

PTACHC Technology Committee Update

September 1, 2026

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: LINDSAY UNGER (Chair), KIMYA DAVANI, VIVIAN MOLINA, and
SAMARY RAMIREZ
BOARD SUPPORT: KARINA FISHER

PTACHC Technology Committee Description

The Technology Committee exists to advocate for technology use for all students in HCPSS that 1) is safe 2) prioritizes wellbeing, and 3) effectively improves their learning outcomes. This includes the hardware provided to students, the applications leveraged and accessible (EdTech, AI, social media, web browsers, etc) by students on that hardware, and the policies regulating personal device usage. The committee is also invested in supporting the community with educational resources and programming to help parents and caregivers make safe and healthy technology choices for their families since student health and wellbeing at home impact student performance in the classroom.

Main Objectives:

- liaise with the BOE and HCPSS Central office to advocate for tech use that aligns with our motion
- recommend formal positions to represent PTACHC on tech-related policy considerations
- create and/or disseminate educational materials and programs to PTA member schools regarding safe and healthy tech use

PTACHC Motion Passed in May 2026

PTACHC advocates for technology use for all students in HCPSS that 1) is safe 2) prioritizes wellbeing, and 3) effectively improves their learning outcomes.

Student Technology at HCPSS Survey

[View Full Report](#)



- 560 respondents representing 75 of 78 schools
 - 452 Parents/Guardians
 - 72 Teachers/Staff
 - 76 Students
- Organized around the categories of *safety*, *wellbeing*, and *learning*
- Survey ran from April 24 - May 25, 2026
- Distributed by PTACHC delegates, PTA Presidents, and HCPSS Newsletter

Key Findings

Safety

38%

Reported awareness of students bypassing network restrictions, **including 100% of student respondents**

30%

Reported awareness of students accessing inappropriate or unsafe content

68%

Of Parents opposed advertising on school-issued devices in exchange for free/low cost application

Wellbeing

60%

Reported awareness of screen overuse

46%

Reported awareness of excessive or compulsive engagement with gamified applications

81%

Expressed preference for 0-1 hour of screen time for school day for PreK-5. For HS and MS, the majority preferred 3 or fewer hours

Learning

9%

Rated digital tools as “very effective”, with overstimulation, distraction, lack of deep learning most cited as impacting effectiveness

64%

Reported awareness of non-academic device use during school, **including 79% of student respondents**

63%

Of respondents for HS, **80% for MS, and >90% for ES** preferred AI access models that have AI “off by default”

IMPORTANT: The overall theme of the results was not that technology has no place, it's to find the right, intentional place for it

Priorities for PTACHC Advocacy

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

Recommendations for HCPSS

01 SCREEN TIME & TECHNOLOGY USE

1 Establish age-appropriate screen time limits

Standardize technology practices in alignment with parent/guardian preferences and current research on student well-being and learning outcomes.

2 Conduct an ongoing review of technology use

Identify where technology most effectively enhances learning; prioritize intentional, evidence-informed use while minimizing unnecessary or excessive screen exposure.

02 NON-DIGITAL LEARNING ACCESS

1 Ensure non-digital materials are available

Include non-digital instructional materials in all curricula and make them readily available to teachers and students.

2 Allow for non-digital assignment alternatives

Allow non-digital options for assignment completion and submission.

03 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE GOVERNANCE

1 Develop a more prescriptive AI framework

Treat AI as a distinct technology category with firmer access limitations, standardized guidelines, transparent governance, and proactive family communication.

2 Invest in digital education and professional development

Provide educators and students age-appropriate instruction on digital safety, usage risks, accountability, and research on technology—especially AI—across safety, well-being, and learning.

Priority 1: Reduce Screen Time

PTACHC RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Establish age-appropriate screen time limits

Standardize technology practices in alignment with parent/guardian preferences and current research on student well-being and learning outcomes.

2

Conduct an ongoing review of technology use

Identify where technology most effectively enhances learning; prioritize intentional, evidence-informed use while minimizing unnecessary or excessive screen exposure.

HCPSS Response

- Acknowledged there is an overreliance on screens - working toward balance (intentionality)
- Continue Chromebook pilot program into the Fall to gather more data (Ellicott Mills MS and Hammond MS)
- Work with teachers to help them decide when technology use is appropriate (Resources: TIM Framework and Tech Strategic Plan)
- Reviewing curriculum and guidelines and presenting a Board report in September

Priority 2: Artificial Intelligence Governance

PTACHC RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Develop a more prescriptive AI framework

Treat AI as a distinct technology category with firmer access limitations, standardized guidelines, transparent governance, and proactive family communication.

2

Invest in digital education and professional development

Provide educators and students age-appropriate instruction on digital safety, usage risks, accountability, and research on technology—especially AI—across safety, well-being, and learning.

HCPSS Response

- Aligning HCPSS AI guidelines with MSDE guidelines per recent legislation due in October - HS Gemini access is temporarily paused
- Updated 30 minute teacher training module about AI - training varies by grade level
- Curricular focus on AI literacy and critical thinking
- Creating new framework for evaluating digital tools, especially those with an AI component

Priority 3: Non-Digital Learning Access

PTACHC RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Ensure non-digital materials are available

Include non-digital instructional materials in all curricula and make them readily available to teachers and students.

2

Allow for non-digital assignment alternatives

Allow non-digital options for assignment completion and submission.

HCPSS Response

- Working with content and curricula leaders to review materials and determine where technology is used and is essential
- Ensuring non-digital materials are always available is a challenge
- Funding for materials is an advocacy point

HCPSS Additional Actions

- Emphasis on staff professional learning
 - Lightspeed management and monitoring strategies
 - Usage risks and current research on impacts of technology
 - Protocols for providing detailed comments on digital work to restore meaningful feedback
- Standardize Canvas to improve workflows and centralize resources to eliminate “confusing workflows”
- HS no longer able to add/access personal Google/Gmail accounts to help prevent bypassing content filters

(August 12 HCPSS News email for a compilation of key links/updates on HCPSS Technology)

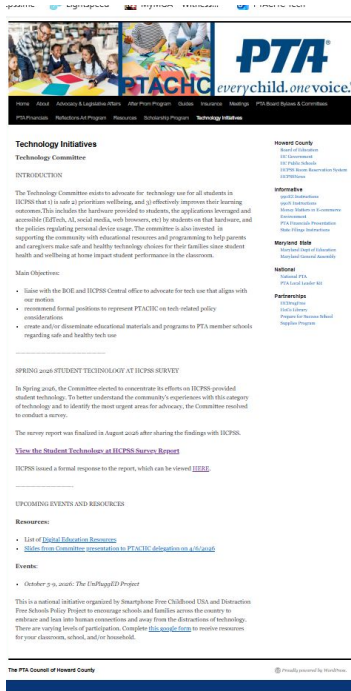
Unresolved

- Google Search AI Overviews - unable to be blocked for any students
- YouTube Access
 - Current practices:
 - **Elementary:** YouTube not permitted on student devices
 - **Middle and High:** Families may opt in to YouTube access through Family File as a part of “Google Additional Services”
 - **Restrictions:** blocking or hiding YouTube Shorts, playlists, thumbnails, comments, and the sidebar, as well as using SmartPlay to filter video content
 - Current discussions:
 - YouTube access currently bundled with “Google Additional Services” - can we unbundle?
 - Maryland Phone Free Schools Act bans social media - defining YouTube as social media?

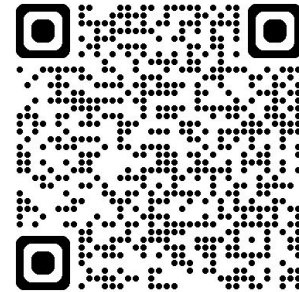
PTACHC Technology Next Steps

- Continue partnering with HCPSS
 - Connect on developments
 - Advocate for our priorities
- Develop and/or disseminate relevant educational events and resources
 - Parent guide to managing HCPSS-issued student devices (partnership with HCPSS)
 - Digital Education Resources
 - Community engagement event
 - Partnership with local PTAs
 - October 5-9, 2026: The UnPluggED Project

Visit our PTACHC Web Page for Information



- Survey Link and Response from HCPSS
- Resources
- Upcoming Events



https://bit.ly/PTACHC_Tech

www.ptachc.org>Technology Initiatives

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