

Frequently Asked Questions

Strategic Plan

What is FCPSOn and why is the school division providing each student with their own device?

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) believes that developing responsible and productive digital citizens is an essential life skill. Increased connectivity provides additional flexibility and exciting opportunities for personalized learning. FCPSOn is the digital transformation work FCPS is beginning to help define what a student-centered learning environment should look like. The Portrait of a Graduate already established attributes students should have when they graduate. Now it is time to define what teaching and learning needs to look like to achieve this goal.

Many teachers have been using technology as an instructional tool for a number of years. In fact, each school has been using devices (laptops, desktop computers, netbooks, tablets) to personalize learning experiences for students in the classroom to some degree. FCPSOn is really not about the device itself - it's about developing instruction to meet the needs of students by creating learner-centered, inquiry-based, and more personalized learning. Students will be able to work on school assignments anywhere, anytime. There are a number of families who report they do not have access to a device or the internet. This initiative will provide equal access to devices and the Internet for all students.

Whose idea was this?

FCPSOn was established to meet the expectations set forth in Ignite, the FCPS Strategic Plan. This plan was developed with input from stakeholders throughout the county. One of the outcomes in goal one of the strategic plan is that teachers, students, and parents will have access to contemporary and effective technology resources. Achieving the goal of one device per student is one of the identified actions to reach this goal.

How is the county paying for this initiative?

Built alongside FCPS' Strategic Plan, Ignite, the FCPSOn initiative seeks to bring integrated technology in a 1:1 ratio to students across the division. Phase one of this effort encompasses the Chantilly Pyramid, and has been funded through the use of existing resources (both staff and existing project funds).

Details can be found online under School Board work session on May 2, 2016, pages 7-9:

<http://www.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=A9FTX3678B62>

Each student in kindergarten through second grade will use existing technology devices during the school day. For grades three through 12, approximately 7,800 devices were obtained through outright and lease purchases to meet the 1:1 technology ratio. One-time replacement equipment funding of \$0.8 million allocated as part of the FY 2015 Final Budget Review was utilized to purchase approximately 2,000 computers. In addition to the one-time funding, replacement equipment funding totaling \$0.6 million from FCPS' Technology Plan was used to lease purchase approximately 5,800 devices. Additionally, Funding of \$0.7 million has been allocated from Project Management to provide professional learning for teachers.

How and why was the Chantilly Pyramid chosen to go first?

After a competitive application process, the Chantilly High School pyramid was selected to begin Phase One of this work during the 2016-2017 school year. The Chantilly pyramid was selected because of a strong vision for teaching and learning, an ever increasing usage of digital tools, and a high level of commitment on the part of teachers.

Instruction and Learning

How long will my child sit in front of a computer screen?

Your child will have a variety of learning experiences, many of which will not involve sitting in front of a screen. When teachers plan, they consider which tools will best support student learning. Sometimes computers will be the best option. At other times traditional tools will work best, such as paper, pencils, and Post-It notes. In working to develop the skills outlined in Portrait of a Graduate, teachers will also consider whether students should work collaboratively or independently, or whether they should be given the option based on their preference. The outcome is to support students in becoming Communicators, Collaborators, Ethical and Global Citizens, Creative and Critical Thinkers, and Goal-Directed and Resilient Individuals. Assigning students work that requires them to sit in front of a computer screen for several hours a day does not align with those outcomes.

The expectation is not that laptops will be used all day, in all classes, for entire class periods or even for the entire lesson. Technology is only one of the tools teachers use to provide meaningful learning experiences to all students. Like students, teachers are at different places with their knowledge of technology, their skill sets and their comfort levels with technology. Each teacher will determine how they will utilize technology if and when they deem it appropriate.

Will my child still be taught using any traditional teaching methods?

Technology has always been used for instructional purposes by teachers. Instructional goals will continue to be assessed as they have always been assessed. Preparing students for the 21st century will include the use of technology as it provides students authentic learning opportunities they would not have otherwise and prepares them for the world they will enter upon graduation. However, technology does not replace the use of traditional teaching practices that have proven successful in supporting Portrait of a Graduate outcomes.

How will teachers be able to monitor students on devices in the classroom?

The laptops will have the same filters and security settings installed as other FCPS computers. There is no question that some students engage in distracting and inappropriate behavior with or without a device (calculators, personal cell phone, computers). Schools use a Positive Behavior Approach to proactively plan for addressing behavior issues. Information will be communicated to parents about expectations and consequences.

Will my child be able to bring home their device?

Schools have determined what grade levels will be able to take devices home. Teachers will be working with students at the beginning of the school year to demonstrate how to care for their device, store it, and use it responsibly. Please check with your school on the plan for what grades will be allowed to bring home their device.

What if my child has an IEP?

All students, including students with an IEP, will receive a school issued FCPS computer. If a student receives Assistive Technology Services (ATS), the school team should work with the assistive technology resource teacher assigned to the school in order to determine what additional assistive technology might be required to meet the needs of the student.

What sort of expectations are in place for students and teachers? Are assignments going in one place?

Will there be common classroom expectations?

FCPS is entering a multi-year transformation to align our classroom instruction with our goal for all students – the FCPS Portrait of a Graduate. During the first year of this effort, the focus will be on building teacher and student capacity for learning in this type of environment. Because each school staff is at a different place in adopting these types of instructional practices, schools will be determining the best pace at which they move forward. Related to this, as part of FCPSOn, the division is working to build out its digital ecosystem which will help teachers and students use all of the different tools that we have available seamlessly.

Where can I find additional information and resources about digital learning?

FCPS will continue to update the FCPS website with information and resources for parents by searching FCPSOn. Common Sense Media (www.common Sense Media.org) is a reputable resource for parents.

The Virginia Department of Education has developed Guidelines and Resources for Internet Safety. Visit www.vdoe.gov and search Internet Safety.

Are we going to continue using Google Classroom and Blackboard?

Yes. FCPS 24-7 (Blackboard) and FCPS Google Apps for Education are two core instructional tools in the FCPSOn digital ecosystem that coexist and interact to impact how students learn, where students learn, and when students learn.

Research shows there are opposing viewpoints about whether technology has a positive impact on student learning. What is FCPS's view?

Technology itself does not result in academic gains. It is how a teacher uses technology as an instructional tool that can increase engagement, motivation, test scores, etc. Teachers who have integrated technology within project and inquiry-based learning have demonstrated improved academic performance by students. Teachers and staff have been engaged in professional learning and will be provided additional professional development throughout the year to increase their knowledge and skills to create active, engaged and inspiring learning environments for students.

Digital Citizenship and Privacy

Will students be taught how to use the device responsibly and safely?

FCPS is committed to providing access to digital resources in a manner that respects and protects student privacy while maximizing learning opportunities for students. All FCPS teachers are expected to incorporate digital citizenship instruction through the curriculum as students are researching, communicating, and creating products using technology.

Is there any way that you can block social media on those laptops when the student is not in school? Also, does the student need to use the laptop with Wi-Fi when not on school property?

Content filtering at home is similar to, but not the same as, the content filtering at school. The FCPSOn at-home filtering solution only has the ability to allow or block categories FCPS-wide, and as such, categories are permitted and blocked using the same settings used at the elementary school level. This means that social media and social networking categories are blocked on all FCPSOn computers when those computers are used off the FCPS network.

There will be some assignments that students are able to do without Wi-Fi when students are not on school property. If a student does not have access to Wi-Fi outside of school and it is needed to complete an

assignment, they should work with their teacher to determine the best approach. Additional information about internet access can be found on the FCPS website by searching Access for All.

Where can I find information on setting up parental controls on a device?

FCPS has compiled a list of resources to help parents, including information on how to set up parental controls or privacy settings for various devices and apps. A list to parental controls and recommendations for the most frequently used apps such as Kik, YikYak, Instagram and more is also provided. These apps are not used by FCPS, but are commonly loaded on student phones and personally owned devices. In addition, many tips sheets, advice videos and more are available. Links to reputable outside sources are supplied for both students and parents to use.

What safeguards have been implemented to ensure the devices are protected from malicious use by hackers and/or potentially abusive FCPS employees/contractors?

Student privacy and security is something we take very seriously. Every application and tool that is used has gone through a thorough safety and security review.

FCPS staff members, contractors, parents and students are all required, yearly, to sign the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that sets the rules for using the FCPS network. The AUP states that all users are prohibited from using computers or the FCPS network to commit, facilitate, encourage, or promote illegal acts.

FCPS installs and manages an enterprise version of McAfee Antivirus on computers to protect against malware and malicious activity. Internet filtering is also applied, that blocks malicious websites, including websites used by hackers, which helps to protect students from this type of activity both on and off campus.

Teachers and librarians have access to rich digital citizenship lessons and resources to support them in creating a safe, responsible, and ethical online learning environment. Students also have access to a variety of resources to assist them in learning how to navigate the online world.

Device Help

What do I do if my child's device is not working?

If a device is damaged, students should report this to their Tech Staff/Student Help Desk and follow designated procedures in place within the school. Students will be provided a working device until the device issued to them is repaired or replaced.

Can students use their iPad or Mac as a personal device?

Students have the option of bringing their own device and registering it on our network. In this case, it must meet the basic standards on the FCPS On Device agreement/permission form, specifically items number 12-15.

What if I do not want to sign the device responsibility authorization form?

It is your choice whether or not you sign the agreement. ***Normal wear and tear (and accidents) will be covered by FCPS, unless there is evidence of unusual or regular abuse of the device.*** If parents choose to opt-out, students will need to check out a laptop from the library on any and all days they don't have a device. On a day-to-day basis, we can't predict which teachers will be using the devices. However, students may not opt-out of instruction. Students still have the option of bringing their own device and registering it on our network. In this case, it must meet the basic standards on the FCPS On Device agreement/permission form.

If my child uses his/her own device in lieu of being issued one by the school, how will I know what software will be used or if there is some special, proprietary software that cannot be installed on his tablet? How often would that software be used?

Students attending elementary school will have a core group of applications to use throughout the day, many of which are accessed through the web and will run on devices at home or school. Some examples are FCPS 24-7/Blackboard (although some tools within Blackboard will not run on certain tablets, including iPads), MyON Books, Google Apps for Education, online textbooks, and Wixie.

Some specialized courses at the high school level require the use of specific applications to fulfill course requirements. However, there are a few digital resources at the elementary level, including eMap Shop and Inspiration, that students will not be able to access on their personal devices. These are programs that are very specific to a curriculum area, and are not used on a consistent or regular basis.

How are we preparing for wireless bandwidth increases?

IT continually evaluates current wireless requirements and performance to ensure optimal performance. In addition, IT has constructed the infrastructure to allow for future growth of additional devices and capacity. FCPS does not expect major building modifications to be required to support new devices.

What happened to the equipment that was in the school before FCPSOn?

The Pre-K-2nd grade classes are receiving some reallocated laptops and iPads from Chantilly HS, Franklin MS, and Rocky Run MS. The elementary schools also used some of their existing inventory to accommodate the students in these classes. The remaining existing equipment, in the Chantilly Pyramid, will continue to be used by students.

What is the warranty/repair process?

Students are required to report a lost or stolen device immediately to their Tech Staff/Student Help Desk. Parents should call the Fairfax County Police non-emergency number, 703-691-2131, to file a police report if the device is stolen while away from school.

If a device is damaged, students should report this to their Tech Staff/Student Help Desk and follow designated procedures in place within the school. Students will be provided a working device until the device issued to them is repaired or replaced.

The cost of device maintenance is covered by FCPS's contract with technology vendors. Tech support is provided at school for the device and teachers can explain to your student what to do should their device need repair. Do not take a school issued device to a retail store for repair or support. Tech Staff will coordinate repair of the device.

What if another child messes up my child's BYOD device? School issued device?

While it is not anticipated that this would happen, this would be covered by under the Student's Rights and Responsibilities. Wording from page 13 of the 2016-2017 Students Rights and Responsibilities Handbook says: "A student who damages, destroys, or steals another's property, including property owned by FCPS, is responsible for compensating the owner for the loss by restoring the property to its original condition or paying for it to be repaired or replaced."

Personally owned devices are the responsibility of the student and FCPS is not responsible for loss or damage of students' devices.

Please contact your child's administrator in the event that a device is damaged or stolen by another student.