covid learning delivery and assignment execution. Canvas does not help teachers grade in a more timely manner. Multiple portals make it difficult for students to manage and keep straight, especially for our neurodivergent friends. Parents are unable to access many portals where students complete tasks. How am I supposed to help my child if I can't access it? Of course I can sign in with my child but how is online better? I've seen no evidence that screen based learning improves academics, the learning experience, or standardized testing."

"Students should not be learning on devices except for a small amount of time superficially related to technology. Expecting middle schoolers to know how to operate canvas for each teacher is absurd and unreasonable. Especially for kids with 504s and IEPs. Schools cannot expect students to not get distracted when they have internet access during the school day."

"I think there are many benefits and disadvantages to technology in school. As a teacher myself I use technology for some students to promote engagement to switch things up from the talking at students approach. I think there should be a mix."

"Having the same school issued Chromebook for a while often leaves to decrease performance and computer is crashing. My daughter's Chromebook has crashed a couple times when she's used it, says it takes a while if you send it to the media center so many students just use the broken computer. I use a computer lab due to industry specific software in my class and don't have these issues."

"Our kids are learning way less on devices than when it was pen and paper."

"Computers should be very limited. All research points to children learning better when physically writing. They are distracting and a burden for parents to manage at home. I have four kids and will soon need to make space

for four computers to safely charge in my bedroom in addition to their personal devices. Computers should stay at school and be rarely used for math and science classes, only engaged to research or writing papers. Our kids all have ADHD and these devices make it worse.”

“School should teach technological skills, but the majority of school time should be used for interactions with students and teachers.”

“www.npr.org/2026/01/14/nx-s1-5674741/ai-schools-education

<https://fortune.com/2026/02/21/laptops-tablets-schools-gen-z-less-cognitively-capable-parents-first-time-cellphone-bans-standardized-test-scores/>”

“There needs to be more tech support from schools through school issued devices as the devices issued are old and when they break or crash students are given a loaner which makes it harder to access previous tabs and logins, which also takes more time to get the device caught up to where the student was with their previous device.”

“Middle school students read text books and ELA novels on the computer screen. This is harder to comprehend the material. It's also harder to study the material for quizzes. We need paper text books and novels in school. Computers can still be used to submit work.”

“With so many moving away from books and paper, I would be concerned about children not having access to a device at home. So much is done on the computer in class and for homework.”

“I think the biggest problem is that when assignments are submitted electronically, then the students don't receive adequate feedback. With a paper assignment for a written response, teachers could put comments directly next to the portion of the assignment that it relates to, they can give re-wording suggestions, and use arrows to explain their edits. For a math assignment, the student could show their work on the paper and the teacher could see where an error was made and could write feedback to address areas of misunderstanding. With the current use of electronic submissions, there is usually no teacher feedback, and if it is present, it is only one vague sentence. Also with the current use of electronic submissions for essays, a grade is posted in Canvas, but since nothing is being physically returned to the student, it is easy for them to not check their grades. Whereas if a paper was handed back to them, their grade and the associated comments would be in front of their face and therefore more likely to make an impact.”

“learning with school-issued devices and the applications run on them is an oximoron. I believe the best way for students to learn is to engage all their senses without devices unless those devices are pen, pencil, paper, actual books, and interactions with the people and community around them.”

“My kids have access to a computer at home, which I know is not possible for all children in Howard County. However, making my child carry around a chromebook at school, bring it home and take it to school every day, and do her homework on it is too much. What happened to textbooks and writing on paper. Have you seen the handwriting of kids lately? They can't even spell because of autocorrect. Technology is failing kids left and right because it is being leaned on too heavily. Please go back to paper and books.”

“Should be as limited as possible; kids gain more from traditional reading and writing”

“As a teacher, when I use games like Blooket for review, I have some students that focus on speed over understanding when responding. They seem excited, but it doesn't necessarily correlate to learning/ retaining knowledge. Also, as a language teacher, I have encountered issues with Google's translation features-- they

are too easily accessible. Some students do not have the maturity to understand how relying on such tools subverts their long term learning."

"They dont need school to teach them with devices. They learn how to learn better without them"

"My kid learns more when writing, speaking, and listening. During digital devices, his focus turns to wanting to "win" and getting the positive feedback from prizes or awards from winning. He does not retain what is being taught during the digital lessons. He does remember all of the advertisements being shown and he says he wants to play the games on the computer. He tries to finish his lessons fast so he gets more "game time". He does not tell me what he is learning in technology class. He only talks about the games played during the class."

"For both of my kids, these Chromebooks are nothing but distractions that prevent them from learning"

"I would like to see the data on student learning on using electronic devices vs non-electronic devices in order to make a determination about effectiveness."

"It's been very hard to support a middle schooler on finding out how to submit assignments as the directions are highly dependent on the teacher/subject and the use of the feedback/rubric submission is also inconsistent"

"I could not rate computer tools as very effective because half the time they do not operate correctly. It seems that these tools are sold from someone who deeply understands or built the tool;however after the transaction staffs on many levels seem to not understand or use this tool purchase nor how to use it to become effective enough to transfer that knowledge to the students-especially if tools are not maintained and managed as needed after the acquisition."

"This is so dependent on the teacher. For example, my son had a shockingly bad experience with a teacher trying to integrate school-based device use at a high percentage level but with no introduction to how to use the tools, and many explaining materials were not appropriate for the age and grade of the students, and it was a disaster. She did not even understand the tools she expected the students to master while doing timed in-class assignments as early as the first weeks of 6th grade (coming from 5th grade class that was almost 100% paper). In contrast, another teacher rarely assigns paper assignments and almost everything is digital, and it is a well thought out approach that provides kids first with the tools and teaching of how to use all of the digital programs and tools, with instructions posted for ease of reference, and allowing appropriate amount of time to complete activities considering the learning curve of some of the digital programs used. I'm completely in favor of the second approach, and completely against the first approach. I've also seen 2 different math teachers at the same grade level use the device in completely different ways, even though both were a split paper and digital approach; one approach worked incredibly well, and the other has so many obvious flaws after having been exposed to the first approach. In sum, it's very teacher and subject dependent."

"We can learn as much as we want to as long as we know when to stop. I think that there's a point when you should take your eyes off of whatever you're learning from and onto something else. And that's especially important for me, who loves to learn new things!"

"It would be great to see curriculum across the board move away from STRICTLY ONLINE to book, discussion, note taking, paper content. Students of all ages are not learning or losing skills needed for real world application. Students are losing the ability or not accessing the emergent intellect needed to grow their conceptual, imaginative & critical thinking skills. NO AI!!!!!!!"

“The best way to ensure safety is to get rid of school issued devices and return to education with pencil and paper. Hours on screens all day is not good for students brains or eyes. I do not want my child on a device for multiple hours during the school day. “

“literally just give us the work and let us do it, stop trying to hold our hands and walk us through easy stuff, and just in general let me fail if I want to, stop grading my studying”

“computers are an important part of society, so learning how to use them safely and effectively is important, but there is just too much reliance and I think deeper learning is suffering, engagement is suffering and it is significantly harder as a parent to see how well they are truly understanding material, where to help and how they are really doing is made much more difficult”

“At the age when adolescents and children are highly suggestible, distractable, and susceptible to "easy outs" (ie, cheating), forcing children to online only access for both homework and classroom notes regardless of their learning style or distractibility and encouraging them to explore AI is dangerously negligent. As an engineer and part-time college teacher who has made a career out of his knowledge of technology, I feel fairly comfortable in saying that this is damaging our children's pathway to learning, and does not improve their technical capabilities or know-how- all their interactions are done through a browser, and HCPSS actively discourages and limits their ability to use the hardware outside of that sandbox. This is not preparing them for the technical challenges of a career, this is asking them to run a gauntlet of temptations without guardrails for less benefit than they'd get from an old-school textbook.”

“When everything is online, the students are missing out on the critical step of learning from their mistakes and seeing specific feedback on their work. They just turn it in and get a grade. It is simply not effective to do math homework without actually writing out your work. It is not effective to turn in an essay and get zero detailed feedback or specific written comments or suggestions. My child can submit it online and never engage with the assignment or exam again, never see specifically why he lost or gained points. I can't see the work either as a parent.

It's like doing the work in a void. If you asked me what things are working well: It does seem like the "class notes" section has been very helpful for some subjects, and being able to review his own notes and the class notes before a test. My student also likes creating slideshow presentations for final projects or group work, and has found that to be value-added.”

“Middle school is far too heavily dependent on using devices. It is distracting and detrimental to the kids' learning.”

“One of my kids had a speech to text device and the teacher has told him he could not use it. Now he's afraid to use it.”

“Devices and schools are hurting are kids learning and social development”

“My first grader said that they watched an ai video of a cat turning into a pizza (or something like that) in math class. Does not seem relevant to the curriculum. I'm not sure that is being used appropriately.”

“Technology needs to be kept in the technology classroom. Using technology in classroom is a huge disservice to students. And the studies are proving that is true.”

“They are not learning any better on the computers it seems just more convenient for grading testing, paperwork etc. Some classes still just use books or packets in class but homework and assignments have to be turned in on the computer. So they should not be able to access anything to distract them from doing that work.”

"Old, broken and infrequently used technology makes the device itself problematic and distracting"

"Laptops are a net negative by a long shot"

"Related to 6th Grader - The use of canvas/online sources for learning is too much. In GT Geography, they have history textbooks scanned into canvas for students to scroll through and use. I have a hard time, let alone an 11 year old, to do all this reading and notetaking online. Why can't we have ACTUAL textbooks to read the information from and ACTUAL documents we can print out or touch/feel to learn about a topic?"

"We hate having everything digital. Difficult to track what's been submitted because it's not about handing it in, it's about sharing it with the teacher via document permissions. This year they read a novel in a screen instead of an actual book - each chapter a different Google document. So hard to navigate this way. Bring back paper and textbooks."

"Hand writing produces greater retention of learned materials than typing. Reading on a screen tends to skim for highlights while reading from a printed text encourages both reading in greater depth and engagement."

"Again- there are experts in this that I would refer to versus my layman's thoughts. I prefer a policy that references research versus a parent survey."

"The temptation to use devices for other purposes is a large net detraction from learning."

"I know this is about school-issued devices but I'm much more interested in the topic of cell phones in schools"

"Teachers who don't use these devices should be celebrated. Math at WLMS and PE is the only bright spot."

"Disappointed in school and county leadership here."

"We also need to focus on cell phones in school"

"It appears as if teachers sometimes rely too heavily on computer assistance to teach & to keep the student "busy" during class. I think we need more interactive teaching & to make sure the teachers don't rely too much on AI to do their job for them."

"Thank you for looking into this subject!"

"I think the devices are too tempting for kids who don't yet have the self-regulation or developed brain to manage impulse control. I would prefer we keep access very limited until high school. A true typing curriculum/class would be more valuable, in my opinion. My kids are on computers all the time, yet they type terribly, with poor technique. I do think proper use of AI is an important skill they should be learning in tech class, and in others, as appropriate. My issue is with the constant chromebook use in middle school for everything."

"Chromebooks would be just as effective for instruction if the students did not have a permanently assigned device but had devices in the school that they could only access when a teacher needs them."

"Many teachers have stated that information is better retained through writing on paper. I personally prefer paper over digital use for core classes and computer use primarily for classes like computer science."

"Wouldn't spending money on teacher technology be much more appropriate? Smart boards, and other tech that teachers request? Maybe talking and taking seriously the advice of those actually in the classrooms would be the most appropriate approach."

"For children and adolescents, learning occurs best with hands on tools and collaboration amongst peers."

"Students do need focused technological instruction in computer science, etc., but the majority of their classes should use limited technology. Numerous studies show students learn more when they write by hand."

"They have to use devices to stay on track with the rest of the world."

"Some kids learn and comprehend concepts better with a textbook or tactile object instead of a computer."

"My kids do not know how to take notes or study properly. They have terrible handwriting and have a hard time with fictional writing... and my kids are GT. I can't imagine what it is like for kids who have learning issues."

"Technology use should be directed by the core learning objectives. Use of technology is not a good substitute for directed learning from qualified and dedicated faculty."

"There is an over reliance on Canvas which inhibits the development of executive functions. For example, teachers are not putting assignments on the board, reminding students of deadline and proactively collecting physical homework. Students are required to find assignments and complete them in Canvas. There are studies that show that information retention is the best when we physical write down information."

"Learning and reasoning are human relationships with the self and others. They do not involve devices. As someone who used computers to score ridiculously high on the SATs and GREs, but has struggled a lot with interpersonal skills and relationships, it's not good enough for kids to score highly on device-issued assessments."

"Students are not learning on their devices. They are not reading, they are skimming. They are distracted at all times, use the devices for games and social activities, and chest their way through assignments. The learning outcomes on paper using pencil are scientifically proven to be much more authentic and engaging. Screens are a shiny object, they have harmed learning significantly."

"I think the push for 1:1 device ratios and the quest for "free" magic-bullet gamified edutainment apps has been a catastrophe, and device usage should be radically scaled back at all levels."

"I'm not sure having devices have improved their learning. I'd prefer they weren't using them and bringing them home."

"The youngest students need to learn social skills, fine motor skills, and attention regulation before using a screen device. Screens are not as effective or engaging as cooperative or hands-on activities."

"Why would you ever even give kids this to learn. It does not help them in ANY way. Stop being lazy and teach young children the right way, you are literally disabling them from using their minds, and that is the worst thing you could ever do for them and their futures."

"Students in high school are a step away from the world of work or college. Learning how to use technology responsibly in k12 is essential to them knowing how to appropriately use college after they graduate. It seems this survey has an underlying intention of removing technology. I totally disagree with this intention. This survey is concerning and I'm shocked at PTAC for promoting this. This survey is the reason technology education is necessary. Our students need to be able to spot manipulative content on the internet."

"When my child started middle school and was working on homework on the Chromebook at home, I noticed that while working on homework my child had been writing out all the answers by pecking at the keyboard one key at a time. When I asked my child learned how to type properly by placing both hands on the home row and learning positions of letter keys, my child replied that they were not really taught how to type properly in school,

however, they did play an educational game called 'Typing Agent' in elementary school. At the time, my child was also not aware of any typing programs currently loaded onto the Chromebook to help improve typing skills. We are not setting our middle school students up for success if we are not teaching them how to type properly, issuing them laptops with the expectation to complete classwork on time when they do not understand how to type efficiently and are distracted by games both "educational" and non educational that they can access and play on their Chromebooks."

"School issued devices in general hold students back from optimal learning. They are used more as a distraction and crutch than a tool. Read the published research!"

"Utilize scientific evidence from peer reviewed journals to guide decision making"

"Technology will continue to grow into our everyday lives. From work to socializing to learning, screens will be a part of it. I want our kids to be prepared for a world full of the benefits and harms this brings us and that includes exposing them early in school. It's a fact of life we need to embrace."

"The impact of screens on children in their personal lives and school is well researched and it's a public health crisis. I worry tremendously about the district relying too heavily on public opinion that is ill-informed stating that "tech is the way of life". We can use tech at work and not have it infiltrate our schools. There is profit motivation here! Studies show millenials are better at effectively using tech than Gen Z because we first learned without tech and millenials are more creative and critical thinkins with stronger problem solving skills. Tech is initutive. It's doesn't take delepting our health and ruining our critical thinking skills (and brains overall) to be able to use tech as a professional. HCPSS needs to consult child development specialists, neuroscienties, and health praticioners to inform your decisions. It's great we're doing this survey to learn about what is happening in our schools but the opinion elements it's can't replace the peer reviewed, independent research. Thank you for this opportunity to share our input!"

"Use text books"

"Technology is a tool that should be used with strict guidelines and rules for students in high school during tech classes only. It is not effective in elementary or middle schools."

"Please reduce Chromebooks in middle school it is a failure of our school system- placing addictive technology in front of our students for 6 hours a day."

"How can we come up with an option to effectively utilize devices and non technical usage during inclement weather."

"I don't beleive chromebooks should be used in school for other than technology/computer classes"

"HCPSS needs to adopt some sort of policy ensuring that kids who don't have computers at home can borrow them with impending storms. We need to have an online snow day policy like Baltimore County"

"Let the teachers teach, rather than plugging them into watered down online resources."

"I wish Howard county would go back to using text books instead of digital books. I can't help my middle schooler with science. Because she doesn't have good reference material. She has a bunch of notes and YouTube links that the teacher has kludged together. It's not organized or effective learning for the kids specially in Elementary and middle schools"

"Parent and student required to grade work with one week so parent can help the student if need be."

"I might be one of few, but I am a fan of the technology in school. It makes things so much easier for things like group projects, missed work when absent and frankly is what they will need to learn/work in the future."

"So glad to hear someone taking the lead on this. We need physical text books."

"I am very encouraged to see this questionnaire and grateful this is being considered. I think we have enough data and information now to seriously rethink the way technology is employed in our schools. As an IT security professional, I would be relieved to see it dramatically scaled back. The use of devices is the primary reason I would consider sending the kids to a private school where there's an option for no devices. This keeps me up at night."

"I believe it's a great opportunity for students as technology is advancing rapidly and students can learn to use technology in a responsible manner in a supportive and supervised environment at school."

"Hcpss should walk back all edtech use in schools. Giving kids Chromebooks to use at home if they don't otherwise have access to a computer is reasonable and equitable, but otherwise edtech should not be involved in these kids' education anymore. This is an issue that needs to take first priority if we're going to educate these kids well."

"HCPSS banned personal cellular devices, yet still left school-issued devices in student's hands all day. The same threats of distraction and safety exist. I would actually prefer my child have their cell phone and be able to contact me rather than stare at a Chromebook all day."

"My children attended Lisbon Elementary school where students were not issued devices on a one-to-one basis. They had a technology class that taught them about their digital footprint (safety) and how to navigate Canvas, and devices were only used to supplement instruction. At first I felt like they were at a disadvantage compared with students from Bushy Park Elementary (who had devices on a 1-to-1 basis) when students from both schools combined at Glenwood Middle. However, I have seen a drastic negative impact from the all-day school-issued device access."

"Technology is here to stay but learning how to write effectively is very good for brain development. The screen time battle with kids is the absolute worst part of parenting in this day and age."

"What is the problem happening at middle school level?"

"Please read the Digital Delusion by Horvath. His expertise and research is important to the educational future of our kids."

"Technology is a critical part of the learning curriculum. Every student should have some amount of access to technology tools. For kindergartners, this should be in the way of simple programmable robots. By middle school, students should feel confident writing a paper in a Google doc. By highschool, those who wish to study computer science should be able to write simple programs in simple languages (JavaScript, Python, etc.). However, technology should not replace learning. When our students are engaged with their screens, they are not engaged with the classroom."

"There is no student need for pre-k to have screen use time. Or kindergarten. Is the use for student benefit or for teachers / staff bc they are overworked, have too many students in class."

"Banning cell phone use was a great start. Follow all the current research and recommendations from mental health professionals on screen. Follow what early childhood educator researchers are saying. Ask teachers what they need in order to decrease or stop use specially for pre-k- grade 2."

"I would increase student/teacher choice in school. I don't think we need a more thorough review of digital tools as they're on multiple digital tools approved in other counties that are not approved in ours and that can be an issue when meeting implementing some lessons or initiatives."

"Use technology for Virtual Classes."

"Technology has a place in learning but I don't believe it should be the main driver."

"Bring back paper text books and ELA assigned books!"

"In particular, I think Math assignments and English assignments should be graded by hand so the teacher can write comments and the students can see the feedback. Paper for math assignments allows and encourages students to show their work (instead of typing just the answer into a text field), and it allows the teacher to review their work and identify areas of misunderstanding. English assignments could be typed, but then they should be printed and returned with teacher feedback and edits physically written on the paper. This would allow students to get more guidance on their writing."

"realistically tech is here to stay. I believe it should start with being limited to tech/media class beginning in 3rd grade (8 yrs old), then in 4th and 5th grade when students can think abstractly, tech can be implemented in another class as well (maybe english). In middle school it can be incorporated in a couple classes. At age 16 (junior year) it can be used in all classes with teacher direction, limitations, parameters. In other words, tech should be rolled out slowly, controlled, with limitations (safety guards) very strictly and controlled because as it is now, it is a dangerous pandora's box."

"Technology is a poor use of school systems resources since it is not shown to improve students learning outcomes. We have older and better proven ways for students to learn."

"It would be great if my kid didn't need to do her homework on a computer every single day. While it may be more like the "real world" it is not supportive of learning to actually write (and SPELL) by hand, do research with a book, and basically be a good person."

"Minimize screens and technology in elementary classrooms"

"HCPSSS should have recommended screen time for its students aged 16 or under while such policies are not available at state or federal levels"

"Thank you for changing the policy for cell phones in schools--we have already seen the improvements for students and teachers alike. Let's follow up on this by reducing tech in other areas and being very specific with its use for accomplishing goals. This is a serious topic at a critical time. We should not be using technology just for the sake of using the latest apps and gadgets (or education tech companies)--we need to be wary of who/what is behind the tech and how that is affecting the well-being of our children. If anything, the focus of tech in schools should be on understanding how software works and how manipulative information technology can be, so that they can develop as critical thinkers in this technology driven world."

"Please get them off computers in school!"

"Teachers should be teaching, not putting students on devices during school. Go back to having textbooks!"

"I think the technology makes it easier to learn."

"I would love to see an opt-out option that parents could exercise"

"Please keep the Chromebooks at school and remove Minecraft."

"I would encourage teachers to come up with a more streamlined approach for each grade so that the next grade teachers would then know how much the prior grade used devices, and have reasonable expectations on what prior knowledge the kids have navigating Canvas, etc. I've seen a teacher in 5th grade use devices for less than 5% of assignments, and then in 6th grade, the teacher expect the students to be able to master it immediately for 50% or more of the class. Secondly, I personally would love to see kids learn to type in school. Not sure if this is offered, and I'm unaware, or whether it's not offered at all. My child has not had any instruction on typing skills and is in the 4th quarter of 6th grade."

"Technology is a tool like anything else... but it cannot be allowed to replace the critical thinking skills and discussions our students NEED to learn and grow."

"No screens for school"

"Middle school computers should be in carts, not given to the students. There needs to be enough carts that all teachers can have them when they need them and don't have to coordinate with other contents for their use."

"Get rid of the reliance on tech. Paper is one of the largest costs of a school system. The decision to rely on tech is less about instructional best practice and more about cost saving measures to the detriment of our students learning."

"While I think there should be more projects, outdoor activities, and etc. I think the PTA should be more focus on helping support admin and students with the use of vapes and marijuana before dying and after school and help with funding regarding substitutes for the departments because many of our teachers dont even get their prep periods anymore because they have to cover a class and this reflects on our classes with them."

"We need updated technology for staff and students-bring back desktops in all academic classes"

"Would prefer no laptops until high school"

"We need to ditch most of this technology and go back to computer labs. I say this as someone with nearly 20 years operational IT experience"

"I think we can take a step and go more old school we some of the learning. As stated above, can the educator read the book aloud instead of watching the YouTube video of it? Can we use books to research about animals, use our media educator to help pull grade level books for an assignment."

"Non digital learning is more important than digital learning. Our students are becoming less effective problem solver relying on technology so much."

"Ensuring all children have access to modern, effective devices"

"I want to go back to text books. Not reading on screens."

"Kids don't need individual chromebooks! Instead schools need a well kept class/department set of chromebooks, kept at school and used at teacher discretion, which worked great prior to Covid. Reliance should be on paper and pencil for students, which teachers bringing in technology to enhance their teaching as they see fit."

"There should be strong advocacy against computer use outside of technology until all workarounds are eliminated so students can't access games or inappropriate content."

"Teachers rely on it too much as a babysitter."

"I hate how much we rely on chromebooks now. Kids aren't learning as well. I notice that in the classes with more paper assignments, my kid's depth of understanding is so much greater."

"I do not believe that parents should be able to opt in or out of technology use. That does not seem like it is either fair or possible for teachers to handle."

"Technology is here to stay and only becoming more advanced by the day. I believe we'd be doing our students a disservice if it's not embedded in the curriculum and if safe use is included."

"This survey seems driven by a desire to say, "We asked parents and here is what they said." I'd prefer that we base our decisions on these things on expert research and findings. Share research with me and ground recommendations in it."

"HCPSS is one of the only school districts that I know of that does not have smart boards for teacher usage, instead of student tech, could we focus on tech used by teachers?"

"Absolutely should be more limited and restricted"

"Aged hardware and expensive ineffective software are not double dose of little to no oversight "

"Chromebooks should not be introduced until high school."

"Take student-issued devices out of schools, or stop calling them schools."

Edtech is just a payday for billionaires and unaccountable corporations - just take the tech budget and give it to the teachers directly. I guarantee we'll get much better results than buying free samples of addictive, exploitative technology and using it to ensnare our vulnerable children into lifelong bad habits.

Tech/trade classes supervise students when they use powerful tools. Table saws aren't addictive and can't hurt more than one person at a time. We wouldn't let a student take a table saw home without supervision, and there is no justifying giving a student an internet-enabled device to take home and use without supervision either. Kids are brilliant and creative, and will reliably overcome the safeguards adults put in place.

Sweden is getting great results by ditching screens:

<https://arstechnica.com/science/2026/04/sweden-goes-back-to-basics-swapping-screens-for-books-in-the-classroom/>

Obligatory disclaimer that assistive devices are positive, and shouldn't be limited. My kid has a handicap and we were considering using one before a breakthrough, and I'm glad other kids have them."

"We are harming our children every single day by keeping them on screens. We have made a bad choice and it is not too late to undo it, but we have to act now."

"I understand we need to prepare our children for a digital world. However, the schools have taken this to far. What happened to text books, pencil and paper, practice sets? These don't have to compete with flashing lights. The tools being given to the kids is a long term play for being the tools they purchase later in life (i.e. Google docs, etc.). It feels very wrong!"

"PLEASE prioritize 1 to 1 computers for intermediate elementary grades (3 to 5). As a teacher who has taught grades 3 and 5 and will be teaching grade 4 next year, it is IMPERATIVE that we have adequate access to enough computers for all students in those grades. Having to share carts with other grades to successfully

implement the use of the online programs we use regularly (CommonLit, HMH, Amplify, News-O-Matic, PebbleGo, Britannica, Nat Geo Kids, etc) makes our jobs that much harder. Please help us by repurposing/refurbishing the older Chromebooks that were just replaced to give us 1 to 1 in all ES schools in grades 3 to 5. They do NOT need to go home each day with the kids, but having them available for classroom use is absolutely 100% necessary and would go a long way to showing ththose staff that our voices and needs matter.”

“It has gone too far.”

“The use of student technology in HCPSS is essential to their later success.”

“Student personal cell phones are still being used in school and teachers do not seem to care. Please help enforce the role that students are to not use personal cell phones while on school premises.”

“We (the students) should be more mindful of what we do on any device we use.”

“Need to move away from laptops. Phones and laptops are distractions that are causing too many issues”

“I would prefer that students have access to no devices during the day. We need to go screen free.”

“I'm more concerned about issues with screens on personal devices. My child seems to follow guidelines laid out with school issued chromebook”

“My student has not been issued a device.”

“Screens are used primarily now and it is excessive.”

“The use of a device and the dependence on one is not beneficial to the students.”

“Tech has its place, especially for people with disabilities, but excessive use is not good for anyone and over-reliance for developing brains precludes growth in healthy coping skills, social skills, research capacity, coherent thought, and attention spans. Europe (in general) is looking to limit screens in school and for once it would be nice to not be 25 years behind.”

“I have personally witnessed students gaming during academic competitions to the point of missing their teams events. My students have reported students gaming during class, including during assigned group projects, which is impacting even the students who do not play the games. The use of computers for assignments have led to frustration as teachers are inconsistent on how assignments are assigned (some via canvas, some written in class, some via e-mail), frustration as assignments are finished but marked incomplete because the assignment required a "submit" button (but not all assignments do), and a lack of focus as assignments require laptop usage with ready access to games or online content. Students find it hard to flip between class notes (when class notes are provided) and the assigned problem sets on the small laptop screens. There is also increased stress on the children due to the financial charges for damaged laptops, even though laptops are issued without protective equipment (sleeves, etc) and are low quality and experience wear during regular usage. Finally, the usage of laptops prevents advanced students from exploring other related academic topics (that would have been available idly flipping through the pages of a textbook) when bored during classroom review of topics they know, which can lead to classroom behavior problems or increased mis-use of computer resources.”

“My child is in only in kindergarten, so I have not had opportunity to assess impacts yet.”

“My son is only in 2nd grade and I think device usage has been appropriate.”

AI Safety, Usage, and Governance

“Students are able to use google and google images including the AI responses. It is easy to get around the limited protections google has in place. Additionally, kids will use home internet and bring stuff into school and share with others.”

“Googling EVERYTHING. Relying on AI for schoolwork. Use of YouTube Music where explicit songs can easily be found. Playing games at school.”

“My oldest son has circumvented controls in place by the district many times and is now using the Gemini AI they provide to circumvent controls placed on our own devices at home and to even try to make nude pictures of real girls without their consent”

“I don’t think AI should be allowed except

In situations where a class is specifically teaching about AI and it is heavily supervised. Kids have committed suicide after talking with AI, so safety is a major concern. It also opens doors for cheating.”

“AI seems to be an unfortunate reality at this point. Students need to be able to think for themselves and write for themselves which does not happen with AI. However, since they will be accessing it regardless, limited access in the higher grades with proper instruction seems prudent.”

“Elementary should have very limited use of computer and Middle should not have 1:1 computer. High school should have controlled learning about AI.”

“There’s no one size fits all answer for k-12. I think different rules should apply to different school levels. For example, elementary school students should not be using AI, whereas high school students may use it for actual classwork. Middle school students could be learning the appropriate application and risks associated with using AI, and how do identify it.”

“Technology/cyberscurity/AI is so dynamic. It’s changing much too quickly for the slow moving school system to keep up with. We aren’t ready to safely use it in schools. I see zero reason especially below high school to introduce it.”

“Staff and parent training are crucial. Staff members need to know how to utilize the tools for restricting access while instructing at the same time. There needs to be more accountability in the teachers to ensure HCPS tech tools are used consistently and in a timely fashion.”

“Combination of multiple safeguards: Communication, content and usage restriction/monitoring, policies and guidelines, accountability, clear expectations, and training.”

“Even 15 minutes with a chatbot has been shown to reduce critical thinking skills. AI usage should be taught with this in mind.”

“Students should not have open access to Youtube or AI”

“No AI, but if must then see all suggestions above”

“Absolutely no AI usage for elementary or middle schoolers”

“There is not enough oversights as it pertains to safety, of students and data”

"Kids are smart and find loopholes around safeguards more easily than we'd probably like to admit. Depending on the type of AI (all AI is not the same) and data-centric security controls in place, there can still be gaps that are expensive to resolve appropriately."

"I think that AI content is already filtered for appropriateness anyways, so there is no need for any additional filtration"

"I think if the teacher says yes to AI, it should be used. I don't think anything should be blocked, as it get's frustrating, and they block school stuff, like"

"Online safety comes from education NOT restriction. My generation learned to be safe online and how to source factual, reputable information from the Internet from growing up with the Internet. The Internet is a tool our children should be taught to use effectively and safety. This includes the use of AI."

"No AI or access to it AT ALL. No access to any games outside of anything HCPSS/Parent Approved. Better understanding within district wide student culture of what cyberbullying is/looks like/sounds like. Chat groups exist within student communications via Canvas/InBox that have no adult oversight or moderation."

"First, the students have figured out some workarounds to access youtube and google sites. Next, in regards to AI, I do not think our society understands the implications of AI and its impact well enough to turn it over to our students at this time. We already have enough problems with social media and are still dealing with the fallout of rushing into that as a society. Adding in AI that is not well regulated (and many times, inaccurate) is not appropriate at this time. We don't need them talking to chatbots as though they are people during this time when they are still struggling to build interpersonal skills and critical thinking skills. Finally, I also have serious concerns about the security of my student's data, which has now potentially been exposed via a data hack. We seem to have accepted this as inevitable, but we should not. I'm done handing over my child's personal info and having to trust other entities to safeguard it -- it clearly can't be done, and it certainly can't be guaranteed."

"It does not appear that HCPSS is using safety controls to ensure appropriate use of devices in the classroom. Despite Lightspeed and other controls, my child has been active on other tabs during class and exposed to inappropriate content on a regular basis. As such, children may have access to AI which has been shown in multiple studies to put children and adolescents with mental health concerns at risk. I believe it should be the parents' decision what their children can access and be available to discuss it in real time. I do not believe the school should be making decisions about if and when my children can gain access to websites such as YouTube."

"Students can play games, watch any music video, play any song, download apps, watch youtube, and generate AI pictures of teacher in swimsuits to laugh at."

"I am very concerned about kids using AI tools and chatbots due to the risk to their mental health. There are no safeguards from these companies and there have been multiple instances of AI chatbots encouraging suicide or violence. Generative AI must be unequivocally banned from HCPSS."

"Not teaching our students how to use AI appropriately would be a massive failure and also completely out of touch with reality. AI is a great tool when used appropriately and when used inappropriately produces work slop."

"AI isn't the problem."

"Only specially trained staff should be using AI with students with defined goals and curriculum. Student data must never be shared with third parties. Students must be aware they have no expectation of privacy when using AI on a school device or through school software."

"I would prefer no access to AI, especially image-generating AI from school-issued devices. The risks are too high because the platforms don't have good enough guardrails."

"My 5th grader talks to Google at home a lot as if person. He and my 2nd grader want to make AI art. All have issues separating or not asking about screens at home. My 5th grader is allowed computer game recess from media teacher if earned."

"I heard a 6th grader talk about a friend who had programmed an ai chatbot boyfriend to say emotionally abusive things to them. She noticed that the chatbot was making her friend sad and was concerned. It sounds like this was on a phone though. I assume the situation resolved because I didn't hear anything else about it."

"'Cognitive Surrender' is a real issue. I have witnessed students immediately google/chatgpt answers to questions before attempting to think for themselves."

"I think using computers, learning about them and everything they offer including AI is very valuable. However, I think it is largely overused in almost every class and as a result I see less communication to students on their work from teachers which is a really important piece of learning.. what are they doing right and wrong.. and if wrong specifics rather than a nebulous grade or grading guideline. the red ink style of grading is very beneficial both for student learning and for parents being able to truly see how their kids are doing and where they can help. I think that is mostly missing with the over reliance on computers"

"Students can play games, watch any music video, listen to any song, download apps, watch youtube, and generate AI pictures of teacher in swimsuits to laugh at, while "doing their homework"."

"Academic reliance on AI chatbots (not able to do assignments without them)"

"Students' critical thinking skills have dropped precipitously in the last two years with the prevalence of easy-access AI. The only way to ensure students are learning is to go back to paper and pencil for a substantial number of assignments."

"They need to learn to use it appropriately. Not using it at all is falling behind the rest of the world."

"The effects of AI on student well-being at any age has not been studied. The negative effects of prolonged screen use are known, at least to a certain degree. Proceed with caution."

"AI takes away our students natural ability for creativity and curiosity and to become good thinkers and problem solvers. When they have AI, they do not exercise those skills any longer."

"AI is the way of the future and we are doing disservice to our students by pretending that it doesn't exist. We've had a teacher refuse to assign any work outside of the classroom for fear of AI use. It wasn't their responsibility to teach them the appropriate use. Wrong! We should be teaching this."

"Most significant concerns are distraction and ensuring they are learning critical thinking skills as well as content. AI is proven to be dangerous to students and diminishes critical thinking. Should only be permitted under heavy supervision in high school (maybe even 11-12 grades only), and not for younger students."

"AI should be used for combing through large swaths of data for research purposes only. It should not be used in a creative capacity."

"AI generated apps should not be made available. I want to know the student can write, research, etc,"

"AI is garbage in garbage out. It's also not a learning tool. Students at any age K-12 aren't mature enough to use it responsibly and it will be used at the expense of genuine learning."

“Students need to learn logic and critical thinking skills in school. AI and LLMs don’t help children learn how to synthesize information and how to think. Instead, AI and LLMs give people the answers they want to hear. We are doing our students a disservice if we don’t teach them HOW to think and HOW to learn. We already over test them. Let’s not make it worse.”

“AI use needs to be more nuanced. Using AI to generate an image for an assignment is different than using AI to write an essay. As an ELA teacher, I’m fine with them using it to make an image, but any other use is counterproductive to learning how to write and read.”

“Students need to learn to think for themselves, to solve problems, to write independently before they should be able to access AI-supports. They are overly reliant on quick fixes, fast solutions, and fail to think for themselves with school work and real world problems. The constant access to devices only fuels this issue.”

“Even 15 minutes with a chatbot has been shown to reduce critical thinking skills. AI usage should be taught with this in mind. Also, the environmental costs of using AI should be part of the curriculum. My child comes home happy to show me some dumb AI image they generated, but no teacher has once told him that the artwork it was trained on was stolen from the original artists. I would love to see more about copyright law when discussing AI. Overall though, AI is not a safe tool to use.”

“Kids need to learn how to use gen AI effectively and safely. It shouldn't be blocked for high school but they're should be effective training, and a closed environment where their data is not used to train the AI models.”

“I think that there should be a focus on critical thinking when using AI tools”

“AI can be a tool, but when given too young it prevents them from learning to think reflectively, or for themself, it's a short cut and many new learning skills will be lost to the use of AI in our young”

“The challenge with having teacher activated is that not all teachers fully understand model biases and pitfalls with Gen AI. this is not a direct replacement for search type functionality but many use it that way. Also depending on how school networks are configured, opening up Gen ai to many risks increasing data compromises”

“Schools are supposed to teach students how to think, interact, when over rely on device, AI, they don’t leant how to think and interact”

“Technology use for younger children should be significantly reduced and only used with active teacher involvement. Otherwise, screen free learning is more effective. The least access to generative AI for younger age children just learning how to be creative, the better. It is an available tool, but is being used extremely carelessly in so many situations by adults--how are we expecting children to use it appropriately and with more discretion??”

“AI technology can be useful for the teachers to leverage to better engage students, but as the technology advances quicker than any policy or legislation, student’s engagement with it should be very limited. AI has a long memory with the general inability to delete (literally) anything that has been entered. Consequently, the third party access to student’s information (knowing or unknowingly entered into the systems) can be easily used for unapproved and/or dangerous purposes.”

“Again generative AI is a tool students should be taught to use effectively and safely”

“I have watched my students' ability to learn, think critically, and retain information decline over the years as the reliance on AI has increased.”

"I worry that too much gamification of learning can lead to a more shallow understanding of concepts. I especially worry that our understanding of AI as a technology is far too incomplete to risk bringing it into the classroom. More research is needed."

"Nobody should be using AI in school as it only leads to cheating. AI is good for assisting with tasks you already know and can do or for general questions. However it is 100% abused and used incorrectly"

"College preparation - we need to teach AI"

"I have serious concerns about the severe consequences of unsupervised and unrestricted access to chat GPT and other AI applications, such as exacerbated mental health problems, suicidal behavior, and worsening interpersonal relationships as kids rely more and more on AI-based relationships. I do believe that children should learn how to use AI but in a safe and controlled way that does not allow for use outside of supervised use."

"AI is part of society and technology is expanding. Students should learn how to responsibly use AI and other technologies that is part of everyday life and professional workplaces."

"AI does not help students learn, it teaches them shortcuts and ways to not use their own brain."

"Students need to learn from teachers not AI and not use ChatGPT to do the work for them"

"AI should be encouraged to be taught in schools. How to use AI will be a critical skill in the work world for these kids."

"As a professor in Higher Ed, I have yet to see uses of LLMs that actually help with real learning. There are uses of it that help experts do what they already know how to do faster. That's not what our kids need."

"Student AI usage MUST be heavily monitored. Emphasis on heavily. With AI still evolving, there are almost no reliable safeguards to protect our children from viewing appropriate things or stop them from creating inappropriate things. There are several documented cases of AI being used by children to target other kids, create revenge porn, bully, etc. Teachers using AI to find accurate information to teach is one thing - students should not be allowed open access."

"We need to teach students AI and computers.. please look back to 2019 when technology was cut because it wasn't needed. Then we spent 3 years on computers and the 1st year was teaching both parents and students how to use it. Computers and tech and AI are reality. Wouldn't we want our children taught from the beginning safety, proper use, what to do with misuse, etc. Our schools are not just a place for education as seen by food programs and supply closets and all the support we give students to be successful. Sometimes the only safe adult is the one in the classroom."

"Students and parents MUST be made aware of the risks associated with using generative AI. From the resources it consumes to the dangers of inappropriate use."

"I see people using AIs in ways that violate the current guidelines and nothing happens. Strengthening the guidelines matters less than enforcing the current guidelines."

"I'm a high school student. One of my teachers uses AI to generate all of her assignments and does not review them to make sure they make sense before giving them to us. This is for an English G/T class, by the way. This AI misuse results in us not engaging with the content past surface level, feeling as if our teacher does not care about teaching us, feeling confused when multiple questions ask the same thing, feeling confused when a question includes false information about the book, and valuing our learning material much less. Many people

in my class do not feel as if they are learning whatsoever, and are wholly unprepared for future English classes. She has also graded assignments with AI, which is problematic as well. One student got an assignment back with points taken off for a mistake which he did not make. His response did not include a misspelling which the AI comment said it did. This shows that my teacher does not even check to see if the AI grades are reasonable. A group of concerned students (including me) have spoken to an administrator at my school and that has led to no change, months later.

Because of this, I feel as if HCPSS needs to set *enforceable*, clear guidelines on teacher usage of AI in the making and grading of assignments. Having teachers whose assignments and grades consistently include AI caused errors shows us that they do not care about our learning, and do not care about carrying out their job correctly.

Overall, when your council considers HCPSS AI policy, I hope you have the foresight to discuss teacher usage *as well as* student usage. Please do not overlook this.

- A concerned high school student in HCPSS”

“The allowance of generative AI has hurt so many at my school, from either teachers or students abusing it. One of my teachers exclusively uses AI for all purposes: assignments, lessons, grading, feedback, images, and warmups. Aside from the tremendous environmental impact, AI frequently gets things wrong and focuses on what many people think is irrelevant. We are all tired of the AI assignments, and discontent can be found in every one of these classes. The AI also takes off many points for trivial reasons, such as not including a certain word, such as "mortar". The word mortar was never used in the book or any previous assignments, so it was unclear why it was so critical to this one essay. By doing AI assignments, our brains are being rewired to sound more and more like AI as we write about the Geography of Silence, the Hierarchy of Fear, and the Anatomy of an Identity.

The implementation of Gemini was also a terrible decision. The overall policy of not using it unless specified is there, but that doesn't stop people from using it anyway. Students have no qualms about using Gemini for even the slightest of tasks. This decreases their comprehension, critical thinking, and deeply harms the environment. Adding Gemini to Chromebooks has only made it easier for students to cheat and get around doing the work themselves.”

“Curriculum should guide safe and effective use of a.i rather just not allow it”