



Agenda
Osseo Area Schools
School Board

Regular Business Meeting
Educational Service Center - Forum Room
11200 93rd Ave N
Maple Grove, MN 55369
Tuesday, May 5, 2026
6:00 PM

Our mission is to inspire and prepare each and every scholar with the confidence, courage and competence to achieve their dreams; contribute to community; and engage in a lifetime of learning.

This regular meeting of the School Board of Osseo Area Schools is being conducted in the Board Room of the Educational Service Center, and is open to the public. The meeting can be monitored electronically by streaming online at district279.org/about-us/school-board (Watch Livestream). An archived recording will also be available on the district website.

Agenda Items

1. 6:00 p.m. Welcome and purpose
Thomas Brooks, Board Vice Chair
2. 6:05 p.m. Check in
Dr. Kim Hiel, Superintendent
3. 6:05-6:40 p.m. Equity Policies Review 3
Amy Moore, General Counsel; Amy Tollefson, District Level Principal; Student School Board Representatives
4. 6:40-7:15 p.m. American Indian Education 34
Ethan Neerdaels, Coordinator of Indian Education; Katy King, AIPAC Co-Chair; Nicole Parry, AIPAC Co-Chair; student representatives
5. 7:15-8:00 p.m. Technology Use 48
Anthony Padrnos, Exec. Dir. of Technology; Ryan Cox, Dir. of Technology; Andi Bodeau, Digital Learning/Instr. Media Coord.; Johannah Arndt, Technology Coord.; Becky Fritz, Teacher, Technology Integration; Tanya Wacholz, EL Teacher, PCSH
6. 8:00-8:30 p.m. Language Access 155
Dr. Bryan Bass, Assistant Superintendent; Kay Vilella, Executive Director of Community Relations; Kiersten Nicholson, EL Coordinator; Vanessa Gill, Family and Community Engagement Coordinator
7. 8:30 p.m. Adjournment
Thomas Brooks, Board Vice Chair

To accommodate individuals with disabilities, this material will be made available in alternative formats upon request. Individuals with disabilities are invited to request reasonable accommodations to participate in or attend a district activity, call your local school or the school district at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance (two-week notice preferred). Members of the public can view and

download School Board meeting notices and regular meeting agendas and materials from the district website www.district279.org, under "About Us > School Board."



**Osseo Area
Schools**

Student School Board Representatives: Policy Review

May 5th, 2026

**Amy Tollefson, Amy Moore, Naomi Cooper-Grear, Aliya Jiwa, Cristian
Vargas, Hikma Adam**



Policy Review

April 2026

Policy and Procedure Review

- 101 Racial Equity
- 102 Harassment/Discrimination
- 508 Gender Inclusion

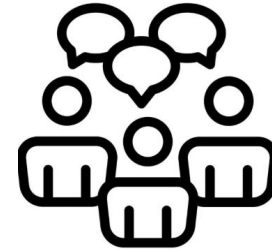
Policy 101 - Racial Equity in Achievement



Culturally responsive training for students



Growth in staff of color and students feel supported (ex. Osseo Senior High)



Consistent communication in multiple languages (ex. Park Center Senior High)



Policy 102 - Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Violence

- Improved clarity on how to report an incident
- More engaging student handbook review each trimester
 - Consistent messaging with a video



Policy 102: Reporting Considerations

- Offer multiple reporting options
 - including a trusted adult
- Ensure students feel safe and supported reporting
- Provide clear, student-friendly explanation of the process

Policy 102: Reporting Considerations



- Communicate transparency and follow-up on outcomes
- Clarify how to report repeat incidents and address false reporting concerns



Policy 508 - Gender Inclusion

- Consideration to include rights of 18 year olds
- Importance of identifying a safe staff for each student
 - How can schools emphasize with staff?



Pause & Process (Discussion)

- Questions and conversation about the feedback from the Student School Board Representatives

Thank You

POLICY 101 RACIAL EQUITY IN EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that educational excellence and educational equity are provided for each learner. Each of the school district's students deserves respectful learning environments in which the student's racial and ethnic identity is valued and contributes to successful academic outcomes for all students. Through educational excellence and equity, each student in the school district will be empowered and equipped as a lifelong learner with the necessary tools to achieve dreams and contribute to community. The school district will establish and maintain a commitment to educational excellence and equity in its systemic practices, which will support its contribution toward a community free from racially predictable disparities.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The school district is committed to raising the achievement levels for each student by creating transformational system change to ensure equitable student achievement.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. School district administration will develop, support, model, and sustain equity-focused and culturally responsive training for staff and students.
- B. School district administration will develop practices that create multiple pathways to success in order to meet the needs of our diverse students, and will actively encourage, support and expect high academic achievement for each student.
- C. School district administration will monitor policies, programs and practices to assess educational equity and work to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in all district and school-level programs.
 1. Students at the Center
The school district will provide each student with high quality culturally responsive pedagogy.
 2. Equity Leadership Development
The school district will recruit, employ, support and retain a workforce that reflects the diversity, including racial diversity, of enrolled students, as well as culturally competent administrative, instructional and support personnel.
 3. Culturally Responsive Leading, Learning, and Teaching Practices
Consistent with state regulations and school district policy, the school district will provide materials and assessments that reflect the diversity of students and staff, and are geared towards the understanding and appreciation of race, culture, economic status, language, ethnicity, ability and other differences that contribute to the uniqueness of each student and staff member.
 4. Family and Community Engagement and Empowerment
Each school and program will seek community input and create a welcoming culture and inclusive environment that reflects and supports the racial and cultural diversity of the school's student populations, their families, and communities.

Policy 101 Adopted: 11/22/16

School Board
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 279
Maple Grove, Minnesota

Cross Reference:

Policy 104 – School District Mission Statement

PROCEDURE 101 RACIAL EQUITY IN EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

I. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms have the meaning given to them in this section;

- A. Culturally competent means skilled in ways to teach and serve a racially and ethnically diverse student population and serve racially and ethnically diverse families and communities.
- B. Culturally relevant means programs and materials that use a student's cultural references in order to empower the student intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically.
- C. Culturally responsive means learning from and relating respectfully with people from one's own and other cultures.
- D. Educational Equity or equity is the removal of barriers that can disproportionately affect a student because of the student's characteristics such as race, culture, class, language, ethnicity, ability or other difference so that each student can benefit equally.
- E. Equity-focused training is professional development to enable staff members to develop personal, professional and organizational skills and knowledge to address inequities leading to racially predictable disparities.
- F. Racially predictable disparities are those differences in measurable student outcomes such as test scores, graduation rates, identification for special education, and discipline between groups of students that are predictable based on the students' race, culture, class, language, ethnicity, or ability.

II. SCHOOL BOARD ACTION

- A. The school board will examine and assess policies to ensure that the policies are consistent with equitable student achievement.
- B. The school board will provide and allocate resources for educational equity.

III. SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITY

- A. School district leaders will make recommendations for allocation of resources and priority results consistent with educational equity.
- B. School district hiring managers will hire the best employees of all racial and ethnic backgrounds who will bring their unique talents and skills into the school system. Hiring managers will provide opportunities for employee training and professional development.
- C. Each school district employee will be provided with the opportunity to improve his or her culturally responsive practices.
- D. School district employees will be provided with training and support to engage students in positive ways that demonstrate understanding and appreciation of each student's race, culture, class, language, ethnicity, ability and other differences. School district employees will make use of positive behavior intervention strategies, restorative justice practices and other culturally responsive methods.

IV. STUDENT MATERIALS, ASSESSMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

- A. Instructional staff and leaders will examine student materials and assessments to identify and eliminate practices that result in predictably low academic performance for any student group.
- B. Instructional staff and leaders will identify and adopt student materials, instructional practices and assessments that are designed to eliminate racially predictable disparities.
- C. Instructional staff and leaders will evaluate student programs and services using culturally relevant practices and tools, and employ assessments designed to eliminate racially predictable and disproportionate identification of students as eligible for special education programs.

Procedure 101 Adopted: 11/22/16

School Board
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 279
Maple Grove, Minnesota

Cross Reference:

Policy 104 – School District Mission Statement

POLICY 102 – EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND PROHIBITION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish and maintain a learning and working environment that affords for equal educational and employment opportunities and that is free from harassment, violence or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, family care leave status or veteran status.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Equal Opportunity: The policy of the school district is to provide equal educational opportunity for all students seeking to enroll or enrolled in the school district programs/schools and to provide equal employment opportunity for all applicants and employees. The school district does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of a person's protected status which includes the following: race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, age, family care leave status, or veteran status. The school district also makes reasonable accommodations for disabled persons.
- B. Prohibition Against Discrimination or Harassment: It will be a violation of this policy for any student or school district employee to engage in any of the following conduct:
1. Harass another student or school district employee on the basis of a person's actual or perceived protected legal status;
 2. Inflict, threaten to inflict or attempt to inflict violence against another student or school district employee on the basis of a person's protected legal status;
 3. Discriminate against a student or school district employee based on that student's or employee's actual or perceived protected class status.
- C. It will be a violation of this policy for any student, district employee or independent contractor to engage in malicious and sadistic conduct involving race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, religion, sexual harassment, and sexual orientation and gender identity as defined in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 363A against any student, district employee or independent contractor.
1. "Malicious and sadistic conduct" means creating a hostile learning environment by acting with the intent to cause harm by intentionally injuring another without just cause or reason or engaging in extreme or excessive cruelty or delighting in cruelty.
- D. This policy applies to all of the academic and nonacademic (e.g. athletic, extracurricular, community education) programs of the school district and will be enforced before, during, or after school hours on all school district property, including the school bus, school functions, or events held at other locations. To the extent consistent with state and federal law, this policy also applies to any off-campus conduct that causes or threatens to cause a substantial and material disruption at school, or interferes with the rights of students or employees to be free from a hostile school environment taking into consideration the totality of the circumstances on and off campus.
- E. The school district will investigate all complaints of harassment, violence or discrimination whether formal or informal, verbal or written based on a student's or district employee's actual or perceived protected class status.
- F. The school district's investigation procedures will incorporate appropriate due process standards and include, at a minimum, the following:
1. notice to students, employees, and others of the process for filing a complaint under this policy, including who to contact (title and method of communication) and how to initiate a complaint;
 2. a requirement that all complaints will be promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigated and decided within reasonable, designated time frames at each stage of the complaint process;

3. to the extent consistent with state and federal laws, provisions for maintaining the confidentiality of the person who files a complaint;
 4. written notice to the complainant of the disposition of the complaint at each stage of the process;
 5. a fair and equitable appeal process;
 6. a notice that retaliation against a person who files a complaint of discrimination, harassment or violence under this policy, or people who participate in related proceedings, is prohibited;
 7. an assurance that if discrimination, harassment or violence has occurred in violation of this policy, appropriate corrective and remedial actions will be taken; and
 8. a provision that notifies individuals that they may file complaints with other appropriate state and federal agencies.
- G. This policy and applicable procedures only apply to allegations of discrimination, harassment and violence based upon a person's protected legal status which include actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age, family care leave status or veteran status.

III. VIOLATION OF POLICY

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student or school district employee who is found to have violated this policy. Appropriate administrative and staff follow-up will be provided for targets and offenders of harassment, violence and discrimination.

IV. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The school district will implement discrimination/harassment/violence prevention and character development education programs to prevent and reduce policy violations.

This policy must be conspicuously posted throughout each school building, distributed to each employee and independent contractor at the time of hiring or contracting, and a process for communicating this policy with students, employees and independent contractors.

Revised: 11/21/2023

Revised: 11/16/2021

Revised: 4/17/2018

Revised: 1/24/12

Revised: 10/16/01

Policy 413 Adopted: 2/2/99 (formerly Policy 4153 & 4253)

Revised: 2/1/94

Revised: 4/3/90

Adopted: 8/20/85

Cross Reference:

Policy 414 – Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse

Policy 506 – Student Discipline

Legal Reference:

M.S. 121A.0312

M.S. 121A.03, subd. 2

M.S. 363A

M.S. 609.341-609.345

M.S. 609.321-609.324

M.S. 617.246

M.S. 626.556

PROCEDURE 102A - PROHIBITION AGAINST PROTECTED STATUS DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

I. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This procedure addresses all forms of discrimination, harassment and violence based upon a person's protected status except for reports of sexual harassment and violence. Claims of sexual harassment and violence will be processed, investigated, and addressed in compliance with Title IX of Education Amendments Act of 1972 and Procedure 413 B – Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment and Violence under Title IX of Education Amendments Act of 1972.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. **District employee:** For purposes of the policy/procedures, district employee includes school board members, school district employees, agents, volunteers, contractors/vendors, or persons subject to the supervision and control of the district.
- B. **Discriminate:** The term "discriminate" means to treat a person in a disparate manner because of that person's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, age, marital status, familial status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation (including gender identity or expression), age, family care leave status or veteran/military status.
- C. **Harassment:** Harassment is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, age, marital status, familial status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation (including gender identity or expression), age, family care leave status or veteran/military status. A single incident of harassment may implicate more than one protected class. For example, a student may be targeted because of his race and sexual orientation.
 - 1. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including but not limited to verbal acts and name-calling, as well as nonverbal behavior that is physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Harassment includes the use of derogatory language, intimidation, and threats; unwanted physical contact or physical violence; and the use of derogatory language and images in graffiti, pictures or drawings, notes, e-mails, electronic postings and/or phone or text messages related to a person's membership in a protected class. Harassment includes behavior that may not be directed at a particular person, but may instead consist of harassing conduct (e.g. physical, verbal, graphic, or written) that creates a hostile environment for students or employees.
 - 2. Conduct is unwelcome if the student or employee did not request or invite it and considered the conduct to be undesirable or offensive. Submission or failure to complain does not mean that the conduct was welcome; the circumstances must be examined.
 - 3. With respect to students, respect to students, a "hostile environment" exists when harassment is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to interfere with or limit one or more students' abilities to participate in or benefit from the education program.
 - 4. With respect to district employees, a "hostile environment" exists when harassment is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to alter the conditions of the target's employment and create an abusive working environment.
 - 5. "Gender-based harassment" means non-sexual harassment of a person because of the person's sex, including harassment based on gender identity and expression. Gender-based harassment includes, but is not limited to, harassment based on the person's nonconformity with gender stereotypes, regardless of the actual or perceived sex, gender identity or sexual orientation of the harasser or target of the harassment.
 - 6. "Gender stereotypes" refers to stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity.
- D. **Sexual Orientation-based Harassment:**
 - 1. "Sexual orientation-based harassment" means non-sexual harassment of a person because of the person's actual or perceived sexual orientation or association with or advocacy for a person or group (e.g., family members or friends) who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender ("LGBT").
 - 2. "Sexual orientation" means having or being perceived as having an emotional, physical, or sexual attachment to another person without regard to the sex of that

person or having or being perceived as having an orientation for such attachment, or having or being perceived as having a self-image or identity not traditionally associated with one's biological maleness or femaleness.

- E. Racial, Color, Creed or National Origin Harassment:
 - 1. Racial, color, creed or national origin harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct based on an individual's perceived or actual race, color, creed or national origin.
 - 2. "National origin" means the place of birth of an individual or of any of the individual's lineal ancestors.
- F. Religious Harassment: Religious harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct based on an individual's perceived or actual religious beliefs.
- G. Disability Harassment:
 - 1. Disability harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct based on an individual's perceived or actual disability.
 - 2. A person with a disability is any person who:
 - a. has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities;
 - b. has a record of such an impairment; oris regarded as having such impairment. This includes students who are protected by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
 - 3. Disability harassment also may deny a student with a disability a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Harassment of a student based on disability may decrease the student's ability to benefit from his or her education and amount to a denial of FAPE.
- H. Other Protected Class Harassment: Harassment of other protected classes (under state or federal law) of physical or verbal conduct based on an individual's perceived or actual protected class status.
- I. Racial, Color, Creed or National Origin Violence: Racial violence is a physical act of aggression or force, an assault, or the threat thereof, that is directed toward a student or employee based on their perceived or actual race, color, creed, or national origin.
- J. Religious Violence: Religious violence is a physical act of aggression or force, an assault, or the threat thereof, that is directed toward a student or employee based on their perceived or actual religion.
- K. Disability Violence: Disability violence is a physical act of aggression or force, an assault, or the threat thereof, that is directed toward a student or employee based on a perceived or actual disability.
- L. Other Protected Class Violence: Other Protected Class violence is a physical act of aggression or assault on another based on their actual or perceived protected class status.
- M. Malicious and sadistic conduct is conduct that creates a hostile learning environment by acting with intent to cause harm by intentionally injuring another without just cause or reason or engaging in extreme or excessive cruelty or delighting in cruelty.
- N. Assault is:
 - 1. an act done with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death;
 - 2. the intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm on another; or
 - 3. the threat to do bodily harm to another with present ability to carry out the threat.

III. NOTICE AND PUBLICATION OF REPORTING PROCEDURES

The school district will post complaint procedures regarding protected status discrimination, harassment and violence reports in its buildings, on its website and in employee and student handbooks. It will be distributed to each employee and independent contractor at the time of hiring or contracting, and a process for communicating this policy with students, employees and independent contractors.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR INCIDENTS OF HARASSMENT, VIOLENCE AND/OR DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

A. Reporting Complaints

- 1. Any school district employee who believes he or she has experienced harassment, violence or discrimination on the basis of his or her actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, marital status, familial status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age, family care leave

status or veteran status, or any person with knowledge of or belief of conduct which may constitute harassment, violence, or discrimination, should report this information immediately, or as soon as possible, to an appropriate district official designated by these procedures.

2. Although the school district encourages the alleged target or other reporting party to use a district formal reporting form, use of the formal reporting form is not required. Oral reports shall be considered complaints as well. The form will be available from the principal of each building, the district office, and on the district's website. Upon request for qualified persons with a disability, alternative means of filing a complaint, such as through a personal interview or by tape recording, will be made available.
3. The district designates the Executive Director of Human Resources as the school district human rights officer to receive employee reports or complaints of harassment, violence and discrimination at:

Mailing address:
11200 93rd Avenue North
Maple Grove, MN 55369

If the complaint involves the Human Rights Officer, the complaint shall be filed directly with the Superintendent at:

Mailing address:
11200 93rd Avenue North
Maple Grove, MN 55369

If the complaint involves the Superintendent, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board:

Mailing address:
11200 93rd Avenue North
Maple Grove, MN 55369

If the complaint involves a School Board Member, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board Chair:

Mailing address:
11200 93rd Avenue North
Maple Grove, MN 55369

If the complaint involves the School Board Chair, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board Vice Chair:

Mailing address:
11200 93rd Avenue North
Maple Grove, MN 55369

4. In each school building the school principal is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of alleged harassment, violence or discrimination at the school level. Supervisors of itinerant staff or other employees not supervised by a building principal will also be responsible for receiving oral or written reports of alleged harassment, violence or discrimination. Any school district employee who receives a report shall inform their supervisor or their building principal immediately. If the supervisor or principal is not available on the date of the report, then the employee must forward the oral or written report/complaint directly to the human rights officer. If the complaint involves the supervisor or principal, the employee will provide his or her report directly to the school district human rights officer. Upon receipt of a report, the supervisor or principal must notify the school district human rights officer immediately, without screening or investigating the credibility of the report. The supervisor or principal may request, but

may not insist on, a formal written complaint. If the report is verbal, the supervisor or principal shall prepare and provide to the human rights officer a written statement of the facts alleged within 24 hours of receiving the report. Failure to forward a complaint under these procedures may result in disciplinary action against the responsible party.

5. Nothing in these procedures shall prevent a school district employee from reporting alleged harassment, violence, or discrimination directly to the school district human rights officer or to the superintendent.
 6. The complaint (verbal or written) should be reported immediately, or as soon after the incident as possible; delays between the date of the alleged incident and the reporting date may make investigations more difficult.
 7. The willful filing of a false report will be considered to be a violation of school district policy and may result in disciplinary action.
 8. Although confidentiality cannot be assured, the school district will respect the privacy of the alleged target, the reporter (if someone other than the alleged target), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations.
- B. Investigation – District Employees
1. The human rights officer, upon receipt of a report or complaint, will promptly undertake or authorize an investigation. The investigation may be conducted by school district officials or by a neutral third party designated by the school district.
 2. The investigation will be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of the complaint, unless impracticable.
 3. The investigation may, as appropriate, consist of personal interviews with the alleged target, the reporter (if someone other than the alleged target), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods (e.g. review of documents and electronic media) deemed pertinent by the investigator.
 4. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of the policy/procedures the school district will consider the facts and surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of the policy/procedures requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.
 5. The school district, at its discretion, may take immediate steps, based on the severity of the allegations, to protect the parties involved in the complaint process pending completion of an investigation.
- C. School District Action – District Employees
1. Upon completion of the investigation, the school district or neutral third party designated investigator will make a written report to the human rights officer. If the complaint involves the human rights officer, the report must be filed directly with the superintendent. If the complaint involves the superintendent, the report must be filed directly with the school board. The report will include the facts, a determination of whether the allegations have been substantiated/not substantiated or are inconclusive and whether a violation of the policy/procedure has occurred.
 2. Upon completion of the investigation, the human rights officer will inform the alleged target of his or her right to review the written report at the school building where the target is employed or enrolled, in accordance with state and federal law regarding data or records privacy.
 3. In the event a complaint is substantiated, the school district will take appropriate and effective action depending on the circumstances. Such action may include, but is not limited to, training, counseling, warning, suspension, transfer, remediation, or termination. School district action taken for violation of these procedures and related policy will be consistent with requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Minnesota and federal law, and school district policies.

V. REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR INCIDENTS OF HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE AGAINST STUDENTS.

A. Reporting a Complaint

1. Any student who believes she/he has experienced harassment, violence or discrimination on the basis of his or her actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, marital status, familial status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age, family care leave status or veteran status should report the alleged acts immediately, or as soon as possible to their building principal or a staff member in their school.
2. Any District employee who observes an act or receives a report of alleged harassment, violence or discrimination toward a student shall intervene to attempt to stop the act and shall report it to the building principal or principal's designee in their school immediately, or as soon as possible.
3. The complaint (verbal or written) should be reported immediately, or as soon after the incident as possible; delays between the date of the alleged incident and the reporting date may make investigations more difficult.
4. The district designates the building principal or their designee to monitor and receive student reports or complaints of alleged harassment, violence and discrimination against students.
5. If the complaint involves a principal, the complaint should be filed directly with the Assistant Superintendent that supervises the Principal. If a complaint involves the Assistant Superintendent, the complaint shall be filed directly with the Superintendent. If the complaint involves the Superintendent, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board.
6. If the complaint involves a School Board member, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board Chair. If the complaint involves the school board chair, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board Vice Chair.
7. Although the school district encourages the reporting student to use the report form set forth in this, use of formal reporting forms is not required. Oral reports shall be considered complaints as well. The form will available in the counseling and administrative office of each school, the district office, and on the district's website.
8. Alternative, accessible means of filing a complaint, such as through a personal interview or by tape recording, will be made available for individuals with disabilities.

B. Investigation – Students

1. Upon receipt of a report or complaint, the district shall promptly undertake or authorize an investigation. The investigation will be completed within thirty (30) days from receipt of the complaint, unless impracticable.
2. The investigation may, as appropriate, consist of personal interviews with the alleged target, the reporter (if someone other than the alleged target), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.
3. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of the policy/procedures, the school district will consider the age and level of understanding of the student(s) involved, the facts and surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of these procedures and the Policy 413 requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.
4. The school district and building administration may, at its discretion, take immediate steps, based on the severity of the allegations, to protect the parties involved in the complaint process pending completion of an investigation.
5. The intentional filing of a false report will be considered to be a violation of the student discipline policy and may result in disciplinary action.

C. School District Action – Students

1. The investigator shall document his or her findings within five school days of concluding the investigation.
2. Upon conclusion of the investigation and receipt of the findings, and if harassment is found to have occurred, the school district will take appropriate and effective action with respect

to the target and the offender, and document the action taken. If the investigator determined that a violation of the policy/procedures has occurred, such appropriate action may include, but is not limited to, an education component, alternative dispute resolution, training, counseling, warning, class transfer, suspension, expulsion, or transfer. If both the target and the alleged offender agree to attempt to mediate the complaint using the school's formal mediation process, this will be encouraged.

D. Timelines and Notification to Parents / Guardians

1. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the target and the alleged offenders of harassment, violence or discrimination should be notified of the report before the close of the current school day, but not later than two school days of the report being filed, unless otherwise directed by law enforcement or required by law, or if in the professional judgment of the District notification is not warranted. The parents/guardians of both the target and the alleged offender(s) shall be notified if there is a physical assault, unless otherwise directed by law enforcement or required by law.
2. Following the investigation, the person handling the complaint or a representative of the District will communicate with the target regarding the outcome of the investigation.
 - a. This communication will include the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student at the parent's/guardian's request if the student is under age 18, or at the student's request if over 18.
 - b. If the investigation has not been completed within ten school days, a verbal summary of the progress of the investigation will be given to the target at that time.
 - c. The privacy and data privacy rights of all persons involved must be respected in accordance with current state and federal laws.

E. Persons Responsible for Investigation and Reporting Procedures

1. When a report is made or referred to the building principal, that person or their designee is responsible for carrying out and documenting this reporting procedure.
2. When a report is made or referred to the Assistant Superintendent, that person or their designee, is responsible for carrying out and documenting this reporting procedure.
3. When a report is made to the Superintendent, that person or their designee is responsible for carrying out and documenting this reporting procedure.
4. Incidents that include violence as defined in this procedure should also be referred to the police liaison officer serving the building for a possible separate criminal investigation.
5. When the report involves alleged harassment, violence or discrimination by a district employee or employee of an agency contracted by the District against a student, the investigation will be performed by the District Human Rights Officer.

F. Harassment or Violence Abuse

1. Under certain circumstances, alleged harassment or violence may also be possible abuse under Minnesota law. If so, the duties of mandatory reporting under Minnesota Statutes section 626.556 may be applicable.
2. Nothing in these procedures will prevent or prohibit the district from taking immediate action to protect victims of alleged harassment, violence or abuse.

VI. NO REPRISAL

There will be no retaliation against any target or reporter of the alleged harassment, violence or discrimination under the policy/procedures, nor against any person who participates in an investigation. The school district will take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other district employee who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report, who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, or who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to the report. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

VII. APPEAL

If the report or grievance has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the alleged target of harassment, violence or discrimination, they may appeal.

- A. Appeals of Alleged Prohibited Acts by Employee: If the alleged target of harassment, violence or discrimination believes that they are aggrieved by the actions taken by the school district in Section III.C. of these procedures, they may appeal to the district's general counsel.
- B. Appeals of Alleged Prohibited Acts by Student: If the alleged target of harassment, violence or discrimination believes that they are aggrieved by the actions by the school district in Section IV.C. of these procedures, they may appeal to the Assistant Superintendent that supervises their school, site or program.

Appeals must be made in writing within ten (10) business days of receipt of written findings under Sections III. C. or IV.C. The person designated to hear the appeal will conduct a review and issue a decision within ten (10) business days of receiving notice of the appeal. The decision issued under this section is final.

VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

If there is a conflict of interest with respect to any party affected by the policy, appropriate accommodations will be made, such as, but not limited to, appointing or contracting with a neutral third-party investigator to conduct the investigation, or recusing from the process the person for whom a conflict or potential conflict of interest exists.

VIII. RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse which may include filing charges with the agencies identified below, or initiating an action in state or federal court.

Minnesota Department of Human Rights
 Freeman Building
 625 Robert Street North
 St. Paul, MN 55155
 Toll free: 800.657.3704
 TTY: 651.296.1283
 Fax: 651.296.9042
 www.humanrights.state.mn.us

U.S. Department of Education Office for
 Civil Rights, Region V500
 W. Madison Street-Suite 1475
 Chicago, IL 60661
 Tel: 312.730.1560 TDD: 312.730.1609

IX. DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY

- A. Each school will ensure that the policy and procedures are discussed at the start of each school year with all staff and with each student in a manner appropriate to his/her age and level of understanding and the principal or a designee will document the date it was discussed in each classroom.
- B. These procedures, including possible consequences for a violation, will be in the employee handbook and student handbook of every school.

Revised: 11/21/23
 Revised: 11/16/21
 Revised: 4/17/18 (Procedures 413 & 548 combined)
 Revised: 9/27/16
 Revised: 9/10/13
 Revised: 1/25/12
 Revised: 5/17/10
 Revised: 10/16/01
 Revised: 2/2/99 (formerly Procedure 4153 & 4253)
 Revised: 2/1/94
 Revised: 4/3/90
 Adopted: 8/20/85

Cross References:

Policy 414 – Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse
 Policy 506 – Student Discipline
 Policy 548 – Harassment and Violence

Legal References:

M.S. 121A.0312

M.S. 121A.03, Subd. 2

M.S. 363A

M.S. 609.341-609.345

M.S. 609.321-609.324

M.S. 617.246

M.S. 626.556

PROCEDURE 102B– GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR SEXUAL HARASSMENT CLAIMS

I. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This procedure addresses sexual harassment that occurs within the school district’s education programs and activities and that involves alleged misconduct of a school district employee, student, or other school official or agent. This procedure does not apply to sexual harassment that occurs off-school grounds, in a private setting, and outside the scope of the school district’s education programs and activities. This procedure does not apply to sexual harassment that occurs outside the geographic boundaries of the United States, even if the sexual harassment occurs in the school district’s education programs or activities.

II. DESIGNATION OF TITLE IX COORDINATOR

The school district designates the Assistant Superintendent of Equity and Achievement as its Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator or their designee is responsible for acting as the primary contact for the parties involved in a complaint of sexual harassment. The Title IX Coordinator or their designee is also responsible for effective implementation of any supportive measures or remedies. The Title IX Coordinator and their designee must be free from conflicts of interest and bias when administering the grievance process. Any student, parent, guardian or employee having questions regarding the application of Title IX and its regulations and/or this policy and grievance process may discuss them with the Title IX Coordinator or their designee. The Title IX Coordinator’s contact information is as follows:

Assistant Superintendent of Equity and Achievement
11200 93rd Ave. N
Maple Grove, MN 55369
(763) 391-7000

III. DEFINITIONS

A. “Sexual harassment” means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A school employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of school on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school’s education program or activity; or
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, as those terms are defined herein.
 - a. “Sexual assault” means any sexual act directed against another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent.
 - b. “Dating Violence” means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. Whether such a relationship exists depends on the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
 - c. “Domestic Violence” means felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who

is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.

- d. "Stalking" means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others; or suffer substantial emotional distress.
- B. "Complainant" means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.
- C. "Respondent" means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.
- D. "Party" or "Parties" refers to both the complainant or respondent.
- E. "Education program or activity" includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the School District exercised substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs.
- F. "Investigator" means a person who investigates a formal complaint. The investigator of a formal complaint may not be the same person as the Decision-maker or the Appellate Decision-maker. The Investigator may be a school district employee, school district official, or a third party designated by the school district.
- G. "Decision-maker" means a person who makes a determination regarding responsibility after the investigation has concluded. The Decision-maker cannot be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator, the Investigator, or the Appellate Decision-maker. If the respondent is an employee of the school district the Director of Human Resources or their designee will serve as the decision maker. If the respondent is a student enrolled in a secondary school within the school district, the school district's Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Schools or their designee will serve as the decision maker. If the respondent is a student enrolled in an elementary school within the school district, the school district's Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Schools or their designee will serve as the decision maker.
- H. "Appellate Decision-maker" means a person who considers and decides appeals of determinations regarding responsibility and dismissals of formal complaints. The Appellate Decision-maker cannot be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, or Decision-maker. The Appellate Decision-maker is the school district's General Counsel or their designee.
- I. "Supportive measures" means individualized services provided to the complainant or respondent without fee or charge that are reasonably available, non-punitive, non-disciplinary, not unreasonably burdensome to the other party, and designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, and deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures may include counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, alternative educational services as defined under Minn. Stat. § 121A.41, as amended, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the school district buildings or property, and other similar measures.

IV. ASSURANCES OF NEUTRALITY AND ADEQUATE TRAINING

- A. A Respondent is presumed to not be responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility has been made.
- B. The Title IX Coordinator, Investigator(s), and Decision-Maker(s) will receive training regarding the definition of sexual harassment in this process, how to serve impartially, how to avoid prejudgment of the facts at issue, bias based on sex, bias in favor of complainants or respondents in general, and bias or conflicts of interest with respect to any particular student(s).
- C. The Title IX Coordinator shall receive training regarding the requirements of a formal complaint, the required contents of the notice of allegations, and the steps of the grievance process.
- D. The Investigator(s) and Decision-Maker(s) will be trained on what constitutes relevant evidence, for purposes of the investigation report and/or advisor questioning of the other party.

V. ADVISORS

Complainants and respondents are permitted to have an advisor of their choice present at all proceedings that require the complainant or respondent's attendance during the investigation. An advisor may be, but is not required to be, an attorney. Advisors will be required to agree to non-disclosure of information/data regarding the grievance process, to ensure the data privacy rights of the parties and any witnesses.

VI. INITIAL RESPONSE TO FORMAL COMPLAINTS

A. **Formal Complaint.** The term "formal complaint" means a document, either electronic or in hard copy, filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the School District investigate the allegation of sexual harassment. The complainant must be participating or attempting to participate in a School District education program or activity at the time the formal complaint is filed.

B. **Initial Contact with Complainant.** The Title IX Coordinator must promptly contact the complainant (i.e., the individual alleged to be the victim of sexual harassment, who may or may not be the person who reported the sexual harassment) to:

1. Discuss the availability of supportive measures;
2. Consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures;
3. Inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without filing a formal complaint;
4. If formal complaint has not been completed, explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint;
5. If appropriate, determine suitable supportive measures and coordinate with appropriate administrators to provide supportive measures to the complainant during the pendency of the investigation;
6. Document any supportive measures provided and maintain privacy of supportive measure as required by Title IX and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

C. **Dismissal of Complaint**

1. After receipt of formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will determine whether the formal complaint is not covered under Title IX and these procedures. A formal complaint must be immediately dismissed if:
 - a) The conduct alleged in the formal complaint, even if proven, does not meet the definition of sexual harassment set by these procedures;
 - b) The conduct alleged in the formal complaint did not occur in the School District's education program or activity; or
 - c) The conduct alleged did not occur against a person in the United States.
2. The formal complaint may also be dismissed if:
 - a) The complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator, in writing, that they would like to withdraw the complaint;
 - b) The respondent is no longer enrolled at or employed by the school; or
 - c) Specific circumstances prevent the School District from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the complaint.
3. If it is determined that the formal complaint will be dismissed under this paragraph, the parties shall be notified, in writing, of dismissal and the reason(s) for the dismissal. Dismissal of a formal complaint does not preclude the imposition of discipline arising out of the same conduct for any other violations of the student code or the School District's policies.

D. **Notice to the Parties.** If the complaint is not dismissed under Section C above, within 5 business days of receipt of the formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will provide both parties with a written notice informing the parties about who will investigate the formal

complaint and notice regarding the following information:

1. Notice of this grievance process, including any informal resolution process;
2. Notice of the allegations, including sufficient details to the extent they are known at the time. The phrase "sufficient details" includes, but is not limited to, the identities of the parties involved in the incident, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident. To the extent that any of these details are not known at the time the formal complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator must provide a supplemental notice when it learns of new or additional information;
3. A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible and that a determination regarding responsibility will be made at the conclusion of the grievance process;
4. Notice that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, subject to the requirements of Section IV of this Process; and
5. Notice informing the parties of any provision of the School District's code of conduct that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

VII. EMERGENCY REMOVALS AND INTERIM SUPPORTIVE MEASURES

- A. Generally, consistent with the School District's presumption of non-responsibility until the investigation has been completed and a determination of responsibility has been made, the School District will not suspend, expel or exclude a respondent while an investigation is pending under the grievance process.
- B. Notwithstanding Paragraph A of this Section, if, after undertaking an individualized safety and risk analysis, the School District determines that the respondent poses an immediate threat arising from the allegations of sexual harassment to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual, including the respondent themselves, the respondent may be removed from a school building on an emergency basis in a manner consistent with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act or applicable contract rights.
- C. A respondent who is removed on an emergency basis must be notified of the School District's decision and provided with an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following removal. The respondent shall bear the burden of proving that the removal decision was incorrect.
- D. Nothing in this Section shall be construed to prevent the School District from suspending, excluding, expelling, or otherwise removing a student from school for any reason other than a pending sexual harassment investigation.
- E. The School District may place a non-student employee who is accused of sexual harassment on administrative leave pending the completion of this grievance process.
- F. The School District should offer interim supportive measures on an equal basis to all parties. Any measure that is made available to one party shall not be denied to the other party. Any supportive measures provided to either party shall be maintained as confidential, to the extent that confidentiality will not impair the School District's ability to provide such measures.

VIII. CONDUCT OF INVESTIGATIONS

- A. **Presentation of Evidence and Identification of Witnesses.** Both parties shall have an equal opportunity to present evidence and to identify witnesses who they claim have potentially relevant evidence.
- B. **Interviews of Parties.** A party shall be notified in writing of any interview of that party with sufficient time to prepare. The written notification shall include the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of the interview. Neither a party nor that party's advisor shall be permitted to attend the interview of an adverse party.
- C. **Interviews of Witnesses.** Neither party nor their advisor shall have the right to receive advance notice of the interview of a third-party witness, nor shall any party or their

advisor be allowed to attend the interview of a third-party witness.

- D. **External Records.** A party's medical or psychological records may only be obtained, accessed, considered, disclosed, or otherwise used with the voluntary written consent of the eligible student or of a parent. Eligible students or parents should be advised that any medical or psychological records that are disclosed to the School District will be shared with the opposing party and the opposing party's advisor during the grievance process.
- E. **Review of Evidence.** Both parties shall be provided any evidence that is directly related to the allegations raised by a formal complaint, regardless of whether the School District intends to rely on said evidence in reaching a determination regarding responsibility, prior to completion of the investigative report. The parties, and their advisors, if any, will each have ten (10) calendar days to respond to the evidence in writing, and the investigator must consider any written submissions received within those ten days prior to completion of the investigative report.
- F. **Investigative Report.** The investigator will complete their investigation and prepare a written report within 30 calendar days of their appointment to investigate the formal complaint. The investigator can extend the deadline for completion of the investigation report for good cause and will timely notify the parties of the need for an extension. The investigative report must fairly, and neutrally, summarize the relevant evidence.

VIII. DETERMINATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

- A. **Responding to the Completed Investigation Report.** Upon completion of the investigation report, the investigator will provide a copy of their report to the decision-maker. After promptly reviewing the investigation report, the decision maker will provide a copy of the investigation report to the complainant and respondent simultaneously.
- B. **Response to Investigation and Written Questions.** After the investigation report has been provided to the parties, but before a decision is made regarding responsibility, the decision-maker shall provide each party the opportunity to provide a written response to the investigation report and to submit written, relevant questions that the party wants asked of any party or witness.
 - 1. Each party must provide their written response to the investigation report and their written questions to the decision-maker within 10 business days after the investigator sends the parties the written investigation report. A party who does not provide written questions by this deadline is deemed to have waived their opportunity to participate in this process.
 - 2. The decision-maker will screen the questions for relevance within 5 business days after receiving them. If the decision-maker determines that a question is irrelevant, the party proposing the question will receive a written explanation of why the question is not relevant and will not be asked. Questions and/or evidence relating to the complainant's sexual predisposition and prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless they are offered to prove consent or to prove that the act alleged was committed by someone other than the respondent.
 - 3. The party or witness to whom the written questions are proposed will have 10 business days to respond in writing. Written responses will be provided to the party proposing the questions, who will then have 3 business days to submit follow-up questions. Follow-up questions will also be screened for relevance and to determine whether the follow up questions are confined to the response(s) provided by the other party. Answers to relevant follow-up questions will be provided within 3 business days.
 - 4. The advisor of the party's choice may assist with the formulation of questions and of answers to questions.
- C. **Standard of Proof.** The School District retains, at all times, the burden of proof and the burden of gathering sufficient evidence to reach a determination regarding

responsibility. In reviewing the investigation report and determining whether the respondent is responsible for the conduct alleged, the School District's decision-maker(s) shall apply the preponderance of the evidence standard. "Preponderance of the evidence," as used in the procedure, means that the respondent will be found responsible only if it is more likely than not that they engaged in the conduct constituting sexual harassment, as defined by these procedures.

The same standard of proof shall apply regardless of whether the respondent is a student or a staff member.

- D. **Written Determination Regarding Responsibility.** The decision-maker(s) shall issue a written determination within 60 calendar days of receiving the investigation report. The written determination must be provided simultaneously to both parties and should contain the following:
1. Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
 2. A description of the procedural steps taken under this process, including any notifications, interviews, hearings, and other methods used to gather evidence, if applicable;
 3. Findings of fact supporting the determination;
 4. Conclusions regarding the School District's Policies and Procedures;
 5. A statement of the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, the rationale for the result, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and any remedies designed to restore or preserve the complainant's equal access to the School District's education program or activity; and
 6. The appeal procedure described in this procedure.

IX. SANCTIONS AND REMEDIES

If a respondent is determined to have engaged in conduct that meets the definition of sexual harassment, discipline shall be imposed in accordance with the School District's policies and procedures. The level of discipline imposed shall be determined based on the facts identified in the investigation report and relied upon by the decision-maker, the respondent's disciplinary history, the severity of the conduct, and other factors that the School District may deem relevant.

X. APPEALS

- A. Either party may appeal the decision-maker's determination, or the dismissal of a formal complaint, within 10 business days of the written determination or written notice of dismissal being issued. The appeal of the written determination must be in writing and must be
- B. An appeal may be made on any of the following bases:
1. A procedural irregularity affected the outcome of the matter;
 2. New evidence, that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, would affect the outcome of the matter; or
 3. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias against the complainant or respondent in this matter, or against complainants or respondents in general.
- C. Appeals shall be heard by a decision-maker who did not make the initial determination regarding responsibility and who is not the investigator in this matter or the Title IX Coordinator.
- D. The decision-maker reviewing the appeal shall notify both parties when either party has filed an appeal. Both parties will have 5 business days from when the decision-maker reviewing the appeal provides such notice to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the dismissal or the determination of responsibility.

E. The appeal decision-maker shall issue a written decision within 30 calendar days of a party's written appeal simultaneously to both parties that describes the result of the appeal and provides the rationale for said result.

XI. DISTRICT EXTENSION OF TIMELINES

Although the school district strives to adhere to the timelines described above, in each case, the school district may extend the time frames set forth in this procedure for good cause. Good cause may include, without limitation: an agreement of the parties to engage in information resolution; the complexity of the allegations; the severity and extent of the alleged misconduct; the number of parties, witnesses, and the types of other evidence (e.g., forensic evidence) involved; the availability of the parties, advisors, witnesses, and evidence (e.g., forensic evidence); concurrent law enforcement activity; intervening school district holidays, breaks, or other closures; the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities; and/or other unforeseen circumstances.

XII. RETALIATION

It is a violation of these procedures for any individual to intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual to interfere with their rights under this procedure, or because that individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in any process described in this process. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator.

Notwithstanding the above, it shall not be considered retaliation if the School District asserts a code of conduct violation against any individual who makes a materially false statement in bad faith. A determination regarding responsibility, standing alone, does not prove that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

XIII. INFORMAL RESOLUTION

At any time after a formal complaint has been filed, and before a determination regarding responsibility has been made, the School District may offer informal resolution. "Informal resolution" means options for resolving a formal complaint that do not involve a full investigation and adjudication. Informal resolution may encompass a broad range of conflict resolution strategies, including mediation or restorative justice.

Both parties must voluntarily consent in writing to participate in any informal resolution process(es). Either party retains the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process at any time before a resolution is reached and to resume the grievance process as laid out above. Once both parties have agreed to an informal resolution, however, neither party may resume the grievance process with respect to those allegations. Voluntary consent shall only be effective where the parties both receive a written notice detailing the allegations, the informal resolution process and its consequences, and the right to withdraw before a resolution is reached.

Informal resolution is not available where the complaint alleges that an employee has sexually harassed a student.

Procedure 102B Adopted 11/16/2021

Legal References:

20 U.S.C. §§ 1681-1688 (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972)
34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Implementing Regulations of Title IX)

POLICY 508 – GENDER INCLUSION

I. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This policy is intended to ensure student access to school district programming, activities and facilities for each student regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or gender non-conformity. All students of the school district, including transgender and gender diverse students, deserve respectful and inclusive learning environments that value students' gender identity and gender expression. The school district strives to provide programming and facilities where all students feel safe and supported.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Gender" refers to the socially constructed roles, activities, behaviors and attributes that a given society attaches to femininity or masculinity.
- B. "Gender Expression" means the manner in which persons represent or express gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, or mannerisms.
- C. "Gender Identity" means a person's deeply held sense or knowledge of one's own gender, regardless of the sex assigned at birth.
- D. "Gender Non-Binary" is an umbrella term for people who transcend commonly held concepts of gender through their own expressions and identities. Other terms for this include gender diverse, gender expansive, gender creative, gender nonconforming or genderqueer. Some non-binary people also identify as transgender.
- E. "Transgender" is an umbrella term describing persons whose gender identity or expression is different from that traditionally associated with the sex at birth.
- F. "Gender Non-Conforming" is a term for individuals who do not fit into traditional "male" and "female" gender categories.
- G. Sexual Orientation means having or being perceived as having an emotional, physical, or sexual attachment to another person without regard to the sex of that person or having or being perceived as having an orientation for such attachment, or having or being perceived as having a self-image or identity not traditionally associated with one's biological maleness or femaleness.

III. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The school district's staff and systems ensure inclusive access to programming and facilities. In accordance with this policy, and in consultation with students, parents, and/or guardians, the school district will:

- A. Respect all students' sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and gender non-conformity.
- B. Identify and address students by their preferred names and pronouns that align with their gender identity.
- C. Upon written request of the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s), student names and pronouns will be changed on school district digital systems to the extent possible to align with their gender identity. Medical documentation or legal verification of a student's name change is not required.
- D. Within academic programming, prohibit the separation of students and/or curricular materials based upon gender unless it serves as a legitimate pedagogical tool.
- E. Provide all students the opportunity to participate in co-curricular and extracurricular activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity, including but not limited to intramural and interscholastic athletics, and in conformance with Minnesota State High School League rules and regulations, where applicable.
- F. Provide all students with access to facilities that align with students' gender identity.
- G. Respect the safety and privacy of all students, pursuant to District Policy 515 (Protection & Privacy of Pupil Records) and state and federal privacy laws.
- H. Ensure that all district policies apply to all students, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or gender nonconformity.
- I. School officials will work with families and students to identify one or more safe staff members

that gender nonconforming students can access if they require additional support during the school day.

IV. REPORTING

Any person who believes there has been a violation of this policy shall report the alleged violation under the procedures set forth in Procedure 413 A.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

School district employees will receive professional development to ensure that staff understands their responsibilities pursuant to this policy.

Adopted: 7/20/2021

Legal References

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

Minn. Stat. ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.03, subd. 2 (Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment and Violence Policy)

20 U.S.C. § 1701 et seq. (Equal Educational Opportunities)



American Indian Education

Supporting the academic success, cultural identity,
and well-being of American Indian students

Ethan Neerdaels

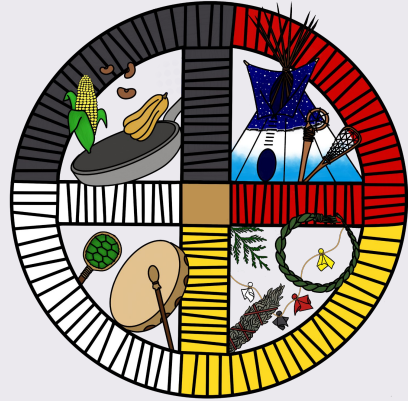
May 5, 2026



Indian Education

Enhancing the cultural identity of the Indigenous child

Oyáte nípi kte!

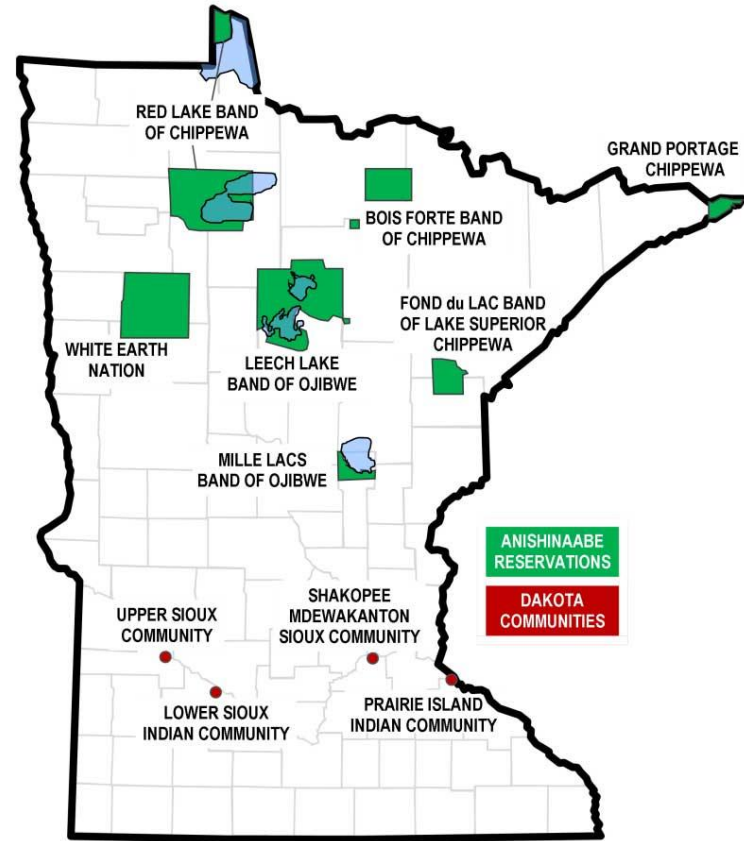


Sovereignty in Education

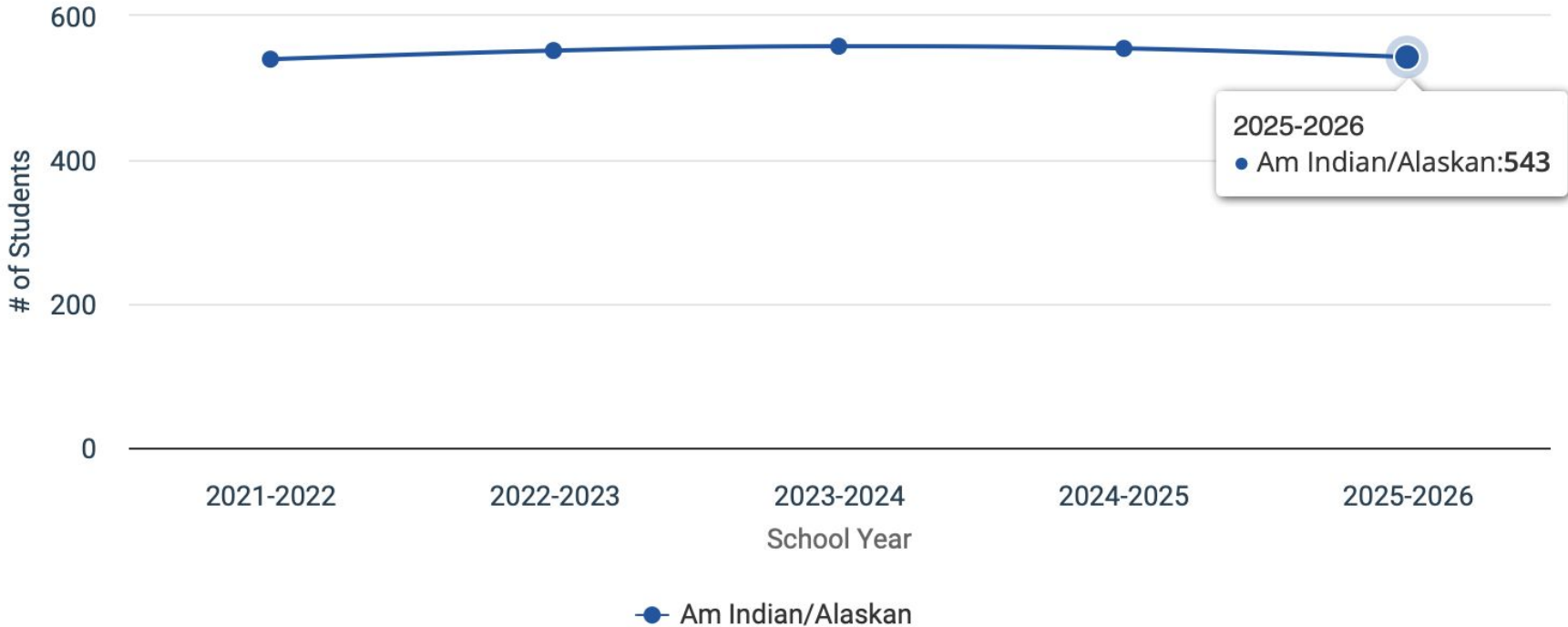
Tribal Nations are sovereign governments with the inherent right to self-govern and to preserve their lands, cultures, languages, and traditions.

This relationship is grounded in treaties recognized under the U.S. Constitution and reinforced through federal, state, and international policy.

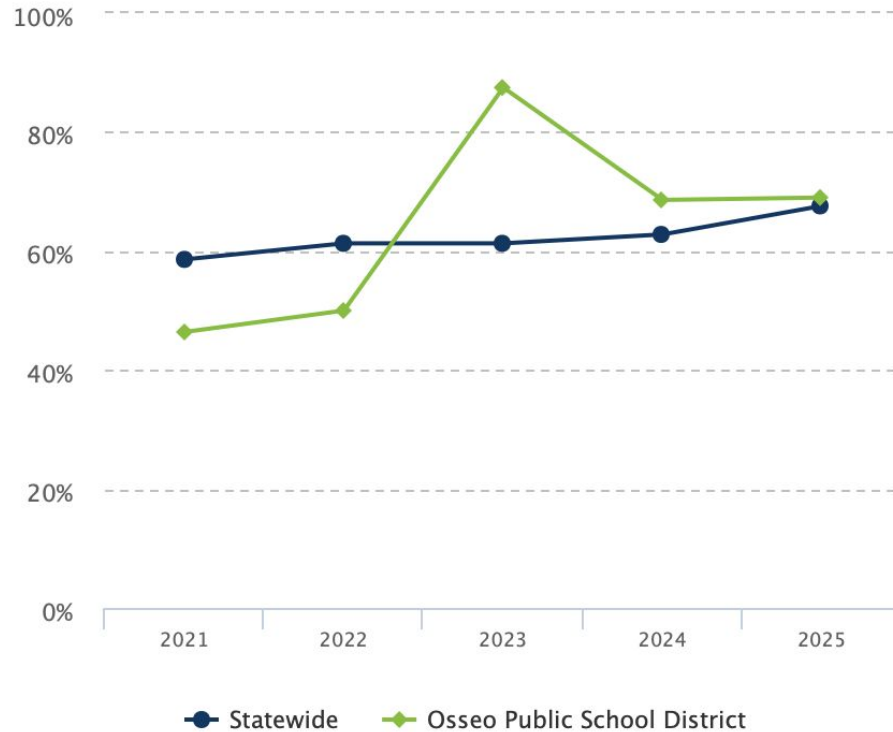
This unique relationship shapes how we partner with Tribal Nations and support American Indian students.



American Indian Student Population



Graduation Rate Trend



Disproportionality

Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS)

American Indian students were suspended at a rate **2.57 times** higher than White students during the 2023–24 school year.

American Indian students are **2.2%** of enrollment but over **4%** of suspensions—nearly **double** their representation.

Behavior Incidents

American Indian students were involved in behavior incidents at a rate **1.35 times** higher than White students during the 2023–24 school year.

Special Education

American Indian students are identified for Special Education at disproportionately high rates (**25.5%**), which reflects systemic factors such as referral practices, access to early supports, and cultural responsiveness in assessment.



Indian Education

- Serving 543 American Indian Students districtwide
- Federal Title VI
- Minnesota American Indian Education Aid
- Johnson O'Malley
- MDE Native Language Revitalization



American Indian Parent Advisory Committee

The American Indian Parent Advisory Committee (AIPAC) ensures that the voices of American Indian families and community members guide and inform the district's Indian Education programming.

- Review and approve the district's American Indian Education program and budget
- Provide input on programming, services, and student needs
- Advocate for the academic success and well-being of American Indian students
- Support culturally responsive practices and initiatives
- Annual resolution of concurrence



Cultural Programming & Identity Development

- Weekly Indian Education classes
- Cultural Field Trips
- Intergenerational Experiential Learning
- Beading Club
- Drum and Dance, Annual Powwow
- Regalia Making
- Dakota Language Table
- Ojibwe Language Table
- Traditional Arts
- Wooden Stick Lacrosse
- Winter Storytelling
- Star Lab
- American Indian Cultural Resource Center
- TCU Tours
- Student Honorings & Recognitions



Student Engagement and Belonging

- Relationship-based support with students
- Safe and welcoming spaces for American Indian students
- Mentoring and leadership development opportunities



Native Language Revitalization

Dakota and Ojibwe language classes currently offered at each of the high schools to all students for world language credit.

Expansion of language programming at new site. (CV)



Partnerships & Tribal Consultation

- Project Dreamcatcher
- American Indian PBIS
- Learning & Achievement
- Talented and Gifted
- Department of Educational Equity
- Nutrition Services
- Enrollment Center
- Tribal Nations Education Committee



Thokátakiya étunwan po!

- Increased visibility of Native students and accurate data reporting
- Increased cultural supports
- Increased Native Language programming
- Increase recruitment and retention American Indian staff
- Increased professional development for teachers and administrators

Phidámayayapi!
Miigwech!



**Osseo Area
Schools**

EdTech Use

School Board Work Session

May 5, 2026



Learning Targets:

- Develop common understanding on the use of technology for learning
- Share information regarding the current reality of student use of technology for learning in Osseo Area Schools

Education Technology

Purpose: Intentional design for learning & skill acquisition

Examples: LMS, educational apps, simulations, coding platforms

Focus: Structured, goal oriented, curriculum aligned

Outcome: Mastering concepts, critical thinking, academic progress

General Technology

Purpose: Broad utility for communication, entertainment, daily tasks

Examples: Social media, streaming, email, web browsing, gaming

Focus: Unstructured, exploratory, convenience driven

Outcome: Connection, recreation, efficiency in daily life⁵⁰

OUR DIGITAL LEARNING VISION:
PERSONALIZED PATH, PLACE, PACE
FOR STUDENT SUCCESS



Digital Learning Vision

Students will experience learning that is personalized in path, place, and pace through strengthening teaching and learning practices that support student success.



Digital Equity

Digital equity refers to ensuring that each and every student has access to and can effectively utilize digital technologies, resources, and information. It encompasses not only access to hardware and internet connectivity but also the availability of relevant digital tools, education, training, and support needed to fully participate in the digital world. Digital equity aims to bridge the digital divide, foster connections, and empower students to thrive in an increasingly digital society.

Intentional Alignment:

- **State Learning Expectations:**

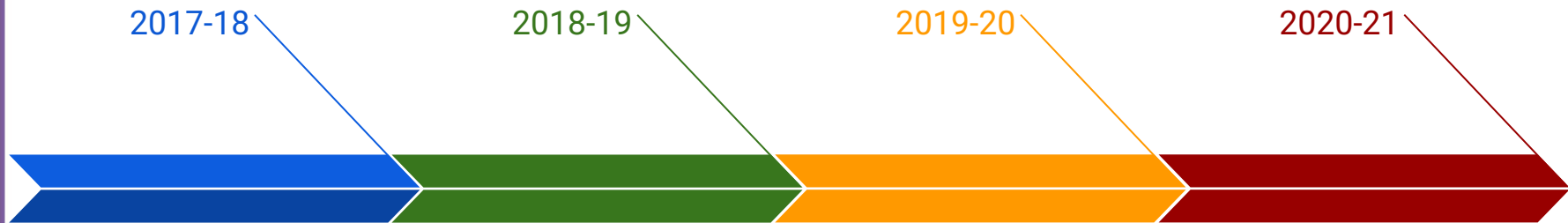
- Minnesota ELA standards emphasize media literacy skills
- Evolving computer science skill emphasized through state standards

- **College and Career Readiness:**

- National guidance is elevating AI literacy and responsible use, aligning education with workforce expectations.
- Minnesota-focused research points to information literacy gaps for new college students—reinforcing the need to build these skills earlier.

- **Instructional Delivery & Student Support**

- Flexible learning options (asynchronous/ eLearning/ remote/ online when needed) while maintaining consistent expectations.
- Progress monitoring, required assessments, and accommodations ensure students are supported and learning stays on track.



Development

- Develop #DL4A refresh plan
- Develop implementation plan
- Recommend technology to support
- Pilot tech 9-12

Phase 1

- Grades 9-12
- #DL4A model embedded PreK-12
- Continue current PreK- 8 technology
- Pilot technology 6-8
- Collect data PreK-5

Phase 2

- Grades 6-8
- Continued #DL4A development PreK-12
- Continue current PreK-5 technology
- Pilot tech PreK-5

Phase 3A

- Grades PreK-5
- Continued #DL4A development PreK-12
- Re-evaluate 9-12 technology

2021-22

2022-23

2023-24

2024-25



Phase 3B

- Grades K-2
- Continued #DL4A development PreK-12
- Re-evaluate Grades 6-8 digital learning
- Implement Online Programming
- Review parent/guardian learning opportunities

Improvement Cycle (Standard Work)

- Implement parent/guardian learning opportunities
- Expand online programming options
- Re-evaluate PreK-5 digital learning

Improvement Cycle (Standard Work)

- Re-evaluate Grades 9-12 digital learning
- Continued #DL4A development PreK-12

Improvement Cycle (Standard Work)

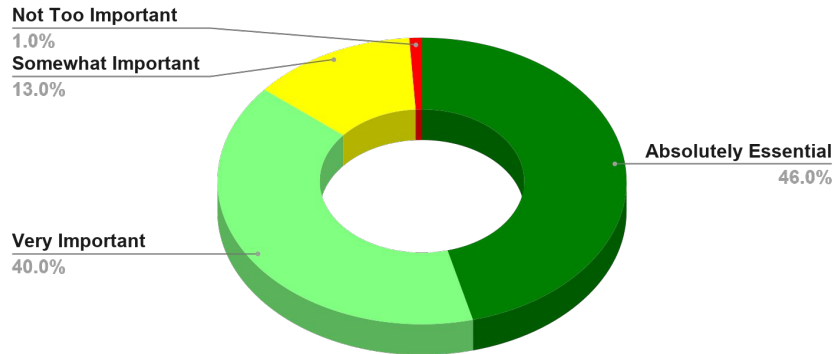
- Re-evaluate Grades 6-8 digital learning
- Continued #DL4A development PreK-12

Caregiver awareness:

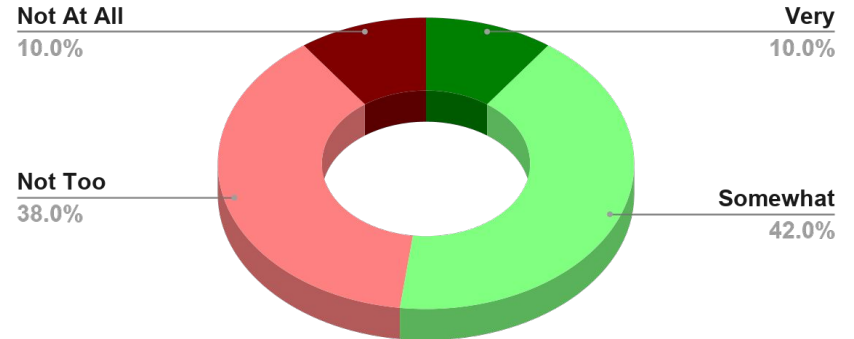
- Caregivers may opt their child out of using a school-issued device, similar to other instructional materials.
- District digital resources fall into three categories. Commonly used resources are publicly listed, and teachers share any additional classroom tools with families at the start of the year, including opt-out options.
- School-issued devices are filtered for safety both at school and at home.
- Families can add extra filtering through their home internet service or network equipment if desired.
- Caregivers are encouraged to set clear expectations at home for school devices, just as they do for personal devices. Questions can always be discussed with the teacher.

Survey Says:

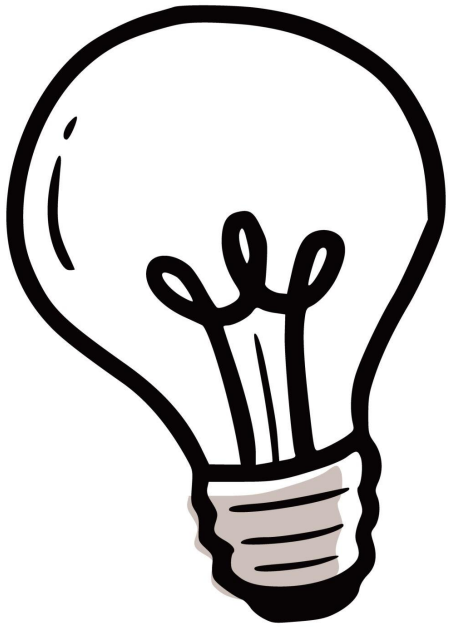
Importance of Technology (2026)



Concerns about Screen Time (2026)



Osseo Schools Reality



The Big Idea

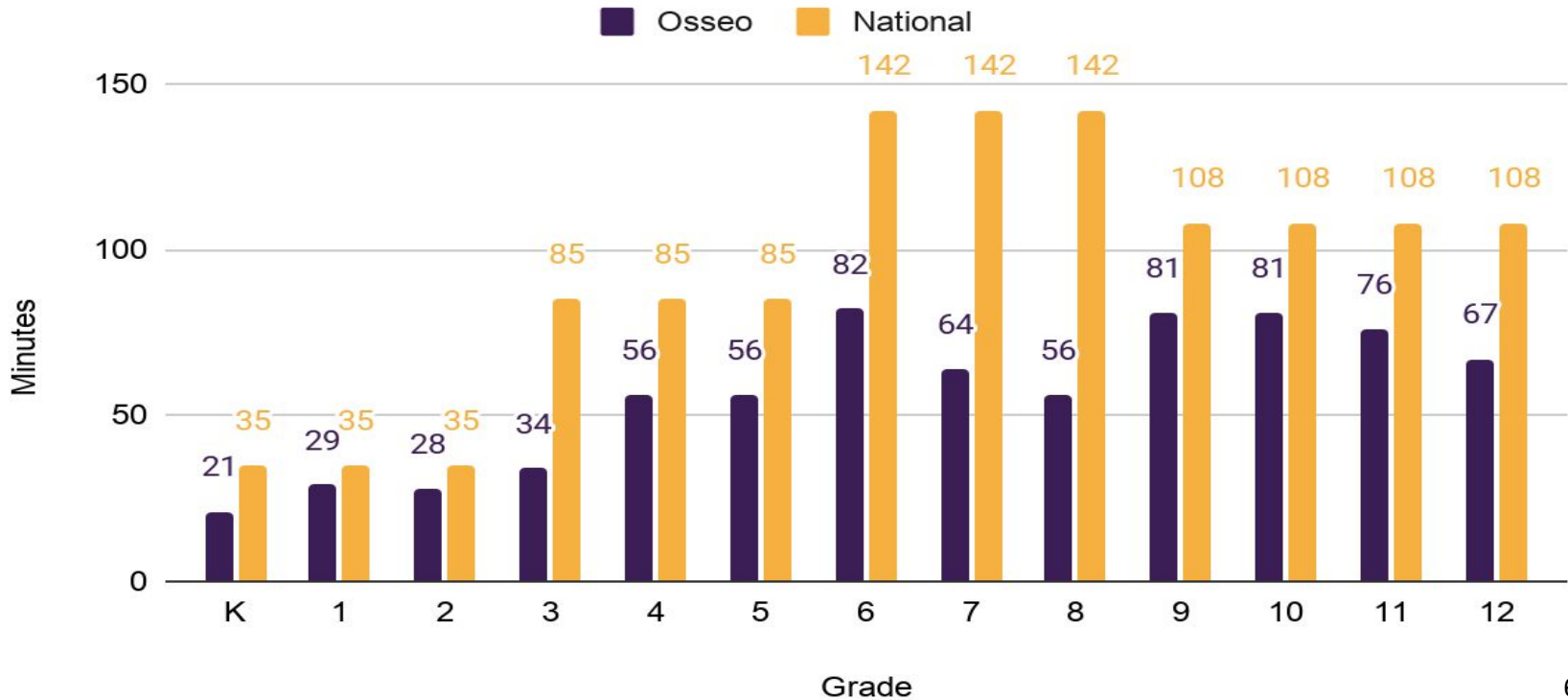
Strengthen the focus on teaching and learning practices that better support student success in the digital age, which requires adapting instructional practices, incorporating new educational resources, and utilizing internet-connected technology.

Empowering Students as Creators

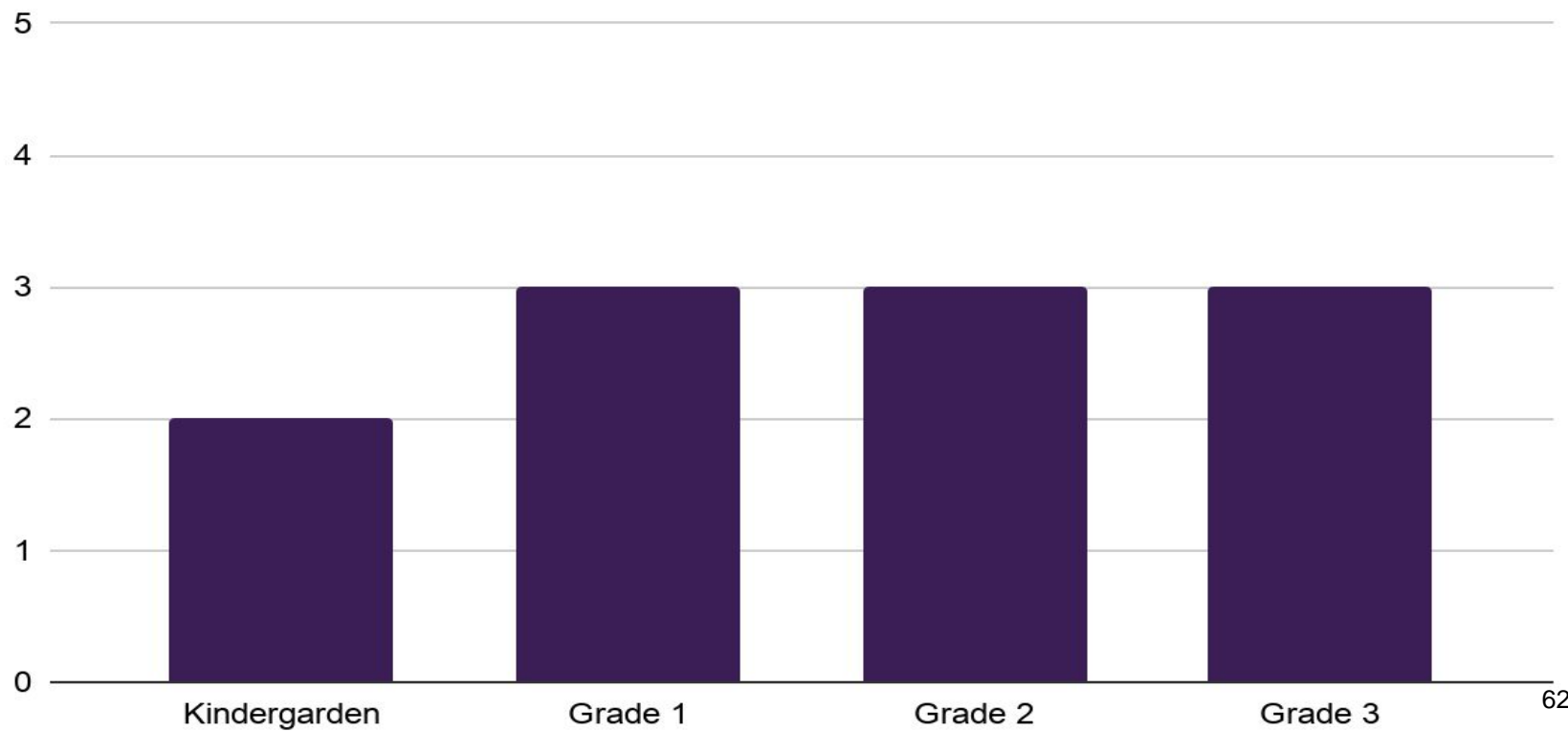
Goal: To empower students to use technology that personalizes their learning through path, place, and pace.

- **Creative Production:** Moving from consuming to creating
- **Critical Thinking:** Moving from searching to synthesizing
- **Active Engagement:** Moving from repetition to evaluation
- **Collaborative Innovation:** Moving from isolation to connection

Average Time per Student per Day on District Technology

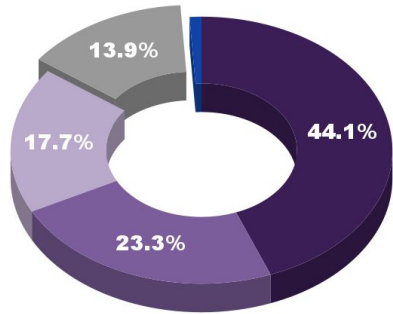


Average Days Per Week



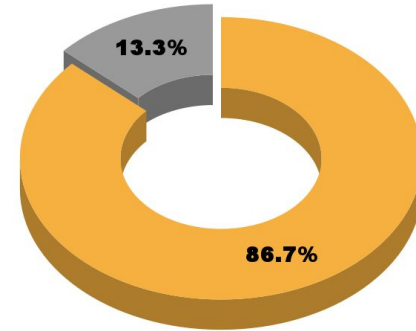
Online Activity by Categories

Osseo Area Schools



- Education Apps
- YouTube
- Search
- Miscellaneous
- Communication

National

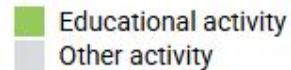


- Education Related
- Miscellaneous

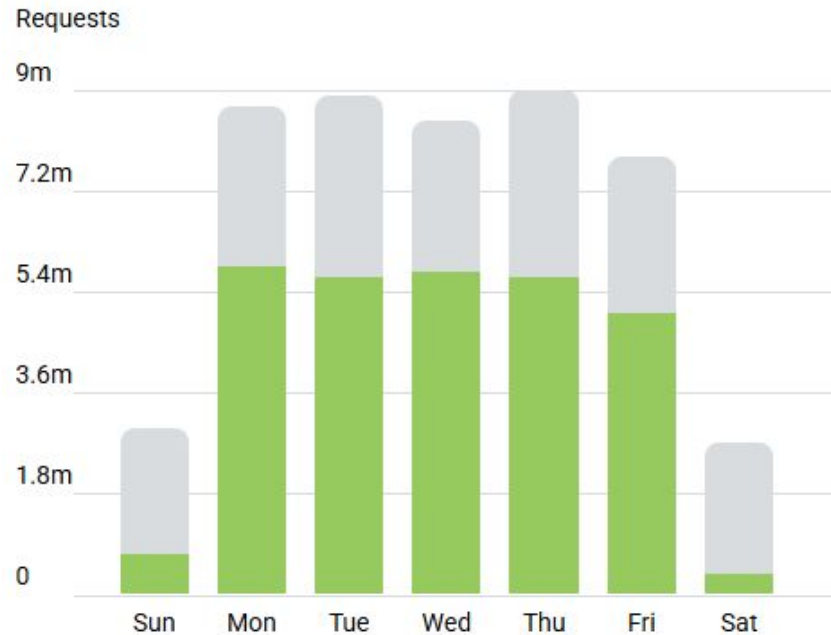
Student Online Activity by Time of Day



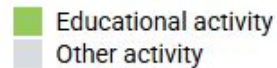
Online activity for all students for the selected period.



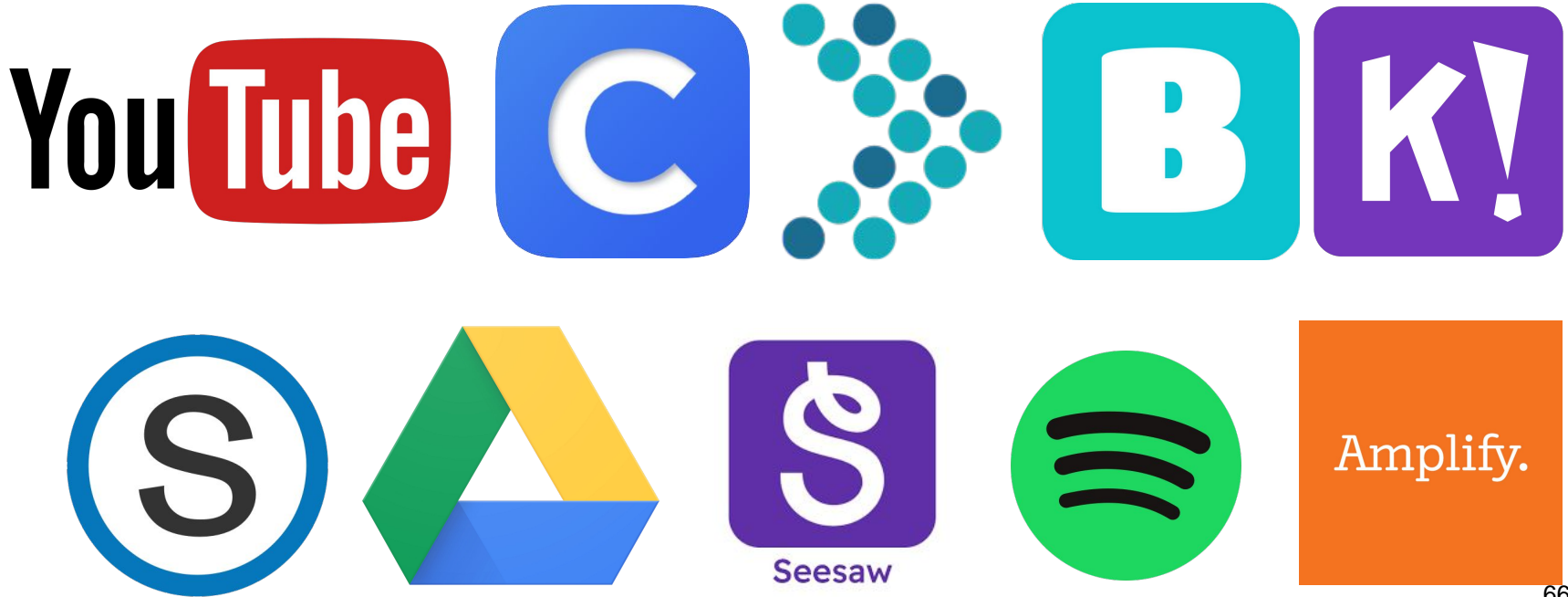
Student Online Activity by Day of Week



Online activity for all students for the selected period.



Top 10 digital resource this school year



How do students use technology for learning in our district?



2025

BLASCHKE REPORT

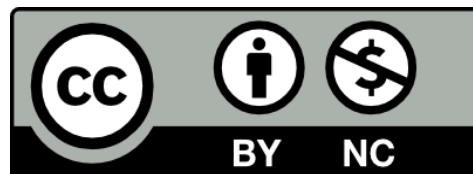
SCREENS IN BALANCE: EDUCATION, TECHNOLOGY, AND COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS



Cooper Sved
Consortium for School Networking
Blaschke Fellowship – Summer 2025
Screens in Balance: Education, Technology, and Community Conversations

Suggested Citation: Sved, Cooper (2025).
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Consortium for School Networking.

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Any mention of a specific solution is for contextual purposes.

Supporting Partners

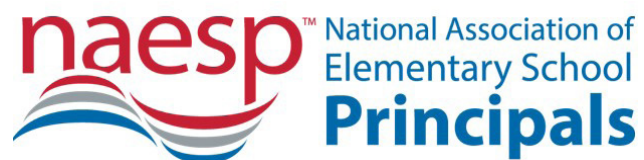


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Executive Summary

The ubiquity of screens in American K–12 schools has become a pressing and controversial issue in public education. This report examines the different ways screens appear in classrooms and homes. It also examines how educators, families, and policymakers can work together to navigate their inevitable impact on children.

Our report aims to clarify the term “screen time” as it relates to children in K–12 education. In public debates, the term is often used without distinction, making complex and thoughtful conversations between relevant parties difficult. Schools encounter screens in three primary forms: **smart phones and social media, educational technology (EdTech), and screen-based entertainment**. Each carries different risks and opportunities for children both in and out of the classroom setting.

Smart Phones and Social Media

Smart phones and social media applications (like Instagram and TikTok) used by K–12 students are at the center of a feverous national conversation. States and districts across the country have moved quickly to restrict their use via state and local legislation, citing distraction, safety, and mental health as primary catalysts. As of Fall 2025, almost two-thirds of U.S. states and territories have enacted wide-sweeping legislation related to smart phone use in K–12 schools (EdWeek, 2025). While schools cannot control the pervasiveness of smart phones or the financial incentives of their app’s designers, they are responsible for managing use within the classrooms and maintaining clear communication with families about what restrictions are in place.

Educational Technology (EdTech)

Unlike social media, EdTech is developed exclusively for instructional purposes. When used with intention and balance, it can support differentiation, accessibility, enrichment, and workforce preparation in the K–12 classroom. EdTech is not a replacement for instruction, however; it works best as a supplement to high-quality teaching (Masiello et al., 2023). Its success depends on the training educators receive and the degree to which its use aligns with local pedagogical structures (Niederhauser & Howard, 2018). Without sustained support, technology risks overwhelming teachers rather than empowering them.

Screen-Based Entertainment

A child's relationship with screens begins long before entering the school system. Television, video games, and other screen-based entertainment media dominate the early lives of American children. This shapes long-term technology habits and expectations while also contributing to "parental screen guilt" (Wolfer et al., 2024), a phenomenon describing the negative feelings from parents when they feel that they have an overreliance on screen media as a parenting tool. These feelings can influence how families interpret educational screen use and may help explain why district decisions about technology can be contentious.

Educators as Public Figures

Educators, both in instructional and leadership roles, stand at the intersection of debates over educational policies and their implementation. Though they do not always have a hand in the policies they are subject to, they are responsible for carrying them out and explaining them to their classroom communities. Their ability to communicate consistently and thoughtfully is essential for maintaining community trust. That community trust can also be built through high-quality teaching and pedagogical structures, which should result in positive academic outcomes. As the conversation over screens and EdTech continues to evolve, teachers and site leaders must use their technological resources with efficacy while simultaneously relaying said efficacy to families.



Recommendations for Educators

- Provide both new and experienced teachers with ongoing, context-specific professional development for using EdTech effectively.
- Teach and model digital citizenship, showing students how to balance the academic and social dimensions of screen use.
- Ensure school and district leaders articulate a clear vision for how screens fit into instruction, aligning decisions with both local needs and community expectations.

Conclusion

Screens are now a permanent feature of K–12 schooling. The central challenge is not whether they belong in classrooms, but how they can be integrated in ways that strengthen learning, promote equity, and preserve public trust. By distinguishing among different manifestations of screen use and addressing their unique impacts, schools can move toward more constructive, community-centered conversations about technology.





Glossary

504 Plan: An individualized plan designed to ensure an appropriate and responsive education for students with disabilities that participate in programs receiving federal financial assistance. Developed in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. According to the U.S. Department of Education, Section 504 covers students who are determined to:

- Have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or
- Have a record of such an impairment; or
- Be regarded as having such an impairment.

Choice Board: A visual menu of options for students to choose from in academic or non-academic settings. Designed to facilitate student choice and ownership over their education.

Differentiation: An instructional technique that includes various ways to teach content and assess learning. It is used to meet student needs and differences in readiness, interests, and learning styles.

Economically Developed Country: A country with high amounts of industrial activity and citizens with relatively high incomes.

Educator: A person who teaches people. Encompasses classroom teachers, school leaders, and anyone in direct, authoritative contact with students in an academic setting.

Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs): Any program designed to train and certify new educators. These are often, but not always, housed within colleges and universities.

Educational Technology (EdTech): Technological resources designed to support educators in teaching their students. May refer to hardware (e.g. laptops; tablet computers) or software (e.g. online math programs; editing software).

Enrichment Program: Programs and experiences that supplement classroom instruction either during or after school hours. Enrichment activities extend student thinking beyond their established grade-level concepts.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): An individualized, legally-binding program of action designed to serve the unique needs of students with disabilities. This plan requires accommodation and understanding by all staff members.

K–12: Referring to the range of years students spend within a traditional public school system (kindergarten through twelfth-grade).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB): U.S. federal law aimed at improving public primary and secondary schools, and thus student performance, via increased accountability for schools, school districts, and states. The act was passed by Congress with bipartisan support in December 2001 and signed into law by Pres. George W. Bush in January 2002. States were not legally mandated to follow NCLB, but non-compliance would result in the loss of federal funds for education programs.

One to One (1:1) Model: A model for the dissemination of student EdTech hardware. Under this model, all students are given and responsible for their own device (laptop, tablet, etc.) that will be used for classroom activities. Most K–12 schools in the United States operate on a one-to-one model at all grade levels.

Parental Screen Guilt: The phenomenon of parents feeling guilty or frustrated at their use/overreliance on screen-based activities as a form of childcare.

Screen: A surface that can display electronic images (e.g. televisions; computer monitors).

Special Education: A system or program within school systems designed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities or learning differences.



Report Developers

About CoSN (Consortium for School Networking)

CoSN is a world-class professional association for K-12 EdTech leaders with the mission to provide professional development resources for EdTech leaders, their teams, and districts, allowing them to cultivate engaging learning environments. CoSN's represents over 14 million students and continues to grow as an influential voice in K-12 education. [Learn more about CoSN here.](#)

The Blaschke Fellowship Fund

The Blaschke Fund was created by CoSN to support emerging leaders in education technology policy and advocacy. This memorial fund honors the late-industry giant Charles Blaschke, who conducted pioneering research and analysis on the ever-changing U.S. education landscape for over 50 years. Through the fellowship, graduate students have the opportunity to develop research along with CoSN in topics related to digital equity, protecting privacy of education data, enabling accessibility or other key topics. [Learn more about the Blaschke Fellowship here.](#)

Cooper Sved

The Blaschke Fellow for 2025 is Cooper Sved. Currently, Cooper serves as a proud Sixth Grade teacher in the Washington, D.C. area. He is finishing his Master's in Education Policy at George Washington University and has served as an intern for the U.S. House of Representatives and the Educational Testing Service (ETS). He also holds a master's in teaching from the University of Richmond and a bachelor's in theatre from Virginia Commonwealth University. He dedicates his career to the memories of Mary Emily Kitterman, his grandmother, and Adam Turck, his dear friend.

In addition to preparing this report, Cooper developed the [Screen Time Toolkit](#) to help educators facilitate thoughtful conversations about EdTech with their school communities.



Methodology

This report is the product of a summer-long exploration of screen use in public education via academic journals, contemporary news articles, and semi-structured interviews with various professionals working in EdTech and K-12 spaces (including, but not limited to, school principals, district-level EdTech leaders, teacher's union representatives, and CoSN staff).

Cooper Sved, CoSN's 2025 Blaschke Fellow, began by creating an annotated bibliography that covered the following topics: Screentime and Child Development; School Leadership; Parent Perspectives on EdTech; Social Media; and Digital Citizen Education.

The questions asked during the semi-structured interviews were dependent on the subject's professional background. Each interview aimed to gather the subject's perspectives on screen use in schools, conversations about screens in their professional communities, and ideas for resources that may help schools communicate with families about EdTech.

The methods used to develop this report were also used in the development of CoSN's Screen Time Toolkit.

Acknowledgements

The report's developer would like to thank the following people and organizations who, in one way or another, helped make this report a reality:

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PTA: Kimberly Martin, Daniel Ehrenpreis

Common Sense: Merve Lapus

The following Trustees were appointed to develop the criteria that candidates must meet to be selected for the Blaschke Fellowship:

Deborah Delisle, President & CEO, Alliance for Excellent Education

Deb deVries, K-12 Education Industry Veteran

Gary Mainor, Executive Vice President, Pearson Education



Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically reshaped the landscape of American education technology (EdTech). School districts were, with little warning, forced to quickly develop an infrastructure for all-digital learning (Heise, 2023). If they didn't already have one, students at all grade levels were given a personal learning device to help facilitate this monumental shift in K-12 learning. Upon emerging from the pandemic, districts found themselves with a range of new educational hardware and software. Though screens had been present in most K-12 schools before the pandemic, they had assumed a ubiquity that no principal or superintendent could have predicted. What were educators going to do now that most, if not all, of their classrooms had one-to-one devices?

While school districts were navigating their new circumstances, a new generation of children were presented with unparalleled access to burgeoning, rapidly-evolving, and unregulated new technologies. This, in conjunction with a media ecosystem dependent on rapid and repetitive engagement and the growing prevalence of artificial intelligence (See: [2024 Blaschke Report on AI and Accessibility](#)) has created a new kind of digital nativism. Children in the United States, more than ever, are immersed (and functionally dependent) on their screens (McArthur et al., 2021).

In such a disjointed and untested ecosystem, K-12 schools are presented with a unique opportunity. They, more than any other American institution, have the chance to harness the power of this new digital landscape to prepare the workforce, promote student individuality, and uplift marginalized populations. To accomplish this lofty goal, American schools must proceed with thought, intention, and care. The long-term impacts of screen time on modern students depend on the steps we take at this very moment.

What Do We Mean By “Screen?”

In this report, we (i.e. CoSN) attempt to frame the current conversation on screens in schools. To start, what do we mean by the word “screen?” We are bombarded by digital displays both in and out of the classroom. Smart watches, fast food restaurant menus, slide decks, and e-ink reading devices all count as examples of everyday screen use. For the purpose of discussing K–12 education, it will be important to narrow our scope.

In the K–12 classroom, we use “screen” to refer to an **electronic panel used to display continuous and self-contained digital information**. We use self-contained to exclude instances where screens are used to supplement intentionally designed, high-quality in-person instruction. For example, slide decks, if used alongside an in-person experience, are not included within the scope of this report.

The “screen” may, however, refer to a smart phone or smart watch that may serve as a repeated distraction to student learning. “Screen” in our context will refer to digital tablets, laptops, smart phones, and whole-class projections that do not supplement in-person instruction (e.g. watching a video). In a students’ home, a screen may also include a desktop computer, handheld gaming console (e.g. Nintendo Switch), or a television. In all cases, screen use can refer to either active OR passive participation by the user.



“The term ‘screen time,’ if used without specificity, may conflate multiple kinds of screen use that are distinct and equally worthy of our care and attention.”

Clarifying the Conversation

[There is a pervasive national \(and international\) conversation on children and “screen time”.](#)

“Screen time,” though, is an umbrella term. Though screens are ubiquitous in 2025, they vary significantly in purpose and functionality. The term “screen time,” if used without specificity, may conflate multiple kinds of screen use that are distinct and equally worthy of our care and attention. To help clarify our work, we have identified three relevant manifestations of “screen time” that require separate conversations and, indeed, separate solutions. We do understand, though, that these manifestations do share a connective tissue. When one mentions “screen time,” they may be referring to: smart phones and social media; educational technology (Ed-Tech); or screen-based entertainment.

For a more in-depth overview of why we must “Clarify the Conversation,” see **Appendix One: What Does Screen Time Mean, Anyway?**

An infographic detailing the three manifestations of “screen time” for educators and families can be found in CoSN’s [Screen Time Toolkit](#).

Smart Phones and Social Media

Smart phone use has dominated the national and political conversation about screens in classrooms. Specifically, smart phones are discussed as tools for social media consumption by adolescents and teenagers. An estimated [53% of children aged 8–12 \(Toscano & Schmitt, 2024\)](#) and [95% of teens aged 13–17 \(Pew Research Center, 2025\)](#) in the United States have access to a smart phone. [There has been growing concern in recent years that these devices are, in fact, contributing to poor social behavior, mental health, and academic performance in K–12 students.](#) In 2024 and 2025, in response to this national concern, [the majority of U.S. states passed some form of legislation related to smart phone use and restrictions in schools.](#)

For a more in–depth overview of smart phone use and legislation, see **Appendix 2: Smart phones, Schools, and Solutions.**

Educational Technology (EdTech)

Coinciding with concerns over smart phones in schools are worries over the ubiquity of screens and screen–based activities in the K–12 classroom. Despite these concerns, EdTech resources have the power to radically enhance teacher practices and, in turn, positively affect student outcomes (Johnson et al., 2016). Thoughtful and intentional academic screen time, when paired with high–quality instruction from a professional educator, can be transformational (see: [RAT model](#); [SAMR model](#)). It is also important to note that EdTech companies and social media companies operate within different markets and financial incentives for their products. Because they are funded via ad revenue, social media companies are most lucrative when users spend long amounts of time on their platform. Conversely, EdTech companies are most lucrative when they are able to foster consistent student academic growth and, in turn, stay contracted with school districts.

For a more in–depth overview of EdTech, see **Appendix 3: Performance Without Paper.**

Screen–Based Entertainment

Before children are given access to a personal smart phone, they have already been inundated with screens as tools for entertainment and leisure. These screens can come in many forms, like desktop computers, video game consoles (like Nintendo Switch, which has its own built–in screen), televisions, and, most commonly, tablets. By 2021, 80% of households with children have some form of tablet computer while 64% of households overall have a tablet computer (Mejía, 2023). U.S. parents have not only shown a willingness to offer these kinds of devices to their children, in many cases, they see screen media as

a form of babysitting (Chong et al.,2023). Children’s screen use goes well beyond smart phones, it often begins before they even get to kindergarten. A recent study has even shown a correlation between leisurely screen use (social media, video games, etc.) and strong SAT scores (Hales & Hampton, 2025). This study questions the assumption that digital entertainment, generally, lacks educational value.

For a more in–depth overview of Screen–Based Children’s Entertainment, see **Appendix 4: A Digital Childhood**.

Supplement, Not Replacement

Screen–based EdTech resources are not, and should never aim to be, a replacement for high–quality in–person instruction from a trained educator. K–12 schools are not sites of autonomous production. Concrete academic skills (reading, writing, mathematics, etc.) certainly should serve as primary goals for teachers and students. They are not, however, taught in a silo. K–12 education is designed for the development of a student’s academic AND socio–emotional skillsets. Trained educators, in turn, are facilitators of critical INTERPERSONAL experiences. In academic settings, students are challenged by both content and environment; K–12 students must simultaneously navigate personal and social responsibilities. Furthermore, students do not arrive at school on the same socio–emotional footing. Schools are not just sites for new social experiences, but spaces for modeling thoughtful behavior and meeting those who experience the world differently. This emphasis on empathy, cooperation, and relationship–building, while not explicitly assessed, is a vital part of building a new generation of citizens and workers. Screens and artificial intelligence are simply unequipped to facilitate these kinds of experiences on their own.

Screen use in the classroom is not a polar issue, however. An all–or–nothing approach to this conversation denies teachers and students access to meaningful and practical digital experiences that, indeed, bolster the classroom learning experience. Not only have EdTech resources been thoroughly woven into school district and teacher preparation infrastructures, but they are vital for differentiation, access, and nuts–and–bolts workforce development (this will be expanded upon in a later section, Screens in Schools). The key to resource implementation, though, is educator development. Teachers and administrators cannot instinctively know how to incorporate new technologies effectively. We cannot expect them to guess best practices and hope for the best. Since EdTech will (and should) continue to supplement in–person instruction, it will be necessary to continue developing educators into effective designers of a multi–modal classroom experience.

For more on teacher development, see **Appendix 7: EdTech Professional Development**.

Educators can use CoSN's Teacher Reflection and Administrative EdTech Audit documents, parts of the [Screen Time Toolkit](#), to help clarify their use of available classroom technologies.

Screens in Schools

One-to-one computing in K–12 classrooms serves as just one example of the prominence of screen use in the lives of children in the United States. Social media, video game platforms, YouTube content, and tablet applications define media consumption by children currently attending K–12 schools.

School districts offer a range of resources to teachers that rely on screens. In many cases, the use of screens is a mandatory part of the district's educational infrastructure. Teachers are not generally able to use any resource they please. Instead, they will defer to the guidance and approved resources that have been cultivated by that district's technology and curriculum offices. Those resources, in turn, are filtered through multiple levels of district and site leadership before being used by a teacher of record. This heavily vetted selection process ensures that the district's classrooms are, in some way, aligned via



coordinated resources. The process looks different in each district, and can still fall victim to technological fads, but it provides critical guardrails that inform the pedagogical strategies that teachers will employ.

Screen-dependent EdTech resources serve a multitude of classroom functions. Students and teachers, in many ways, depend on one-to-one devices to successfully access and complete their work. In the rest of this section, we will outline just a few ways that EdTech resources might be employed in K–12 classrooms. We offer this section not to break ground, but to remind readers of the critical role that EdTech plays in the everyday classroom. Communicating these use cases clearly and thoughtfully is one major way to temper parent concerns over screen use.

Note: Some of these points serve as an expansion to those expressed in Appendix 3: Performance Without Paper.

Educators may use the editable presentations available in CoSN’s Screen Time Toolkit to help facilitate conversations about the use of EdTech in their school.

Differentiation

Differentiation is a foundational pedagogical skill taught in teacher preparation programs. Educators are primed with internal AND external expectations to meet the needs of all learners in their classroom, regardless of their academic need. [Differentiated activities provide pathways for each learner to access grade-level content that aligns with their unique learning styles, classroom habits, and skillsets.](#) Teachers may differentiate their activities in a variety of ways, like providing leveled options for games or project options of differing complexities.

One-to-one computing, critically, offers teachers opportunities for easy and quick differentiation in the classroom. Many digital EdTech resources (like phonics programs, digital choice boards, etc.) allow students access to grade-level content that is aligned with their needs and skills either through menu options or automatic content generation based on formative assessment. Programs featuring content generation via formative assessment are especially prominent in elementary school. Foundational literacy and math instruction in early grades is taught directly and enhanced by independent work targeting specific skills. These kinds of programs also afford teachers more classroom time for small-group instruction. Without one-to-one computing, elementary educators would have to spend more of their planning time generating thoughtful and differentiated independent activities,

“One-to-one computing, critically, offers teachers opportunities for easy and quick differentiation in the classroom.”



adding to their generally dense work schedules. Furthermore, the one-to-one structure allows students greater opportunity to explore content related to their own personal interests without the need for teacher cultivation or intrusion.

Special Education

Many devices, INCLUDING personal smart phones, offer academic pathways to students in special education programs. Special education, in this case, refers to individualized education programs (IEPs), 504 accommodations, and enrichment programs. In addition to differentiation, screens offer accessibility and extension opportunities.

Over the past ten years or so, EdTech resources have been employed effectively when teaching special education students across the K–12 spectrum (Carreon et al., 2025). Most often, these programs will use applications on one-to-one devices. They may be used to teach content skills (like spelling and graph-making) or to teach other skills as outlined by the student’s unique education program (like fine motor skills or effective communication). Additionally, studies have demonstrated that artificial intelligence (AI) can be a crucial piece of special education pedagogy (Hopcan et al., 2022) (Also see [CoSN’s 2024 Blaschke Report on AI and Accessibility](#)). It is important to note that the USE of personal devices for these kinds of digital resources is not universally approved within the smart phone restrictions offered by state legislatures in the U.S.. Some legislation allows for exceptions to smart phone restrictions for students with IEP and 504 plans, but not all make that distinction.

“We offer this section not to break ground, but to remind readers of the critical role that EdTech plays in the everyday classroom. Communicating these use cases clearly and thoughtfully is one major way to temper parent concerns over screen use.”



Workforce Development

Despite some nationwide tensions over the curricular expectations of schools and districts, most Americans agree that K–12 education is, at least partially, supposed to cultivate a new generation of high-quality workers. It is necessary that students, especially in secondary grade levels, are exposed to skills that are practical (and necessary) for the job market. The skills necessary for entry into said market, though, have changed drastically over the last decade (World Economic Forum, 2025), and K–12 schools have a duty to keep with those expectations.

Educational technologies, in addition to providing new pedagogical strategies, allow students to explore content using skills that may be necessary for their future careers. [Many school districts allow for coding programs, even to elementary-aged students.](#) Opportunities for digital marketing projects, building virtual presentations, and online collaboration via websites like Google Drive are all valuable, and necessary, to those looking for immediate

post-graduate careers OR a college education. With the onset of artificial intelligence programs, K-12 schools are needed more than ever to provide thoughtful guardrails and guidance to students learning to use burgeoning technologies for both academic and personal reasons. Public education is not able to stop the development of new tech products, but they have the ability, and perhaps a duty, to teach students to use said products with balance and intention.

The Public Conversation

The 2025 Blaschke Report (and CoSN's Screen Time Toolkit) have been developed in direct response to an ever-growing national debate over the presence of screens and technology in K-12 classrooms. Though many schools had already shifted to a one-to-one model, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated investments in devices and programs to ease the heavy burden on educators navigating a new but necessary digital teaching infrastructure. As the United States emerged from this chaotic and uncertain period, its educational infrastructure maintained its reliance on EdTech tools and resources. In reaction to the continued employment of technology in classrooms, the collective trauma of COVID-era education, and continued literary and online discourse, a national conversation about screen use emerged between schools, families, and educators. In this section, we explore different pieces of this national conversation, the actors within it, and how it directly affects what happens in the classroom.

Smart Phone Restrictions

According to EdWeek's [Cellphone Laws and Policies Tracker](#), the majority of US states (and Washington, DC) are entering the 2025-2026 school year with legislation targeting the use of smart phones in K-12 classrooms. This legislation may come in the form of statewide bans, mandates for district-level policy development, recommendations, or incentive structures. Most states passed their legislation in late 2024 or early 2025 in anticipation of the upcoming school year.

These restrictions serve as an example of states exercising their constitutional right to exclusively govern their education systems (education mandates at the federal level are not legal, only incentive programs like [No Child Left Behind](#) that offer federal funds). Though statewide smart phone legislation has received significant bipartisan support from constituents, it has garnered some criticism from educators and families. Critical perspectives include concerns over parent/student communication, funding, access for

students with IEPs and 504 plans, and organizational accountability.

For a more in-depth overview of smart phone use and legislation, see **Appendix 2: Smart Phones, Schools, and Solutions.**

Parent Perspectives

Public education, as a public institution, is dependent on the needs and expectations of the community they serve. Relative to other economically developed countries (EDCs), families in the United States have an outsized role in the development and implementation of education policy. Rather than relying on a federal department of education, U.S. public schools are controlled locally by school boards, district-level leadership and state-level leadership. School boards, in particular, heavily democratize reform efforts. Under these circumstances, new district and state policies for public schooling can often arise from constituent priorities and incentives. By contrast, other EDCs (e.g. United Kingdom) generate reform efforts and guidance from the top-down. While still subject to public scrutiny, these institutions are more removed from the kind of active community involvement that helps shape education policy in the United States.

In response to pandemic learning and poor standardized test scores, American parents have shown an increased disdain for screens, especially in school settings. State legislatures created their policies for smart phone restrictions to attend to these growing concerns. Parent perspectives on screen use, however, are far from definitive or consistent. Despite concerns over EdTech's prominence in public schools, they also tend to recognize its potential educational value. Furthermore, American parents experience parental screen guilt (PSG) as a correlate to their child's personal screen use at home (Wolfers et al., 2024). A parent's concern over EdTech in school may stem from personal guilt over screen use in the home.

For a more in-depth overview of parent perspectives on screen use, see **Appendix Five: Parent Perspectives.**

Educators as Public Figures

As noted in the previous section, public education in the United States is especially vulnerable to the expectations of local communities. Educators (meaning classroom teachers, administrators, and other student-facing school employees) serve as public representatives of the system they work within. Despite often having little control over curricula and approved resources, educators at school sites serve as a first point of contact for parents and community members. As a result, they are often expected to speak to or justify policy decisions that they, in some cases, have taken no part in creating. As organizational representatives, teachers and leadership teams must convincingly communicate mandates and expectations created at the district or state level. This is an unseen, unspoken extra expectation on the plates of school employees.

As public figures with community-level influence, educators have to directly respond to parent concerns over screen use and educational technology. The implementation of digital resources in the classroom, as a result, must remain thoughtful and balanced. Educators must be intentional with their EdTech implementation if they wish to honestly communicate with families classroom-level and site-level practices.

The expectations for clear, consistent, thoughtful communication about EdTech and screens led CoSN to develop the [Screen Time Toolkit](#). This series of documents helps educators foster nuanced conversations about the use of screens in schools with members of their community.

Recommendations for Educators

A rapidly evolving technological ecosystem requires K–12 schools and school systems to remain flexible, attentive, and creative. Local policies must remain centered on pedagogical efficacy while maintaining a keen eye towards public perception and understanding. Screen use in public education only remains publicly salient if district- or school-level messaging is authoritative, focused on collaboration, and authentic to day-to-day classroom practice. These recommendations highlight just a few ways that education systems may build and maintain public trust around the use of digital EdTech tools.

Teacher Development

Teacher development, in this case, refers both to the development of new educators and to the continued development of the K–12 work force. Both novice and veteran teachers require thoughtful professional development for EdTech products. Not only do they need to understand the resource itself, but how to use said resource within the context of their school. Because public education operates at a local level in the United States, each school site must build and maintain a unique pedagogical structure. Understanding how EdTech resources operate within that local structure is necessary before they can be used in the classroom. School leaders and site-based EdTech leaders must make their guidance on specific resources clear and intentional. Not only does this provide classroom teachers with a contextual understanding of the resource, but it provides all parties a coherent framework and expectations for use that may be used in communication with families.

Educator preparation programs (EPPs) must also work to prepare novice educators to thoughtfully and intentionally weave EdTech into their pedagogical structures. Digital tools exist in all U.S. school systems. Most districts operate on a 1:1 device model. Creative and thoughtful use of these resources, in conjunction with high-quality teaching, is a vital piece of any modern classroom infrastructure. Despite not knowing where EPP students will end up teaching, responsive programs will ensure that educational technologies are included within modeled structures of high-quality teaching and learning.

Modeling Digital Literacy and Citizenship

Research has demonstrated that a child’s ability to effectively balance their use of screens in day-to-day life may depend on their exposure to thoughtful use by adults. Teachers and family members can affect a child’s relationship with screens by simultaneously setting consistent boundaries for use and demonstrating thoughtful use themselves. In



the classroom, teachers should use their EdTech resources without overreliance, only employing them when it makes pedagogical sense or in conjunction with other strategies. Parents can affect their children’s relationship to screens by balancing their own lives alongside consistent boundary-setting.

Schools and districts may serve as friendly and authoritative figures in the screen time conversation. Building a school-to-home connection is critical for providing actionable guidance on screen use to families that is aligned with district-level messaging and expectations. Furthermore, teachers are best equipped to provide classroom-level context and child-specific guidance.

Administrative Coherence and Clarity

Those in leadership, both at the school and district level, should provide clear, actionable, and context-specific guidance on the use of EdTech resources in the classroom. Not only should EdTech resources be thoughtfully filtered by leadership teams to best fit the needs of their academic community, but they should have a clear understanding of how each will

operate alongside other resources and expectations.

For example, if your district purchases and offers an optional digital phonics program for K-2 students, the leadership team may ask the following questions:

- How might it fit into your established structures for teaching and learning?
- Would this resource be reiterative?
- Might this resource be a stronger alternative to a program that is already being used?
- How long might it take for teachers to learn and implement this new resource with efficacy?

Once a site leadership team contextualizes their EdTech resources and communicates those expectations to staff, all are able to speak about said resources with families. Not only is it important for districts to find quality resources for their sites, it is critical that school-based leaders curate those resources to best fit the pedagogical needs of their student AND teacher populations.

“Local policies must remain centered on pedagogical efficacy while maintaining a keen eye towards public perception and understanding.”



“Controversy can be a starting point for a nuanced, thoughtful, solutions-oriented conversation between schools and communities.”

Conclusion

Conversations about screen use in K–12 schools connect directly to the wider story of technological development in the U.S. and around the globe. Recent smart phone legislation, in particular, is part of a larger story of technological development in the United States and around the world. School districts, in reflecting contemporary society, find themselves either in harmony or contention with burgeoning and ubiquitous technologies. Often, they find themselves feeling both at the same time. It is important for public schools to prepare students for an advanced, often unpredictable technological future. At the same time, they must recognize that education work in the United States is directly dependent on the voting public. **Technological advancement within the classroom must be simultaneously responsive and innovative in order to fulfill public education’s numerous (often paradoxical) responsibilities.**

Despite their general lack of authority over district-level decisions, site-based K–12 educators indirectly assume the responsibility for disseminating policies and initiatives that may not always land well with their communities. In addition to their pedagogical work, educators play a public role that they may not always be ready for. Teacher training, for novice AND veteran teachers, rarely includes guidance on thoughtful and authoritative communication.

The use of any technology in the classroom can (and does) easily become a source of controversy. This has especially been the case since COVID-19 brought with it a cobbled infrastructure of all-digital education. The solution to these controversies may not lie in swift, comprehensive legislation (like we’ve seen throughout the United States this past year). Instead, controversy can be a starting point for a nuanced, thoughtful, solutions-oriented conversation between schools and communities.

The importance of a nuanced conversation about technology use extends beyond improving K–12 education. It is driven by a recognition that public education serves as both a reflection and a driver of our collective relationship with new technologies.

The 2025 Blaschke Report was developed alongside CoSN’s [Screen Time Toolkit](#) and a series of posts slated for release on the [CoSN Blog](#) throughout the fall/winter of 2025. Many of these posts are highly relevant to the topics discussed in this report and can be found in the appendices below.

Appendix One: What Does Screen Time Mean, Anyway?

K-12 educators are currently operating within a feverous cultural conversation over technological ubiquity and screen time. This cultural conversation is expansive and can be overwhelming. When someone refers to “screen time,” they may be speaking of television, social media, smart phone addictions, or, importantly, technology use during classroom instruction. Though these topics share a connective tissue, they should not be conflated. Parents/caregivers and policymakers, in their concern over both screen time and public education writ large, may not instinctively understand the importance of separating their terms and specifying our home-to-school discourse. In the coming academic year, strong differentiation in K-12 messaging may curb some of the conflicts between schools and their communities.

Educators at the classroom, school, and district level, should work to help the community differentiate between the varying definitions of “screen time” that manifest in their classrooms. These manifestations may be separated into three categories: smart phones/social media, educational technologies (EdTech), and screens for at-home leisure. Though distinct, these categories are all highly relevant to those working in twenty-first century public education. Understanding how these categories impact children/students will help educators navigate conversations around screen use in the coming academic years.

Smart Phones/Social Media

Smart phones and social media may be the most pertinent focus of our national conversation on screen use. All around the country, schools, states, and districts are enacting smart phone bans designed to increase student attention spans and foster meaningful academic engagement. As of September 2025, almost two-thirds of US states (and Washington, DC) have enacted new legislation banning, restricting, or disincentivizing smart phone use in the classroom (EdWeek, 2025). In a rare example of national unity, bans have, for the most part, been well received by lawmakers, constituents, and educators, despite some unpopularity with students and parents.

Outside of education, parents and caregivers have shown increased concern over the ways that [cell phones affect childrens' socio-emotional and cognitive development](#). Time will tell if school bans are able to curb some of the long-term threats that cell phones pose to young people (see also: [Navigating Student Cell Phone Use in K-12 Schools; Whose Call: A Student-Driven Approach to School Cell Phone Policies](#)).

EdTech

The COVID-19 pandemic served as a catalyst for schools and districts to ramp up their use of EdTech. Schools that had strategically fully not gone one-to-one (i.e. each student has their own device) were suddenly forced to purchase and use a slate of new hardware and software. Now, in 2025, most schools in the U.S. operate on a one-to-one model (see: [CoSN's 2025 State of EdTech Leadership](#)).

This model, if used thoughtfully, has the potential to supplement and enhance in-person learning in exciting and pragmatic ways. Teachers may use EdTech devices and programs to differentiate their instruction, teach important technological skill sets, and increase the engagement of differently-abled learners. Too much time on these devices, though, may hinder a student's growth (Kirkorian, 2024), so it is vital that teachers understand how to WEAVE EdTech into their classrooms, not rely on it in lieu of other strong pedagogical practices. It is important to communicate the instructional value of these strategies to families and community members.

Screens for At-Home Entertainment

Though educators have limited influence on a family's use of technologies on a day-to-day basis, they still have an opportunity to sway attitudes towards screen use in the home. Like smart phone use, excessive and unrestricted time on screens may affect a young child's socio-emotional and cognitive development. Despite this, modern parents and caretakers still often use screens as babysitting tools. Video game systems (like the Nintendo Switch), tablet computers, and televisions have the opportunity to affect a child long before they get their first smart phone. Like educators, it is vital that parents and caretakers remain thoughtful and targeted as they introduce digital media to their children. These early experiences may shape a child's relationship to educational technologies once they reach grade school.

Next Steps

The Consortium for School Networking is committed to fostering a pragmatic conversation on screen use in K-12 education. Educators and families alike may benefit from this more nuanced discussion of screens and technologies for children.



Appendix Two: Cell phones, Schools, and Solutions

Over the past year, cell phone use has been a dominant force in the conversation on technology's role in American classrooms. Many educators, advocates, and parents have expressed concern over generation alpha's adherence to personal devices. The development of attention spans, critical thinking, and socio-emotional skills are in untested waters as students have been allowed unparalleled, largely unfettered access to burgeoning technologies. Educators, in turn, have been tasked with navigating these waters without much of a precedent. Government legislation on technology in the classroom was inevitable.

Public education in the United States is controlled at the state and local level. Over the past year, school districts and legislatures have begun exercising their power in response to the [recent national fervor over cell phones in schools](#). According to *Education Week*, as of September 2025, almost two-thirds of states (and the District of Columbia) have passed some form of legislation on cell phone use in classrooms. This legislation may offer blanket statewide restrictions, require localities to produce their own policies, or offer incentives and recommendations to districts. Many, but not all, of these policies include exemptions for students needing personal devices as part of their IEP, 504 plan, or medical plan.

Though some state legislatures passed cell phone bills in 2024, the majority passed theirs in the latter half of the 24–25 school year. The 25–26 school year, in turn, will be a critical test year for the efficacy of this kind of legislation. There is a critical opportunity here to discover how these bills, which vary significantly in size and scope, operate in different academic contexts. Do blanket restrictions do the trick in some cases? Do districts need external funding to make legislation effective? Is it effective to incentivize leaders to develop their own policies without a true mandate? Only time will tell.

We must, though, make sure that any analysis of cell phone legislation in the coming year takes multiple forms of data into consideration. It may take some time for this work to have any effect, positive or negative, on student academic achievement. A qualitative account of both educator and student experience may help us understand how this legislation will operate beyond its pilot year. Longitudinal analyses will be necessary.

Finally, we cannot view cell phone legislation as a silver bullet solution to solve technological intrusion into academic (and non-academic) life. K-12 classrooms are uniquely suited to provide critical, large-scale messaging on how these devices can be used safely. Like EdTech in classroom settings, mass-market technologies should serve as helpful supplements, not replacements, for human experience. We cannot ignore the ubiquity of personal devices, but we can certainly prepare our students (and families) for thoughtful employment of personal devices through 12th grade and beyond.



Appendix Three:

Performance Without Paper

We've identified three primary manifestations of "screen time" in K-12 spaces (those being Cell Phones/Social Media, Educational Technology, and Entertainment). Educational technology, hereafter referred to as "EdTech," may be conflated with digital entertainment and/or cell phone use despite their differing purposes AND market incentives. EdTech, when used as a supplement to high-quality teaching, has the ability to generate significant student academic growth, foster meaningful engagement with standards, and create a pedagogical ecosystem that is designed for all learners. The conversation around EdTech in K-12 classrooms must remain separate from the ferocious national debate over cell phone restrictions.

[CoSN's 2025 State of EdTech Leadership Report](#) notes that most school districts are either operating on a one-to-one device model OR are actively working towards a one-to-one model. In other words, most districts (especially after the COVID-19 pandemic) supply each of their students, regardless of age, with an electronic device (iPad, laptop, etc.) for educational use. How these devices are used, however, varies significantly by age and subject. A site-level administrator or EdTech leader may filter the district's available products to better serve the needs of their community and/or faculty. Products may include phonics programs for elementary students, coding lessons for middle-schoolers, or artificial intelligence software for high-schoolers (See: [2024 Blaschke Report on AI and Accessibility](#)). Many of these programs, even at the elementary level, are dynamic, allowing students to engage with content that is directly aligned with their skills and learning targets. A teacher's use of digital media is largely dependent on district context and administrative expectations (and, of course, their personal comfort with the technologies on offer).

One-to-one computing for general education is just one example of how EdTech manifests in a 2025 classroom. Some districts have adopted virtual reality headsets so that students may go on "virtual field trips" (Mohring & Brendel, 2021). These headsets afford districts that are remote and/or have fewer financial resources the opportunity to share a wide breadth of new experiences with their classes. Many district special education departments use tablets, computers, and other hardware for student communication and differentiation. Some high schools have purchased 3D printers, while others have created

robotics labs. These examples provide a glimpse into not just the scope of EdTech, but how it can be harnessed for the dual purposes of equity and workforce development.

The EdTech industry is vast, complex, and rife with opportunities IF teachers and administrators can use them effectively. None of the resources we have outlined here will be effective without proper teacher training AND an earnest commitment to technologies when they are pedagogically appropriate. We are calling for a balance, not a replacement. We also recognize a need for clear, thoughtful communication with families on the applications of EdTech in the classroom. Buy-in at every organizational level is critical. We do not want families to conflate cell phones with the intentional, thoughtful employment of EdTech for academic and personal growth.



Appendix Four: A Digital Childhood

Introduction

Children in the United States are growing up in a media ecosystem that is drastically different than that of most adults. This generation of kids have been afforded widespread, consistent, largely unregulated access to the internet via personal devices. Much of the national conversation over children's media has revolved around cell phone use in K-12 schools. Children gain access to screen media long before receiving their first cell phone, however. Educators, parents, and K-12 leaders must recognize that these digital childhoods can have effects on teaching practice, student behavior, and the school-to-home relationship. It is also necessary to remember, however, that the kind of media that children consume is often more important than the format in which it is presented.

Ubiquity of Screens Amongst Young Children

Young children in the United States (ages 0-8), despite their age, are often given access to screen-based devices for both education and entertainment purposes. These devices may come in the form of televisions, video game systems (like Nintendo Switch), or even laptop and desktop computers. The most common form of screen for children, however, is the tablet computer. These devices have permeated both educational and non-educational spaces. [According to Common Sense Media \(2025\), by age four, 58% of children have a tablet computer.](#) These tablets can be used for a variety of functions, but are commonly used to play games or watch videos. Despite their age, children can also use these computers to access social media sites (specifically, YouTube) (Auxier et al., 2020). Parents can have a tendency to rely on these devices as conflict resolution tools despite recognizing the potential dangers of overreliance (Chong et al., 2023).

The Screen Time Continuum

On its own, screen time as a form of entertainment does not present any explicit harm, especially if it is used with balance and intention. Harm may present itself, though, if the

activities are not developmentally appropriate or if they are designed in response to the developer's monetary incentives. Often, digital entertainment for children will present the user with a bevy of targeted advertisements. This structure gives developers a reason to keep users repeatedly engaged for long periods of time (Larche et al., 2016). The medium is not necessarily the problem, it's the way that the medium is used by developers. In response, families should be thoughtful about the kinds of activities that they engage with on their screens. For instance, a digital logic puzzle (e.g. a virtual escape room), while still a video game, is far more challenging (and ad-free) than mobile games like Candy Crush. In the same vein, talking to a loved one over FaceTime does not present the same dangers as scrolling social media because it requires deep and consistent socio-emotional engagement from the user while also negating the use of content generation algorithms designed to hook users.

School-to-Home Connection/Finding a Balance

Parents may have concerns over their child's use of EdTech in their public school partially because they have concerns over use in the home. Rather than explicitly pushing back on that rhetoric, it would benefit K-12 educators to meet families where they are and attempt to build a strong home-to-school connection. Families want to trust that teachers use screens thoughtfully, intentionally, and with balance. Consistent engagement with families over the use of EdTech, combined with practical and specific guidance on how technology may be used in the home, may simultaneously appease parent concerns while also building long-term trust in K-12 institutions.

Conclusion

Though educators are not directly responsible for how screens are used in their students' homes, they are responsible for navigating how those home behaviors manifest in classroom settings. Though screens and personal devices are wonderful tools for entertainment, families should remain thoughtful about the kinds of entertainment they make available to children (especially at young ages). Parents and guardians can affect change not just by making clear and consistent home policies surrounding technology use, but by modeling thoughtful use themselves. Much like EdTech, digital entertainment can be exciting, relaxing, and intriguing when used as a supplement to a life rich with a variety of experiences.

Appendix Five:

Parent Perspectives

Beneath our society's collective adoption of new technologies lies a paradox. While, yes, the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and the ubiquity of smart phones indicate a general acceptance of (and even enthusiasm for) technology's intrusion into everyday life, there are macro-level fears that are equally prevalent. Why do we need AI? Is it healthy to be connected to the internet 24/7? Are screens destroying our attention spans? How will new technologies affect my children?

Public schools have become an arena for the debate over technological proliferation. Accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, school districts have adopted innumerable devices and programs designed to support student academic growth. The key word here is support, not replace. Educational technologies (EdTech) are not, and shouldn't be, designed as a replacement for high-quality teaching. There is nuance to how teachers weave their technological supports throughout their classroom activities. This nuance, though, is difficult to communicate to families who may be concerned over the aforementioned technological proliferation.

Chong et al. (2023), in their meta-synthesis of perceptions of screentime, note that parents view screens (TVs, iPads, etc.) as babysitting tools and inevitable parts of life in the twenty-first century. At the same time, they recognize the harms associated with excessive screen time. This perspective is expanded upon in Wolfers et al.'s (2024) study on parental screen guilt. They found that guilt over parental decision-making is related to a child's time spent in front of a screen. Parents become dissatisfied with their parenting decisions when said decisions conflict with their previously-established moral code. Allowing children to spend their free time in front of screens, it seems, often contradicts broadly adopted philosophies on child care.

Chong et al. (2023), notably, also found that parents recognize screens as sites for educational opportunities. This seems to run counter to the larger conversation we are having about screen use (specifically, smart phones) in schools. Use of educational technology in the classroom is becoming increasingly unpopular DESPITE a parental recognition that EdTech can be a powerful tool for learning. This may fuel a rise in

educational programs designed to be used outside of the boundaries of a traditional school district. Widely available EdTech may be of great concern to K-12 leaders because products used at home, outside of the purview of a teacher, will likely not align with district-level technology initiatives and programs. This presents a danger to public schools attempting to establish coherence in a largely incoherent educational marketplace. Large-scale academic initiatives (like the Science of Reading) are threatened, too, because educators cannot guarantee that a child's educational screen time at home aligns meaningfully with the ideas and strategies they are learning in the classroom.

Parent perceptions of screen use post-COVID are paradoxical. Beliefs in the pragmatism and efficacy of new technologies during childhood are accompanied by feelings of guilt and fear over their known (and unknown) long-term ramifications. In the coming academic year, K-12 leaders in public schools must recognize this paradox as they communicate with concerned and anxious families. These institutions are uniquely positioned to ease the public into our new era of work and education.



Appendix Six: Preparation and Societal Progress

Introduction

K-12 schools are designed for social AND professional induction. They aim to teach concrete skills that can be used in the workforce while simultaneously fostering socio-emotional growth. The concrete skills that students need to learn, however, have become progressively more difficult to narrow down. The rise of generative artificial intelligence, the ubiquity of screens, and the wide range of new digital workplace skills have altered the curricular expectations for educational organizations. Furthermore, a rapidly-changing technological landscape may call into question some assumptions we make about traditional subjects and curricula. What do we need to teach, and how should we teach it?

Flexibility/Preparation for the Unknown

We have moved beyond the once-prolific category of “twenty-first century skills.” Not only do modern children understand how to use computers, their childhoods have been defined by an unprecedented access to digital spaces. There was no need to acclimatize; their ability to use technology came as naturally as their ability to walk. Meanwhile, over the past five years, tech applications in the workplace have evolved (World Economic Forum, 2025). Though it has been said plenty of times before, it bears repeating: the rise in automation/artificial intelligence will transform work in ways that are, as of now, unseen and unpredictable. Students knowing how to use computers is not enough preparation for this great unknown. Workforce development in 2025 will require K-12 students to learn skills that may never be used in a professional setting.

The Role of K-12 Schools

We may need to view technological pedagogies like we view K-12 writing courses. Most people do not write five paragraph essays for a living. The five paragraph essay, though, is not anachronistic. We use it NOT as a way to build a marketable skill, we use it to help foster critical thinking and argumentative reasoning. It is an avenue for an amorphous, but

important, skill for students to learn. Educational technologies can be viewed in the same way. If we use these technologies to help students remain flexible and knowledgeable about tech use more broadly, they will be better prepared for the inevitable adoption of new digital workforce skills in the future. We are not teaching the skill itself, we are teaching the flexibility.

Conclusion

The idea of “workforce development” is both critically important and fundamentally impossible. We do not know what students will need because K-12 institutions cannot possibly keep pace with the expectations of the workforce. It is their responsibility, however, to remain attentive to technological trends and create circumstances that allow students to easily adopt what may come. Furthermore, schools can (and SHOULD) try to impart a core message of balance and digital literacy so that students have a greater understanding of the technologies they use both in and out of the workplace.



Appendix Seven: EdTech Professional Development

Introduction

The successful implementation of educational technology (EdTech) tools in classrooms is dependent on educators having a nuanced understanding of the resource they will use, its pedagogical benefits, and how it can be woven into an already-established structure for teaching and learning. A school or district must ensure that any new technological initiative has an induction plan that is thoughtful, responsive, and comprehensive. If schools do not attend to the beginning stages of their EdTech initiatives, they run the risk of losing teacher trust, community confidence, and, worst of all, academic credibility.

Development of EdTech Skills

A school's professional development infrastructure must account for a wide variance in technological comfort within the workforce. Mirroring the differentiation practices that define modern K-12 education, professional development facilitators have to create meaningful learning opportunities for all teachers, regardless of their technological skill level. This era of teaching is particularly interesting because many new teachers grew up as digital natives (i.e. those who used computers and the internet from very early ages). This can create disparities in the skillsets of the teachers in the workforce. Regardless, the teachers in a school building are usually expected to use their EdTech tools regardless of their personal relationship with technology. As new programs and devices are introduced, and as new, innovative tools enter the marketplace, it is vital that EdTech professional development opportunities remain highly responsive to the needs of the educators who are expected to incorporate it into their classrooms.

Teacher Perceptions of Professional Development

Educators, regardless of their interest in advancing their practice, may not respond well to new professional development mandates. Professional development sessions may seem intrusive and unnecessary if they are laborious, complicated, or lack a direct connection to day-to-day teaching. Veteran educators, especially, recognize the cyclical nature of K-12

initiatives, and feel less of an incentive for aligning with mandated structures, strategies, and resources. Not only do EdTech professional development facilitators have to account for a range of skills, they have to remain mindful of how educators may view these kinds of opportunities writ large.

Conclusion

With the continued proliferation of digital resources in K-12 classrooms (and the looming presence of artificial intelligence in the educational marketplace), it is important that teachers have comprehensive and meaningful training. This training must include an explanation of the resource itself AND how it can be applied to a local pedagogical context. At the same time, those creating and directing professional development opportunities must remain thoughtful about how they are introducing the resource, what the teacher's response may be, and how to respond to some inevitable frustration or lethargy from the staff. Despite the challenges, professional development is vital in an era where thoughtful use of EdTech is an expected part of an educator's structure for teaching and learning.



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Screens, Learning, and Well-Being: Education Technology and “Screen Time” in K–12 Schools

Executive Summary

Public concern about “screen time” has increased as children’s lives now include more phones, apps, and online content than in prior decades (Haidt; Sved). At the same time, “screen time” is a broad phrase that can refer to very different activities, including social media use on a phone, entertainment viewing, and use of digital learning tools during instruction (Sved 4). This literature review follows the approach recommended across multiple sources: separate categories of screen use and focus on purpose, context, and design rather than treating all screen exposure as the same (Sved 4; Barnwell; Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 52).

CoSN emphasizes that school-related screen discussions are clearer when they distinguish among three common forms: smartphones and social media, educational technology (EdTech), and screen-based entertainment. CoSN notes that combining these categories often leads to confusion and less productive conversation (Sved 4). Dr. Candice Odgers makes a related argument in her research and public scholarship. She warns that there is often a large gap between the public story and what research has found so far. She highlights that available research linking social media to adolescent health often shows small effects and weak associations, and that youth report both meaningful benefits and notable downsides, with impacts varying widely across individuals (Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 18–20, 61).

Across the literature, several themes are consistent. First, there are no widely adopted time-limit rules for screen use at school. Instead, guidance emphasizes the difference between active and passive use. Active use includes critical thinking and creation. Passive use includes activities such as digital worksheets or consuming content with little reflection or interaction (American Academy of Pediatrics, “Screen Time at School” 2). Second, teacher-guided digital tools can support accessibility, differentiation, and participation when used intentionally to support

learning goals (American Academy of Pediatrics, “Screen Time at School” 2–3; Barnwell; Sved 4). Third, evidence summarized in written testimony by Dr. Jared Horvath suggests that broad general increases in classroom screen exposure may cause weaker learning outcomes, while more consistent academic gains appear in intentional uses such as targeted practice (application of knowledge) or remediation (Horvath 1–5). Fourth, the American Academy of Pediatrics frames children’s media experiences as part of a “digital ecosystem” that is shaped by design incentives that often prioritize engagement, which can crowd out sleep, movement, relationships, and sustained attention. These conditions are important for learning and development (Munzer et al. 2–8).

Odgers’ work adds an important methodological caution. Much of the social media and mental health research is correlational, and many studies cannot distinguish cause from effect. In addition, large preregistered studies often find small associations between daily technology use and adolescent well-being that are unlikely to be clinically meaningful as commonly measured (Odgers and Jensen 336–38, 343–44; Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 20). She also highlights intensive daily and momentary studies that use each child as their own control and report few day-to-day linkages between daily digital technology use and symptoms compared with many other stressors and experiences (Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 24–25). At the same time, Odgers and colleagues emphasize that risks are not evenly distributed and that offline vulnerabilities often predict negative online experiences. Sleep disruption is one area where evidence is repeatedly documented as a concern when devices are used late at night (George and Odgers 846–49).

Finally, Jonathan Haidt argues that a shift toward a “phone-based childhood,” combined with declining independence and free play, has contributed to youth mental health challenges and supports norms such as phone-free schools (Haidt; “The Four Norms”). Odgers agrees that youth well-being deserves urgent attention, while warning that bans can be blunt tools and may produce unintended consequences if they divert attention from improving safety, supporting healthy routines such as sleep, and investing in approaches that meet young people where they are (Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 35–36, 52). Taken together, the literature supports moving beyond a single “screen time” number and toward clear distinctions, purposeful instructional use, reduced distraction, and attention to what screen use may displace, especially sleep and sustained learning time (American Academy of Pediatrics, “Screen Time at School” 2–4; Barnwell; Munzer et al. 2–8; Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 52).

Defining “General Technology Use” vs. “Education Technology Use”

General technology use includes digital experiences common in daily life, such as social media, entertainment video, gaming, and algorithm-driven feeds (Sved 4; Munzer et al. 2–5). The American Academy of Pediatrics describes this as part of a digital ecosystem shaped by incentives that often prioritize engagement and commercialization (Munzer et al. 2–5).

Education technology use refers to digital tools intended to support teaching and learning and used under educator guidance to support learning goals (Sved 8; American Academy of Pediatrics, “Screen Time at School” 2). CoSN emphasizes that EdTech is most effective as support for high-quality instruction rather than a replacement for it (Sved 18).

Acknowledging Concerns About General Technology Use, and Why Schools Are Part of the Discussion

Concerns are understandable because many digital products use engagement-focused design features that can contribute to distraction and can displace healthy routines, including sleep (Munzer et al. 2–8). CoSN documents that smartphones and social media have become central to public debate about distraction, safety, and mental health, contributing to new policies and restrictions in many places (Sved 17–25). Haidt similarly advocates for phone-free schools as part of a broader set of collective norms (“The Four Norms”; Haidt).

These concerns can spill into school conversations about instructional technology because “screen time” is often used as a catch-all label. CoSN cautions that this makes it harder to have clear discussions about learning tools versus entertainment or social media (Sved 16–18). Common Sense Education recommends that technology use in class be connected to clear learning benefits and that educators consider whether screens truly enhance the learning task (Barnwell).

Analysis: What the Research Says About Education Technology Use in Schools

1) Time limits are less informative than quality and purpose (active vs. passive)

The American Academy of Pediatrics notes that there are no standard screen time limits for school and instead highlights active versus passive technology use (American Academy of

Pediatrics, “Screen Time at School” 2). Active use involves critical thinking and creation. Passive use includes activities like digital worksheets or content consumption without meaningful interaction (American Academy of Pediatrics, “Screen Time at School” 2). Common Sense Education similarly emphasizes that context matters and that screen use should be intentional, purposeful, and appropriate for the learning goal and student age (Barnwell). Odgers also recommends shifting attention from how long youth are online to what they are doing online (Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 52).

2) EdTech can support learning access and participation when used intentionally

The AAP school-focused guidance provides examples of how technology can support students with different needs, including audiobooks and voice-to-text, and notes that some evidence supports achievement gains when school devices are paired with evidence-based reading and math programs (American Academy of Pediatrics, “Screen Time at School” 2–3). Common Sense Education emphasizes accessibility and differentiation as strong reasons for classroom technology use (Barnwell). CoSN similarly describes EdTech benefits related to differentiation and workforce preparation when use is intentional and supported by educator training (Sved 4, 27–29).

3) Risks increase when screens substitute for instruction or increase distraction

Horvath argues that increased general classroom screen exposure may be associated with weaker learning outcomes and that stronger evidence of benefit appears with intentional use cases such as applied practice and remediation (Horvath 1–5). He also argues that digital environments can train habits of task switching that conflict with sustained attention needed for learning (Horvath 6). The AAP policy statement similarly emphasizes how engagement-based designs and notifications can disrupt learning and sleep (Munzer et al. 4–8). Odgers and Jensen argue that “screen time” alone is an increasingly weak construct for understanding outcomes and recommend more detailed attention to activities, contexts, and individual differences (Odgers and Jensen 342–44).

4) Reading, writing, and deep learning require particular care

Horvath summarizes evidence that comprehension and retention are often stronger on paper than on screens, especially for complex or extended texts (Horvath 5). He also summarizes evidence

that handwritten note taking can support stronger long-term learning than typing, because handwriting can encourage processing and summarization (Horvath 5). Common Sense Education recommends considering device type, platform design, and ease of distraction when assigning reading on screens, and it suggests comparing print versus digital reading outcomes in local settings where appropriate (Barnwell).

5) Youth well-being and learning conditions are shaped by broader systems

The AAP policy statement emphasizes that children’s media experiences are shaped by nested systems and design incentives, and it recommends focusing on quality, healthy routines, and what media may crowd out (Munzer et al. 2–8). CoSN similarly concludes that screens are now a permanent feature of schooling and that the key question is how to integrate them in ways that strengthen learning while maintaining trust by distinguishing screen types and their impacts (Sved 6). Odgers cautions that public panic can lead to blunt policies and missed opportunities, and she recommends youth-centered approaches and independent evaluation, especially as new tools expand in schools (Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 43, 52).

Recommendations

A. Shift from “minutes” to meaning and purpose

1. Use shared language that distinguishes active learning use from passive use, and make the learning purpose of technology clear (American Academy of Pediatrics, “Screen Time at School” 2; Barnwell; Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 52).
2. Use consistent processes for selecting and evaluating digital tools so that technology use is tied to learning goals and student needs (Barnwell; Sved 27–29).

B. Reduce distraction and protect learning time

1. Strengthen learning environments that support focus and reduce distraction from personal devices and entertainment features, while also considering safety and accessibility needs (Munzer et al. 7–8; Sved 17–25; “The Four Norms”).
2. Configure school devices and platforms to support learning goals and reduce engagement features that make disengagement difficult (Munzer et al. 4–8).

C. Protect literacy and deep learning routines

1. Use print or carefully structured digital reading environments for sustained, complex reading tasks when appropriate, given evidence summarized on comprehension and retention differences (Horvath 5; Barnwell). Preserve handwriting and offline processing where appropriate, especially for conceptual learning and memory formation (Horvath 5).

D. Use EdTech as support for instruction, not a replacement

1. Prioritize the principle that EdTech supports instruction and relationships rather than replacing high-quality teaching (Sved 18; Horvath 7).
2. Focus technology use where benefits are most clearly described in the literature, including accessibility tools and targeted practice, while reducing low-value passive uses (American Academy of Pediatrics, “Screen Time at School” 2–3; Horvath 4–5; Sved 4).

E. Support healthy routines and digital literacy

1. Support sleep routines and reduce late-night device disruption, given evidence that sleep is one area where technology use is consistently linked to negative outcomes (George and Odgers 846–49; Munzer et al. 7–8).
2. Teach and reinforce digital literacy and well-being habits so that youth can better understand online risks, benefits, and design features that affect behavior (Munzer et al. 5–8; Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 52).

Conclusion

The literature reviewed here supports moving away from a single “screen time” number and toward clearer distinctions among types of screen use, attention to learning purpose, and protection of routines that support well-being and deep learning (Sved 4, 6; American Academy of Pediatrics, “Screen Time at School” 2–4; Munzer et al. 2–8). CoSN argues that more constructive conversations occur when smartphones and social media, entertainment, and EdTech are discussed separately (Sved 4, 16–18). Odgers’ synthesis emphasizes that many claims about social media and adolescent mental health exceed what current research designs can support, because much of the evidence is correlational and effects are often small as measured. She also argues that resources should be redirected toward youth-centered design, safety by default, support for sleep and routines, and attention to what youth are doing online rather than only how long they are online (Odgers and Jensen 343–44; Odgers, “Building What’s Next” 52). Alongside these cautions, Horvath and related sources highlight that learning conditions matter, including risks tied to distraction and task switching, and that some learning activities such as complex reading may benefit from non-screen formats (Horvath 5–6; Barnwell).

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Gaps in Information Literacy Knowledge and Skills Among First-Year Postsecondary Students in Minnesota

Key Findings and Recommendations from Interviews with Faculty

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Executive summary

Minnesota students are entering college without the essential information literacy skills needed to navigate their education, careers, and civic life. As artificial intelligence (AI) reshapes how information is produced and misinformation spreads rapidly across digital platforms, faculty report growing concern about students' ability to find, evaluate, synthesize, and responsibly share information. These gaps are not marginal; they are reshaping teaching, constraining learning, and compounding inequities across disciplines and institutions.

This study draws on faculty perspectives from across Minnesota's two- and four-year colleges and universities to examine where first-year students struggle most and what changes are needed to better prepare students for postsecondary success.

KEY FINDINGS

Faculty reported the largest and most consequential skill gaps in three interconnected areas:

■ Identifying and accessing diverse sources

Students rely heavily on narrow, familiar tools (e.g., Google or a single database), struggle to use search strategies effectively, and have limited understanding of source types or how information systems are structured. They struggle to seek out multiple perspectives or intentionally consider who produces information and why.

■ Evaluating sources for credibility and accuracy

Students tend to rely on surface indicators of credibility (appearance, familiarity, ranking) rather than contextual judgment. Verification and corroboration practices are weak, and students struggle to distinguish fact from opinion or identify misinformation — challenges amplified by increasing use of generative AI tools.

■ Synthesizing and sharing findings ethically

Rather than integrating ideas to develop new understanding, students often compile sources without meaning making. Conclusions are frequently underdeveloped, and ethical responsibilities related to audience, framing, and interpretation receive limited attention. Reflection on the research process is typically procedural rather than analytical, and research is rarely approached as iterative inquiry.

■ These gaps negatively affect instruction and student outcomes at the college level.

Faculty reported spending substantial instructional time remediating foundational skills, which meant that class time was diverted away from in-depth content, applied learning, and higher-order thinking. Courses are increasingly structured around scaffolding and process management rather than exploration and depth. For students, information literacy gaps compound over time, contributing to shallow engagement, reduced confidence, overreliance on AI, and difficulty navigating uncertainty. Faculty emphasized that these challenges likely extend beyond coursework, affecting students' readiness for professional work, civic participation, and lifelong learning.

■ Evidence supports an investment in licensed library professionals in K-12 schools.

In the 2024-25 school year, 250,375 Minnesota students across 521 schools had no access to a licensed school library media specialist and only 19% of school libraries met the full statutory definition of a school library. This is despite more than 50 years of research illustrating the correlation between having licensed professionals in schools and increased student proficiency in subjects like reading and math (Burruss et al., 2023; Otero Martinez, 2024; Wine et al., 2023).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Faculty shared several clear and actionable recommendations for the K-12 education system and policymakers:

FOR K–12 EDUCATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

- ✓ **Make information literacy explicit and foundational.** Integrate it intentionally across disciplines and support it with trained librarians and media specialists.
- ✓ **Prioritize research as a process.** Emphasize inquiry, evaluation, synthesis, revision, and reflection over speed and task completion.
- ✓ **Sustain reading and synthesis instruction beyond early grades.** Support students in engaging with complex texts and connecting ideas across sources.
- ✓ **Teach ethical, transparent use of AI and digital tools.** Focus on how technologies work, their limitations, and responsible use.
- ✓ **Encourage collaboration and help-seeking.** Normalize working with librarians and asking questions as essential academic skills.

FOR POLICYMAKERS

- ✓ **Elevate and align information literacy and research in standards and policy.** Treat them as essential, not supplemental skills.
- ✓ **Invest in staffing and expertise.** Ensure sustained access to licensed librarians and instructional support personnel.
- ✓ **Maintain attention to advanced reading skills.** Support discipline-specific reading beyond early literacy.
- ✓ **Adopt thoughtful AI policies.** Promote responsible use rather than reactive restrictions.
- ✓ **Examine accountability pressures.** Ensure testing and performance incentives do not crowd out inquiry, synthesis, and deep learning.



METHODS

This study was conducted in fall 2025 in partnership with Minitex. Wilder Research interviewed 21 faculty who teach first-year students at two- and four-year postsecondary institutions across Minnesota. Faculty also completed a short pre-interview survey aligned with the 2025 Information & Technology Educators of Minnesota (ITEM) standards. Interview questions were informed by survey responses and focused on four learning domains: information literacy, digital citizenship, technology and innovation, and literacy engagement. Findings were analyzed thematically to identify consistent patterns across disciplines and institutions.

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Introduction

The ability to critically evaluate sources, use technology effectively, and engage responsibly in digital spaces is fundamental to both workforce success and a functioning democracy.

In fall 2025, Minnesota librarians partnered with Wilder Research to assess existing gaps in students' information literacy skills as they begin college. Wilder conducted in-depth interviews with 21 faculty from varied colleges and universities across the state who teach first-year students. Faculty were asked about the gaps between the knowledge and skills first-year students are expected to have and the knowledge and skills they had on entry to college. The questions focused on four key domains based on updated standards for 12th graders from ITEM (Information & Technology Educators of Minnesota): information literacy and research, digital citizenship, technology and innovation, and literacy engagement.

The findings reveal large gaps in student preparedness for college that, if not addressed, could have negative implications for Minnesota's future workforce. This report summarizes those findings and presents recommendations for policymakers and K-12 educators to ensure Minnesota students graduate with the skills that our information age demands.

Key findings

Faculty consistently described notable gaps in first-years students' information literacy and research skills, particularly around evaluating sources, engaging critically with information, and applying research skills independently. Across fields of study, interview participants expressed concern that students arrive underprepared for the expectations of college-level inquiry. While skill gaps were also identified in the areas of digital citizenship, technology and innovation, and literacy engagement, information literacy and research gaps were the most abundant and concerning among faculty. Therefore, the following sections summarize the key themes related to information literacy and research skills.

Responses from faculty suggest that students' struggles are less about motivation and more about foundational exposure and practice of information literacy skills. Students often lack experience with structured searching, evaluating authority, navigating information systems, and intentionally engaging with diverse sources — skills that faculty view as essential for success in postsecondary learning.

Among information literacy standards developed by ITEM, the areas where students fell shortest, and that faculty identified as most essential for postsecondary success, were:

- Identifying and accessing diverse sources
- Evaluating source for credibility and accuracy
- Synthesizing and sharing findings ethically

In a brief, pre-interview survey, more than 75% of faculty identified students as having “moderate” or “significant” gaps in the above skill areas. For more detailed responses from a short survey with faculty, see the methods section. The following sections detail faculty opinions about student skills in these three areas from interviews.

IDENTIFYING AND ACCESSING DIVERSE SOURCES

STUDENTS STRUGGLE TO IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE AND DIVERSE SOURCES

Faculty consistently described students struggling to **identify a range of relevant sources** when beginning research. Students tend to rely on a narrow set of familiar tools, most often Google or a single database, rather than considering **who authoritative voices might be** for a given topic or **what types of sources could best address a research question**. Students were described as gravitating toward sources they already know, even when those sources are poorly suited to the assignment. Faculty noted that students often stop searching once they find *something* rather than continuing to explore additional

perspectives or formats. This contributes to shallow research and limits exposure to diverse viewpoints. Several faculty noted that students rarely pause to think about *who* produces information or *why* certain sources might be more appropriate than others. While they have more of a tendency to ask these questions when it comes to news on social media, they are less likely to do so when identifying sources for a research project.

Students tend to assume that if it shows up on Google, it must be legitimate. There's very little questioning of where the information actually comes from. -Interview participant

LIMITED USE OF SEARCH STRATEGIES AND NAVIGATING SOURCE STRUCTURE

Faculty widely observed gaps in students' ability to **use intentional search strategies**. Students often enter full questions or vague phrases into search tools rather than identifying keywords, related terms, or synonyms. There was frequent mention of students' limited use of filters, advanced search features, or sorting tools in databases. Faculty describe students as largely unfamiliar with how database structures work, which makes it difficult for them to refine or expand searches effectively. And for students who had previous exposure to literature search engines, they were challenged to transfer those skills to a different platform.

Students often struggle to scan abstracts, headings, tables of contents or website navigation to assess relevance. Instead, they may attempt to read entire sources without understanding how information is organized, which can be overwhelming and inefficient.

...students just read the title of the reports or journal articles and they don't know how to utilize the abstract and do not have full grasp of what the article is about. -Interview participant

LIMITED EXPOSURE TO MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

Faculty indicated that students frequently fail to **identify sources representing different perspectives on an issue**. While assignments may explicitly ask for contrasting viewpoints, students often lack the skills to intentionally seek out pro/con positions or recognize perspectives within sources. This was described as a persistent challenge, particularly in evaluating arguments rather than simply locating information.

NARROW UNDERSTANDING OF SOURCE TYPES

Most of the faculty interviewed said that students have a **limited conception of what counts as a credible or useful source**. While databases and websites were commonly mentioned, students show less awareness of distinctions among source types (e.g., primary vs. secondary sources, scholarly vs. popular). Some faculty also raised concerns about students' growing reliance on AI tools without sufficient understanding of their limitations or appropriate use.

They'll use blogs or random websites and treat them the same as scholarly articles. There's not a strong understanding of what makes a source credible. -Interview participant

EVALUATING SOURCES FOR CREDIBILITY AND ACCURACY

NARROW UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT COUNTS AS AN APPROPRIATE SOURCE

Faculty consistently described students as **relying on a limited and rigid definition of credibility**, often equating it with surface-level signals such as professional appearance, institutional affiliation, or search engine ranking. Students were described as **less comfortable evaluating credibility across different contexts** (e.g., community-based knowledge, practitioner expertise, journalism, or lived experience) and often struggled to justify why a source was appropriate for a specific academic or personal purpose.

Students tend to think that if something looks polished or comes from a familiar website, it must be credible. They don't always ask whether it's the right kind of source for the question they're trying to answer. -Interview participant

Faculty noted that students **do not consistently evaluate whether information is current or accurate** in relation to the topic or discipline. While dates may be checked, students often lack understanding of how timeliness varies by field or issue, leading to the use of outdated or contextually inappropriate sources.

They'll check the date, but they don't always understand whether being current actually matters for that topic, or why. -Interview participant

SUPERFICIAL EVALUATION OF CREDIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

Faculty noted that while students may recognize common evaluation criteria, such as author, domain, or publication date, they often **apply these indicators mechanically rather than engaging in deeper critical judgment.**

At the same time, faculty emphasized that students **rarely consider how information is produced, funded, or distributed.** Limited awareness of editorial processes, organizational influence, and economic or institutional pressures lead students to take sources largely at face value, without questioning whose interests are represented or amplified.

Together, these patterns limit students' ability to critically assess authority and reliability in context, particularly when sources appear polished or legitimate but warrant closer scrutiny.

They can tell me who the author is, but they struggle to explain why that author should be trusted, or not, for this particular topic.

-Interview participant

There's very little questioning of who is behind the information or what interests might be shaping it. Students often take sources at face value.

-Interview participant

WEAK VERIFICATION AND CORROBORATION PRACTICES, INCLUDING AI-GENERATED CONTENT

Faculty widely reported that students rarely verify information across multiple sources. Rather than cross-checking claims or engaging in lateral reading, students often rely on a single source, particularly one that supports their existing views or appears authoritative.

This pattern is intensified by growing use of generative AI. Faculty described students as struggling to identify when content is machine-generated and to evaluate the limitations of AI-produced information. AI outputs are often treated as neutral or reliable, without verification against human-generated sources or independent evidence.

As a result, students may accept information that sounds confident or plausible without adequately assessing its accuracy, provenance, or reliability.

Once they find a source that supports their point, they stop looking.

-Interview participant

There's a tendency to assume it's reliable if it sounds confident.

-Interview participant

DIFFICULTY DISTINGUISHING FACT, OPINION, AND MISINFORMATION

Faculty expressed concern that students **struggle to differentiate between evidence-based claims and opinions**, particularly in persuasive or emotionally charged content. Students were described as having **difficulty identifying misinformation**, especially when it is embedded in otherwise credible-looking sources.

Students often blur the line between fact and opinion, especially when the writing sounds authoritative or aligns with their views.

-Interview participant

SYNTHESIZING AND SHARING FINDINGS ETHICALLY

SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS LACK MEANING-MAKING AND INTEGRATION

Faculty frequently described students as **assembling information from multiple sources without integrating ideas into a new conclusion or understanding**. Rather than synthesizing across perspectives or evidence, students often organize sources side by side or restate what individual sources say, struggling to move from “what the sources say” to “what this means.”

As a result, conclusions are often underdeveloped, predictable, or disconnected from the evidence gathered. Faculty noted that students may complete the research process without revisiting their original question or clearly articulating how their findings led to a refined or original understanding.

Students are good at pulling quotes from different sources, but much less confident when it comes to explaining what those sources collectively suggest. -Interview participant

[The conclusion] can feel like an afterthought rather than the outcome of the inquiry. -Interview participant

LIMITED ATTENTION TO AUDIENCE AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY IN SHARING INFORMATION

Faculty indicated that students most often frame research products solely for an instructor as the audience, with **limited consideration of how findings might be communicated responsibly to audiences beyond the classroom**. When sharing

information, students were described as prioritizing assignment completion over clarity, relevance, or potential impact.

In addition, faculty described many cases where students often do not consider the ethics of sharing information, such as responsible representation of sources, accurate attribution, and thoughtful framing of conclusions. While citation requirements may be met, faculty noted less attention to the broader responsibility that accompanies interpreting and sharing information.

Students tend to write for me, not for an audience. -Interview participant

They know they need to cite sources, but they don't always think about the responsibility that comes with interpreting and sharing that information. -Interview participant

REFLECTION ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS IS LIMITED AND OFTEN PROCEDURAL

Faculty noted that student reflection on the research process, when present, tends to be procedural rather than analytical. **Reflections were described as focusing on task completion (“what I did”) rather than evaluating effectiveness**, identifying strengths and weaknesses, or considering how research practices could be improved.

When students do identify areas for improvement, faculty observed that these are often framed in terms of **grading criteria rather than deeper learning**. Reflection is frequently compliance-driven, aimed at earning points or meeting assignment requirements, rather than curiosity-driven or focused on strengthening understanding, synthesis, or communication.

When students reflect, it's usually a description of the steps they took, not an evaluation of how effective their research actually was. -Interview participant

Students are more likely to say they'd improve something to get a better grade than to explain how they'd improve the quality of the research or the conclusions. -Interview participant

LIMITED USE OF FEEDBACK AND ITERATIVE INQUIRY

Faculty responses suggested that **students rarely engage in research as an iterative process that incorporates feedback, revision, or the identification of next steps**. While students may engage in basic self-evaluation, there was limited evidence of peer

review, revision based on critique, or sustained inquiry beyond the completion of an assignment.

Research was commonly framed as a finite task rather than an evolving process. Some faculty described students as rarely identifying additional information needs, asking follow-up questions, or viewing research as a foundation for future exploration.

Students will sometimes talk about what they think they did well, but there's less engagement with peer feedback or revising based on critique. -Interview participant

Once the paper is done, the research is done. There's not much sense of 'what would I explore next?' -Interview participant

INFORMATION LITERACY GAPS NEGATIVELY AFFECT TEACHING AND, ULTIMATELY, STUDENT LEARNING

IMPACT ON TEACHING

Information literacy gaps force instructors to shift time away from disciplinary learning toward remediation of foundational skills. Faculty consistently reported needing to slow instruction and devote substantial class time to reading comprehension, source evaluation, argument construction, professional communication, and technology use, often at the expense of deeper content and applied learning.

As a result, instructors described cutting readings, reducing content coverage, and restructuring courses around step-by-step scaffolding and process-based instruction. Increased time spent clarifying expectations, managing communication, and providing individualized support limits opportunities for higher-order discussion, professional connection, and intellectual depth.

Emerging technologies, particularly generative AI, further complicate teaching. Faculty reported increased challenges related to academic integrity, source credibility, and assessment, prompting shifts toward in-class work, process documentation, and alternative forms of evaluation. Many also noted the need to teach basic digital and information skills outside their disciplinary role due to uneven student preparation.

Faculty emphasized the **emotional and ethical toll** of these shifts, including frustration, inefficiency, and concern about academic standards. Several described ongoing tension between accommodating student needs and maintaining expectations for college-level work, with remediation increasingly displacing core course goals.

IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING

When foundational information literacy skills are not developed early, learning gaps compound over time. Faculty described cumulative effects on student learning, with students struggling increasingly in upper-level courses to meet academic expectations and prepare for professional work.

Across disciplines, instructors observed shallower engagement with course material, including difficulty analyzing texts, synthesizing sources, and applying information to new contexts. Students often approach assignments as isolated tasks rather than parts of a coherent learning process, resulting in surface-level understanding and weak or generic conclusions.

Students also struggle to evaluate credibility and navigate uncertainty, frequently viewing information as either equally valid or wholly untrustworthy. Overreliance on generative AI further reduces opportunities to practice synthesis, judgment, and independent reasoning.

These gaps affect **motivation, confidence, and participation**. Faculty reported that students who fall behind in reading or research often disengage or avoid seeking support, compounding learning challenges. Time spent navigating basic skills and logistics diverts attention from course goals and limits opportunities for deeper intellectual growth.

Faculty emphasized that these impacts extend beyond individual courses, affecting students' readiness for civic engagement, collaborative learning, and careers that require evaluating information, adapting to new knowledge, and learning independently.

Evidence: The case for investing in K-12 library specialists to improve information literacy

In their interviews, post-secondary faculty point to the urgent need to improve students' information literacy skills, and to build and better hone those skills *before* students arrive at college. A review of existing literature shows that K-12 library specialists have the potential to achieve those aims.

In today's digital world, students must be able to think critically, evaluate sources, and understand media messages' influences—and this must become a habit developed via every subject they study at all grade levels, so that students develop the foundational and advanced-level skills they need to meet the challenges of engaging in democratic society today" (Hobbs et al., 2025, pg. 5).

Library specialists' effect on K-12 student proficiency

More than 50 years of research has illustrated the correlation between having library specialists in K-12 schools and increased student proficiency in subjects like reading and math (Burress et al., 2023; Otero Martinez, 2024; Wine et al., 2023).

The positive effects that library specialists have on student achievement appear to increase as their FTE status increases. Data from a Missouri study show that student proficiency rates were significantly higher in English language arts, science, and math when there was a full-time librarian at the school (Burress et al., 2023). While a full-time school librarian provides the best learning advantage, "students enrolled in schools with a part-time school librarian have a learning advantage over those in schools with no school librarian" (Burress et al., 2023, pg. 13). In other words, a part-time school librarian is more beneficial than having no librarian at all.

The literature also states that licensed library media specialists have a proven track record of supporting students across a variety of subjects. Trained librarians "teach students about inquiry skills, evaluating information, and using multiple literacies (including print and digital). They also collaborate with classroom teachers and provide professional development to teachers" (Wine et al., 2023).

Minnesota's status

Findings from the 2024-25 School Library Status (Minnesota Department of Education, 2025) show that:

- 250,375 Minnesota students across 521 schools had no access to a licensed school library media specialist.
- Only 19% of school libraries meet the full statutory definition (see Minnesota Statutes 2023, section 124D.911 for definition).
- Minnesota ranks 46th nationally in FTE per school for school library staff.

Information literacy is complex and requires collaboration

While data show the importance of having a full-time library specialist at K-12 schools, it is also important to avoid laying the responsibility of information literacy instruction solely at their feet. The wide range of topics included in “information literacy” necessitates on-going instruction that is embedded throughout classrooms and lessons.

Because there are so many different types and forms of media, media literacy is not one simple thing. It’s a constellation of competencies that reflect the full complexity of human communication in a world where digital technologies are the norm (Hobbs et al., 2025, pg. 15).

While this article is specifically focused on “media” literacy, much of its findings apply to the broader concept of “information literacy.” In their study of Massachusetts educators, the authors highlight the frustrations of educators who feel overwhelmed by having to teach media literacy on top of their classroom subject, as well as several successes involving educator collaboration to improve students’ media literacy skills. A major finding of the report is that there are several examples of “effective media literacy in Massachusetts schools, including evidence of strong and successful collaboration between social studies teachers and school librarians” (Hobbs et al., 2025, pg. 6).

Ultimately, existing literature on this topic supports several key points:

1. Like the post-secondary faculty who were interviewed, many K-12 educators are concerned about gaps in student information literacy skills, especially given the near-constant flow of information to which students are exposed.
2. K-12 library media specialists are uniquely skilled and qualified to teach information literacy, which helps students prepare for college, career, and civic engagement.
3. Information literacy is complex and requires collaboration between educators and integration across classroom learning. Library media specialists can take a lead role in information literacy, but that work should not fall solely on them.

Recommendations

ADVICE FOR K-12 EDUCATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Faculty emphasized that preparing students for postsecondary learning requires a shift from content coverage and task completion toward **intentional development of core skills**, particularly information literacy, reading, research, and ethical technology use. While acknowledging the constraints of K-12 systems, faculty encouraged **changes that prioritize long-term learning over short-term performance**.

Below are several recommendations based on faculty input.

- **Treat information literacy as a foundational skill requiring explicit instruction, not an incidental outcome of assignments or technology use:**
Faculty noted that higher education has learned, often the hard way, that assuming students will “pick up” these skills leads to uneven preparation. Several suggested recognizing information literacy as a distinct area of instruction and supporting it through intentional integration and specialist expertise.

We’ve learned in college that assuming students just ‘pick up’ writing doesn’t work. Information literacy needs the same kind of explicit attention.
-Interview participant

- **Slow down and emphasize the research process:** Slowing down allows students to experience research as inquiry rather than as a step toward a product. When research is rushed or framed only as a requirement for an assignment, students tend to engage superficially and miss opportunities to evaluate sources, synthesize ideas, and reflect on their learning. Some faculty urged a greater emphasis on process over performance. High-stakes grading and pressure to get the “right” answer were seen as limiting students’ willingness to take intellectual risks, revise work, or persist through complexity, habits essential for research and critical thinking.

When research is only a step before writing a paper, it shortchanges evaluation and understanding. -Interview participant

Students come in thinking learning means getting it right the first time, which makes real inquiry hard. -Interview participant

- **Strengthen reading comprehension and synthesis skills beyond early grades:** Faculty observed that many students arrive at college struggling to read complex texts, extract meaning, and connect ideas across sources. They encouraged sustained attention to teaching how to approach difficult texts and engage deeply with information.
- **Support ethical and transparent instruction on AI and digital tools:** The growing role of AI and digital tools surfaced as an urgent instructional need. Faculty encouraged teaching students how these tools work, when they are appropriate, and how to evaluate their outputs, rather than avoiding or banning them.
- **Align policies, standards, and accountability systems to support deep learning, curiosity, collaboration, and help-seeking:** Faculty highlighted the importance of student agency, curiosity, and choice. Allowing students to explore meaningful questions and topics of interest was seen as key to engagement, synthesis, and ethical information use. Finally, faculty emphasized normalizing help-seeking and collaboration, including working with librarians, asking questions, and using available resources. Students who view help-seeking as a strength, faculty noted, are better prepared to succeed.

Knowing when and how to ask for help is a sophisticated skill, not a weakness. -Interview participant

CONSIDERATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS

Faculty responses emphasized that policy decisions play a significant role in shaping students' preparedness for postsecondary learning, particularly in areas related to information literacy, research, reading, and critical thinking. Across responses, faculty encouraged policymakers to consider how structural incentives, accountability systems, and resource allocation influence instructional priorities and student learning experiences.

...when these standards are integrated into curriculum without the expertise of a library or information professional, there's no responsibility or accountability for bringing these skills into the classroom. When it's on all teachers equally to try to fit it into their subject matter, it doesn't happen effectively. Having information professionals/librarians on staff, paid effectively, and supporting all subject areas from K-12 onward seems essential. -Interview participant

Faculty also urged policymakers to recognize **information literacy and research as essential, foundational skills**, rather than optional or supplemental ones. Several responses suggested that clearer policy guidance, standards alignment, and dedicated support could help elevate these skills across grade levels and subject areas.

Another strong consideration was the need for **adequate staffing, training, and resources**, particularly access to librarians, media specialists, and instructional support personnel. Faculty noted that students who have consistent exposure to trained information professionals are better prepared to navigate complex information environments in college and beyond.

Students who've worked with librarians or media specialists come in with a much stronger foundation." Interview participant

Faculty frequently highlighted **reading comprehension as a cross-cutting policy issue**, observing that difficulties with reading complex texts limit students' ability to engage in research, evaluate sources, and synthesize information. They encouraged sustained policy attention to reading instruction beyond the early grades, including support for discipline-specific reading strategies.

The growing influence of **artificial intelligence and digital tools** also emerged as an area requiring thoughtful policy engagement. Faculty cautioned against reactive or restrictive approaches and instead encouraged policies that support ethical use, transparency, and instruction focused on understanding how technologies work and how to evaluate their outputs.

AI isn't going away. Policy needs to focus on teaching students how to use it responsibly, not just banning it. -Interview participant

Faculty also encouraged policymakers to consider how policies shape **student agency, curiosity, and help-seeking behaviors**. Systems that prioritize compliance, speed, and individual performance were seen as discouraging collaboration, reflection, and persistence, skills faculty view as critical for postsecondary success.

Students do better when they're encouraged to ask questions and take intellectual risks, not just follow directions. -Interview participant

Finally, a concern for some faculty was the **high-stakes accountability and standardized testing pressures** that can unintentionally narrow instruction and negatively affect learning. Faculty noted that when schools are incentivized to prioritize test performance and content coverage, there is less time and flexibility for developing complex skills such as evaluating information, synthesizing ideas, and engaging in inquiry-based learning.

When everything is tied to testing, deeper skills like research and critical thinking get pushed aside. -Interview participant

Methods

RECRUITMENT

Minitex and its partners, including librarians from several postsecondary institutions, identified 32 faculty members from two- and four-year institutions across the state who engage with first-year students to invite them to participate in the study. Of those invited, 22 individuals completed a short survey, and 21 of those surveyed participated in a follow-up interview.

Participants represented a range of disciplines, including faculty who teach introductory (101-level) courses in sociology, geology, clinical psychology, English, humanities, agricultural education, and history; faculty who teach first-year experience or writing courses; and one librarian. Participants were affiliated with the following institutions:

- University of Minnesota–Duluth
- Hamline University
- Normandale Community College
- Minnesota State University–Mankato
- University of St. Thomas
- St. Cloud State University
- Southwest Minnesota State University
- Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- University of Minnesota–Twin Cities
- Minneapolis Community and Technical College

BRIEF SURVEY AND INTERVIEWS

Wilder Research worked closely with Minitex and partners to develop a short survey to inform faculty interviews. The survey aligned with the 2025 ITEM standards and asked faculty to indicate whether they observed no noticeable gaps, minor gaps, moderate gaps, or significant gaps among first-year students across key benchmarks within four learning strands: information literacy, digital citizenship, technology and innovation, and literacy engagement.

Because interview time was limited, the interviewer prioritized questions based on participants' survey responses. For example, if a participant rated digital citizenship as

having the greatest skill gaps, the interview began with questions about faculty observations in that area. The survey instrument and interview protocol are included in the appendix.

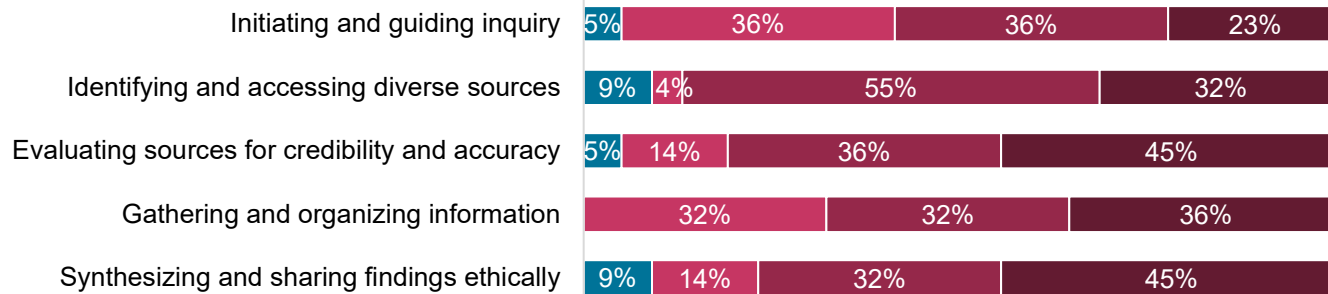
The survey was completed online prior to the interview. Participants received their survey responses in advance of the interview so they could refer back to them if needed. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. Most participants had sufficient time to comment on each learning strand.

SURVEY RESPONSES

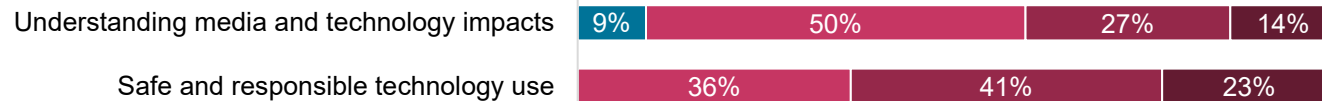
Overall, faculty identified the most significant gaps in the information literacy and research strand. However, more than half of participants also reported “moderate” or “significant” gaps in literacy engagement (constructing a reading identity and participating in literacy communities), digital citizenship (safe and responsible technology use), and technology and innovation (designing solutions to problems).

Gaps in information literacy skills and knowledge, according to faculty

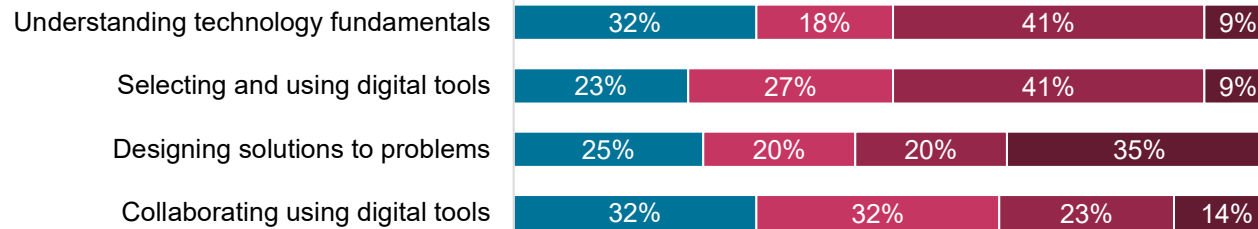
Strand 1 Information Literacy



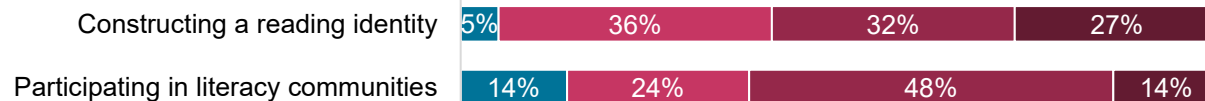
Strand 2 Digital Citizenship



Strand 3 Technology and Innovation



Strand 4 Literacy Engagement



■ No noticeable gaps ■ Minor gaps ■ Moderate gaps ■ Significant gaps

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Appendix

A. 2025 ITEM STANDARDS

Link: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1MWLFY8huH-XaKtzPjazdw1wj7v8fQAIFW9b0I8QAfU/edit?gid=417162993#gid=417162993>

Postsecondary Faculty Survey: First-Year Student Preparedness in Information & Technology Literacy

In 2025, Information and Technology Educators of Minnesota (ITEM) revised the state's Information and Technology Literacy Standards for K–12 schools. These standards outline the knowledge and skills students are expected to demonstrate by high school graduation across four strands:

- Information literacy and research
- Digital citizenship
- Technology and innovation
- Literacy engagement

Through Federal Library grant funding distributed through [Minitex](#) and the [Multicounty Multitype Library systems](#), a group of Minnesota high school, college, and university librarians have partnered with Wilder Research to understand how well first-year postsecondary students are meeting these expectations. Findings will be shared with policymakers to help strengthen K–12 education in these areas.

Please complete this brief survey before your interview. Your responses will help guide the conversation and highlight areas where students may need additional support.

For each standard listed below, please rate the degree to which you observe gaps between what first-year students know and are able to do, compared with what is expected of students at this level.

Use the following scale:

- 1 – No noticeable gaps between what students know and are able to do and what is expected of students at this level.
- 2 – Minor gaps
- 3 – Moderate gaps
- 4 – Significant gaps

Strand 1: Information Literacy

Initiating and guiding inquiry

Students' ability to develop meaningful research questions or subtopics based on personal interests, societal needs, and academic expectations.

1 2 3 4

Identifying and accessing diverse sources

Students' ability to locate sources representing multiple perspectives and use effective search strategies (keywords, filters, advanced techniques).

1 2 3 4

Evaluating sources for credibility and accuracy

Students' ability to verify information, recognize misinformation or fake news, compare AI-generated vs. human-generated content, distinguish fact from opinion, and use lateral reading.

1 2 3 4

Gathering and organizing information

Students' ability to find relevant information within sources, take notes, and cite sources appropriately.

1 2 3 4

Synthesizing and sharing findings ethically

Students' ability to synthesize information, draw conclusions, and communicate findings to audiences beyond the classroom.

1 2 3 4

Strand 2: Digital Citizenship

Understanding media and technology impacts

Students' ability to reflect on and manage their digital footprint, identity, and the impact of digital actions on themselves and others.

1 2 3 4

Safe and responsible technology use

Students' ability to identify misleading information, decode media messages (including AI-generated messages), and responsibly exchange information online.

1 2 3 4

Strand 3: Technology and Innovation

Understanding technology fundamentals

Students' understanding of basic technology concepts and ability to accurately describe technology problems using correct terminology.

1 2 3 4

Selecting and using digital tools

Students' ability to use digital tools for tasks and apply computational thinking to solve problems.

1 2 3 4

Designing solutions to problems

Students' ability to create programs using algorithms, sequences, loops, events, conditionals, and nested loops.

1 2 3 4

Collaborating using digital tools

Students' ability to collaborate through digital tools, including real-time features, shared permissions, comments, public content creation, and building learning networks.

1 2 3 4

Strand 4: Literacy Engagement

Constructing a reading identity

Students' ability to understand a variety of genres and formats and connect them to their needs, preferences, and reading habits.

1 2 3 4

Participating in literacy communities

Students' ability to share responses to reading, make personal and cultural connections, and engage with diverse perspectives, including Dakota and Anishinaabe communities.

1 2 3 4

Follow-up interview questions - faculty

Hi, my name is _____ and I work for Wilder Research. We are working with a group of Minnesota college, university, and high school librarians to understand postsecondary faculty perceptions of the preparedness of first-year students in key information and technology literacy knowledge and skills.

The interview should take about 45 minutes. The information you share will be combined with responses from faculty from other postsecondary institutions across the state and analyzed for key themes. The findings will be shared with policymakers in a summary along with findings from previous studies to advocate for information and technology literacy education taught by licensed school library media specialists in K-12 schools.

The interviews are voluntary and confidential. Nothing you say will be associated with your name. Nothing you say will affect your relationship with your institution or any other partner involved in this work.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

If it's okay with you, I would like to record the conversation as a back up to my notes. Is that okay with you? [If yes, hit record]

In the pre-survey, you indicated that [ONE OF THE FOUR STRANDS] was where you noticed the most significant gaps. Let's start with this strand. (NOTE TO WILDER: You may need to refresh their minds on the benchmarks that are included in the strands. Please proceed to ask the following question (1, a. and b.) about all three of the remaining strands)

1. Where do you see gaps between the knowledge and skill first year students are expected to have and the knowledge and skills they had on entry?
 - a. (Wilder: use only if the two questions listed here aren't answered in the main question) What does that look like for your students? Please provide examples of areas where students are struggling?
 - b. How does this impact your teaching? How does this impact student learning?
2. Which 2-3 knowledge areas or skills from the areas we've discussed are most essential for students to succeed in your course(s) or program?
3. If you could give advice to K-12 educators or administrators about preparing students for postsecondary success related to the areas we've discussed, what would it be?
4. Is there anything else you think policymakers should understand about student preparedness in this area or how postsecondary institutions experience these gaps?

Thank you so much for your time and energy to support this important work.

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Wilder Research, a division of Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, is a nationally respected nonprofit research and evaluation group. For more than 100 years, Wilder Research has gathered and interpreted facts and trends to help families and communities thrive, get at the core of community concerns, and uncover issues that are overlooked or poorly understood.

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**Osseo Area
Schools**

Language Access Plan

MULTILINGUAL, COMM RELATIONS TEAMS | MAY 5, 2026



Presentation outcomes

Board members will:

- Learn about the district's development of a Language Access Plan;
- Explore the alignment to state legislation and Strategic Direction C; and
- Provide feedback on next steps

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2025-26

MISSION

Our mission is to inspire and prepare each and every scholar with the confidence, courage and competence to achieve their dreams; contribute to community; and engage in a lifetime of learning.

VISION

Unleash and enhance the brilliance of our scholars to thrive and change the world.

CORE VALUES

HONOR AND
INTEGRITY

BELONGING

INCLUSION

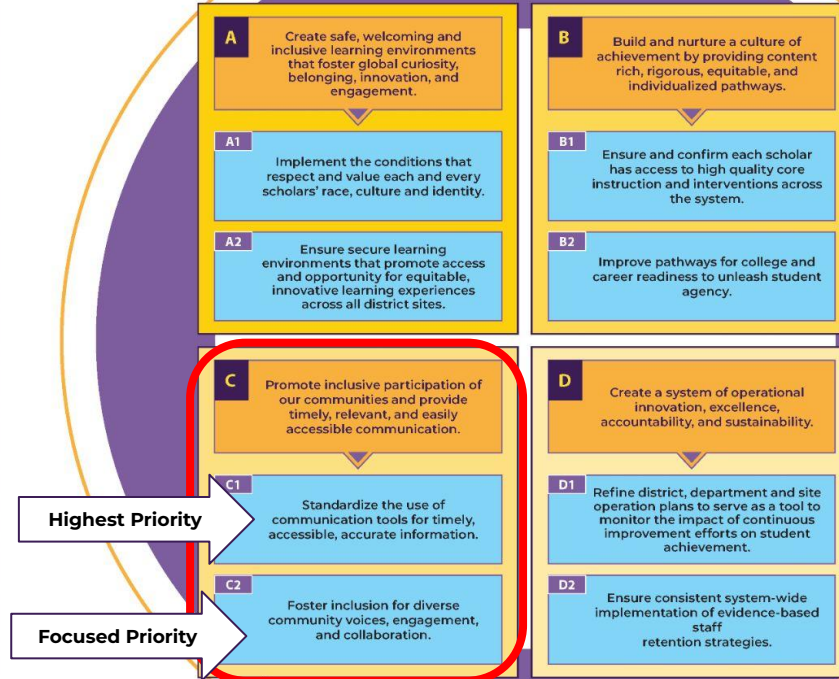
INNOVATION AND

EXCELLENCE

TRANSPARENCY

INTRINSIC VALUE

Continuous Improvement Magnifier



How do our **continuous improvement** cycles and processes help address and eliminate disparities and inequities in achievement?

3 Cs to align work

CONSISTENCY

- Our responsibilities
- Our behavior
- Understanding our biases
- Understanding expectations

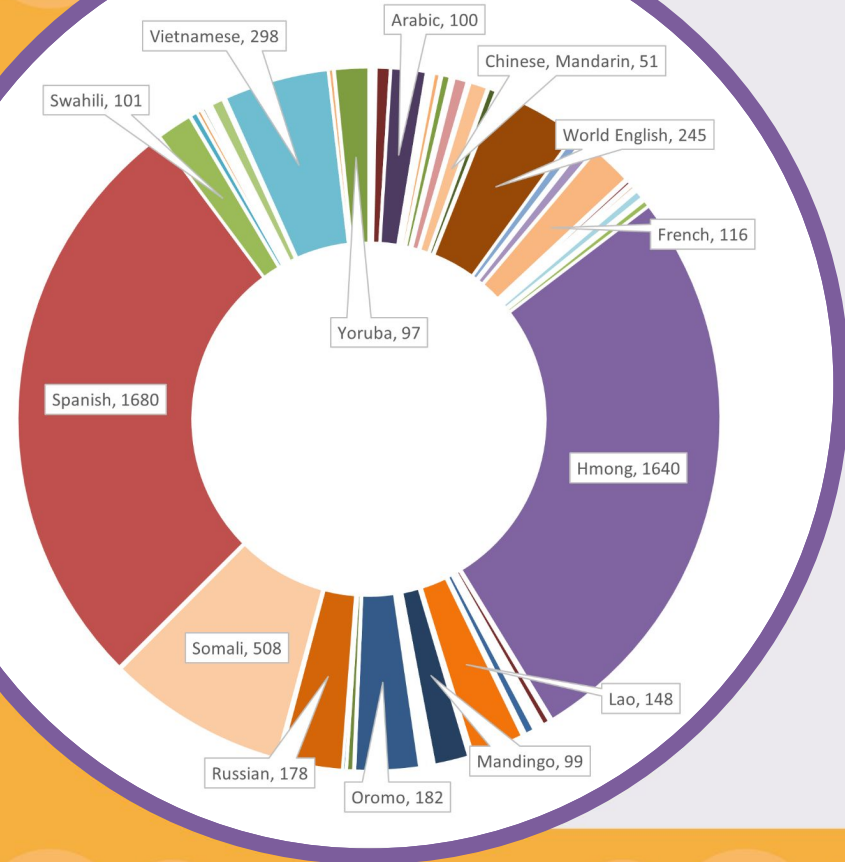
CONNECTION

- Our relationships
- Our roles
- Our impact on others
- Build trust

COHERENCE

- The why
- Our decisions
- Our data
- Weight on the system

Home Language



Did you know?

- There are more than 125 languages spoken amongst district families
- 28% of our families report the use of a language other than English at home
- Top 5 languages after English: Spanish, Hmong, Vietnamese, Somali and Oromo

What is language access?

- Language access means providing individuals who communicate in a language other than English with **timely and reasonable access to the same information and services** as English-speaking individuals.
- Meaningful access
 - Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the individual.
 - For English Learners, meaningful access denotes access that is not unreasonably restricted, delayed, or inferior, as compared to access to programs or activities provided to English-proficient individuals.

Language Access Plan

- A Language Access Plan is a comprehensive document that outlines a school district's commitment and strategies to ensure equitable access to services for individuals who speak a language other than English.
- This plan is essential for fostering inclusivity, meeting legal obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Minn. State Law [123B.32](#) Language Access Plan and supporting the success of multilingual students and their families.

LANGUAGE ACCESS IS A CIVIL RIGHT

Building Capacity for Language Access and Inclusion

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is committed to upholding the language access rights of all families with children enrolled in a public or charter school in the state. [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) and [Executive Order 13166](#) require all recipients of federal funds to have a language access plan that explains their values and process for effectively communicating with individuals who speak a language other than English. MDE will provide guidance to schools to ensure their language assistance process is effective and improved continuously through family and community outreach and engagement.

Parents and Guardians

Your school will provide an interpreter if you need one. Information about your child's education and school policies are available in different languages on the school's website.

School Districts and Schools

Language assistance services must be visible and accessible to all families and the general public. Promote and strengthen your school's Language Access Plan through ongoing community engagement to receive feedback.

For questions or assistance contact:
MDE Community Engagement
Lee.Her@state.mn.us | 651-785-4064

m DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Specifics of MDE's mandate

- Statutory requirement (Effective 2025-26): Districts must formally adopt a Language Access Plan (LAP) during a public board meeting.
- Mandated requirements:
 - Standardized process and procedures for providing effective language assistance to students and adults.
 - Use **trained or certified interpreters** for all communication related to academic outcomes, progress, and placement in specialized programs or services.
 - Ensure meaningful participation in the individualized education program process by families



Mandate specifics

Public accountability:

- Plan must be published in school handbooks and available online.
- Mandatory board review and updates every two years.
- Appeal process if needs not met.
- Notification of rights: Districts must actively notify families of their right to these free services.



Our Language Access Plan process

- Established core team: Bryan Bass, Kiersten Nicholson, Vanessa Gill, Kay Villella and Clay Sawatzke
- Larger group completed MDE self-assessment
- Broke into small groups for each section of the assessment to dig deeper
- Core team incorporated small group input, finalized and are presenting to you tonight

Self-assessment sections

1. Identifying and assessing families' language/communication needs
2. Understanding How Multilingual Families and Individuals Interact with the District
3. Develop Plan: Policies and Procedures
4. Training Staff and Leadership
5. Providing Notice of Language Assistance Services and Providing Services
6. Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating Plan

Question	Evidence of Implementation/Considerations
1. How does the district or charter school identify the language preference of families and individuals(select all that apply)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Assume language assistance is needed if communication seems hindered. <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to individual requests for language assistance services. <input type="checkbox"/> Use of "I Speak" language identification cards or posters. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask open-ended questions to determine language preference on the telephone or in person. <input type="checkbox"/> Prevalence of languages spoken. <input type="checkbox"/> Use language assistance services. <input type="checkbox"/> Self-identification by family on district enrollment application. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)



Two plans being presented

- Public-facing plan
- Internal plan that includes public-facing content with added detail on how to access and utilize or provide resources



Osseo Area Schools

Our commitment: *Osseo Area Schools is dedicated to ensuring that every family has timely and meaningful access to information and services. With more than 125 languages spoken in our district, we're committed to providing multilingual communication that promotes the inclusive participation of all community members. This Language Access Plan provides information about tools, processes and resources available for students, families, and staff at Osseo Area Schools. This plan aligns with Minnesota Statute 123B.32 and federal civil rights laws to ensure students and families can participate fully in their education.*

Identifying family needs

- During enrollment, all families complete the Minnesota Language Survey (MNLS)
 - Stored in the student's profile within the district's student information system
- Families also identify their preferred language for school communications and whether they would benefit from interpreter support, e.g. via back-to-school forms.
- Families can update their preferred language at any time, e.g. via ParentVUE.

Language services

The full list of services is available online via OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices

- Multilingual specialists
- School and district websites
- Language services webpage
- Multilingual learners webpage
- Multilingual Facebook pages
- School and district e-news
- District and school handbooks
- We Are Glad You Are Here posters
- I Need Assistance cards
- Spoken interpretation, including ASL
- Written translation



Ensuring all are in the know

- **Staff:** All staff receive training through professional development sessions, video tutorials and step-by-step guides.
- **Families:** Language services are offered to families who indicate a preferred language other than English. Information about language services is shared with all families through regular communication outlets (e-newsletters, websites and social media pages), printed handouts and in handbooks.
- **Community:** Community-wide communication outlets such as the Have You Heard newsletter and district and school websites.
- Refer to the full communication plan for further detail,
OsseoSchools.org/MultilingualComms

Sample communications



Ani Afaan: Oromo nan dubbadha

Maallo kaardi kana fayyadamuun hojjettooni
Mbarumsaa/aa/yitri akka isaan si gargaaruu danda’an itti
gaarsis.

- Baristaas / dura bu’as / naafii / hojjetaa hawaasumma / gorsaa waliin haasa’uun na barbaachaa
- Barataa koo fudhachuun barbaada.
- Mbarumsichaa imaa biibilii ykn ergaan email’i naa dhufe, horroffii gochuun na barbaachise.
- Kan biroo _____

Waa’ee tajaajila afaani bilisa daawwachuudhaan caalaatti baradhu OsseoSchools.org/Tajaajiloota-afaani



Yo hablo: Español

Por favor, utilice esta tarjeta para indicar al personal de la escuela o del centro cómo pueden ayudarle.

- Necesito hablar con un maestro / el director / la enfermera / un trabajador social / un consejero.
- Necesito recoger a mi estudiante.
- He recibido una llamada o un correo electrónico de la escuela y necesito hacer un seguimiento.
- Otro: _____

Aprenda más acerca de los servicios de idiomas visitando OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices



Waxaan ku hadlaa: Soomali

Fadlan isticmaala kaarkan si aad u tuso shaqaalaha iskuulka/goobta sidii ay kuu caawin lahaayeen.

- Waxaan u baahnahay inaan la hadlo macalin / maamul / kakaalacada /arimaha bulshada /la-talye.
- Waxaan u baahnahay inaan qaado ardaygayga.
- Waxaa i soo wacay ama aan email ka helay iskuulka, waxaan i rabaa inaan ogaado.
- Wax kale: _____

Wax badan ka ogow adeegyada luqadaha adoo booqanaya OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices



Tôi nói: Tiếng Việt.

Vui lòng sử dụng thẻ này để nhân viên nhà trường hoặc tài
địa điểm biết cách hỗ trợ quý vị.

- Tôi cần nói chuyện với giáo viên /hiệu trưởng /y tá / nhân viên xã hội / chuyên viên tư vấn.
- Tôi cần đón con của mình.
- Tôi đã nhận được một cuộc gọi hoặc email từ nhà trường và tôi cần phải theo dõi.
- Khác: _____

Tìm hiểu thêm về các dịch vụ ngôn ngữ miễn phí bằng cách truy cập OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices



Kuv hais tau lus: Hmoob

Thov muab daim ntawv (card) no rau cov neeg ua haujlwm
hauv tsev kawm ntawv/qhov chaw kom lawv paub pab koj.

- Kuv xav nrog lb tug xibwb/tus thawj saib tsev kawm ntawv/tus nassmaum /tus social worker/tus counselor.
- Kuv tuaj los kuv tus menyuam.
- Kuv tau txais xovxovj loosis lb taab email los ntawm tsev kawm ntawv, thiab kuv xav nug seb yog dabtsi.
- Livm yam: _____

Kawm ntawv thog kev pabcuam txhais lus pab dawb los ntawm kev mus saib hauv OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices



I Speak: English


Please use this card to show school/site staff how they can assist you.

- I need to talk to a teacher / the principal / the nurse / a social worker / a counselor.
- I need to pick up my student.
- I received a call or email message from the school and I need to follow up.
- Other: _____

Learn more about free language services by visiting OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices

**Welcome
Bienvenidos
Zoo Siab Tos Txais**

**Chào Mừng
Soo Dhoww
Baga Nagaan Dhufan**



English
We're glad you're here!
Osseo Area Schools is dedicated to ensuring that every family has timely and meaningful access to information and services in their preferred language. We can provide interpreters and translated documents to you, if needed, to ensure you feel valued, included, and can communicate and partner with our school/site to help your student(s) thrive.

Learn more about free language services by visiting OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices.

Español
Estamos contentos de que esté aquí!
Osseo Area Schools está dedicado a garantizar que cada familia tenga acceso oportuno y significativo a información y servicios en su idioma preferido. Podemos proporcionarle intérpretes y documentos traducidos, si es necesario, para asegurarnos de que se sienta valorado, incluido y que pueda comunicarse y colaborar con nuestra escuela/centro para ayudar a que sus estudiantes prosperen.

Aprenda más acerca de los servicios de idiomas visitando OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices.

Hmoob
Peb zoo siab uas koj tuaj ntawm no!
Osseo Area Schools kubb-siab cogj las yavw ua tibzo npaj kom thvua tsivmev musj sijhawm thiab caj nyooj zoo txais tau thvua yam xovxovj thiab kev pabcuam raws lawv yam lus. Peb npaj neeg txhais lus thiab ntawv ntawv txhais rau nej, yog nej xaw tau, kom nej pom txoj kev tseemceb, kev hwm, thiab kom nej txuas tau lus thiab koomtes tau nrog peb tsev kawm ntawv/qhov chaw uas pab tau nej tuaj cov menyuam loj hws.

Kawm ntawv thog kev pabcuam txhais lus pab dawb los ntawm kev mus saib OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices.

Tiếng Việt
Chào mừng Chúng tôi rất vui vì quý vị đã ở đây!
Osseo Area Schools cam kết đảm bảo rằng mọi gia đình đều được tiếp cận kịp thời và hữu ích với thông tin cũng như các dịch vụ bằng ngôn ngữ ưa dùng. Chúng tôi có thể cung cấp phiên dịch viên và các tài liệu đã được biên dịch cho quý vị khi cần thiết, nhằm đảm bảo quý vị cảm thấy được trân trọng, được hòa nhập, cũng như có thể giao tiếp và phối hợp cùng nhà trường để giúp con em quý vị phát triển toàn diện.

Tìm hiểu thêm về các dịch vụ ngôn ngữ miễn phí bằng cách truy cập OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices.

Soomali
Waa ku faraxsanahay inaad halka timaado!
Osseo Area Schools waxaa ka go'an inay hubiyan in qoys walba uu waqti ku haboon oo macno leh u helo macluumaadka iyo adeegyada oo ku qoran luqadaha ay rabaan. Waxaan kuu diyaarin karnaa turjubaano iyo dukumeenta la turjumeey, haddii loo baahdo, si aan u hubino in lauu dhimeyney. Iaga soo dhaweyney, oo aad la hadli karto lana shaqayn karto iskuulka/naag/goobta si aan u caawino in ardayagaagu hormaro. Wax badan ka ogow adeegyada luqadaha adoo booqanaya OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices.

Oromo nan dubbadha
Asitti argamuu keetiin gammadneerra!
Osseo Area Schools maatiin hundi odeeffannoo fi tajaajila hiikkaa afaan ittiin tajaajilamuu fiixantiin bifa gahuusmaa fi xaqiiquuna caabuun yeroo barbaadantiiti akka argatan gochuuf ol kenna hojjetaa jira. Nu biratti iddoo guddaa ati qabduu fi miiri' abbummaa akka sitti dhaga'amu mirkaneessuuf, tajaajila hiikkaa afaani fi sanadotta hiikaman siif kennuu ni dandaeyna. Akkasumas Mbarumsaa/aa/yitri keenya waliin wal qunnartti fi tumsaa cimaa umuun, barattoonni kee akka miikaa'antiifi fi guddatan si deeggaru ni dandaeyna.

Waa'ee tajaajila afaani bilisa daawwachuudhaan caalaatti baradhu OsseoSchools.org/Tajaajiloota-afaani

Staff roles and responsibilities

- School Board: Formally adopts the Language Access Plan every two years. Ensure the district has the resources and budget to meet all state and federal language access laws.
- Superintendent and Cabinet
- Multilingual Community and Communication Specialists
- Multilingual Learning (ML) department
- Community Relations team
- Principals and site leaders
- Office teams (APs, OAPs, Business/Resource Managers, etc.)
- Teachers and support staff
- All staff

Reviewing the plan

- The plan will be formally reviewed and updated every two years.
- Continual gathering of feedback through surveys and meetings.
- Steps for providing an appeal/feedback:
 - **Step 1:** Contacting school principal.
 - **Step 2:** If not resolved, contacting the district office at info@district279.org or 1200 93rd Ave N, Maple Grove.
 - **Step 3:** The district will review and provide a response.





Additional detail on the internal plan

- Specific procedures for assessing and providing services.
- Universal and differentiation training for staff
- Training for interpreters to meet new requirements
- Internal monitoring



Next steps

- Family input will be gathered in May and June. Revisions may be made based on what's shared.
- Detailed staff procedures and training. May Learning Leader and June System Leader meetings are latest connection plans.
- Presented for board vote on June 23.



Thank you

HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS



LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

Ensuring meaningful
communication for
all families.



May 2026



OUR COMMITMENT

Osseo Area Schools is dedicated to ensuring that every family has timely and meaningful access to information and services.

With more than 125 languages spoken in our district, we're committed to providing multilingual communication that promotes the inclusive participation of all community members.

This Language Access Plan outlines the tools, processes and resources available for students, families and staff at Osseo Area Schools.

The plan aligns with [Minnesota Statute 123B.32](#) and federal civil rights laws to ensure students and families can participate fully in their education.



125+ Languages
Spoken



Every Family.
Every Time.



Inclusive.
Accessible.
Equitable.

DEFINITIONS

To ensure clarity for our community:

- **Interpretation:** The process of converting a spoken or signed message from one language into another.
- **Translation:** The process of converting written text from one language into another while maintaining the meaning of the original message.
- **Language services:** Resources and services that facilitate timely and meaningful communication between the district and families who prefer communication in a language other than English.
- **Language Access Plan (LAP):** A document describing the services, processes, and procedures our district uses to ensure effective communication with all students and families.
- **Preferred language:** The specific language a family indicates they prefer for all school-to-home correspondence.
- **Multilingual learner:** A broad category for students who speak, understand, or are exposed to multiple languages, including students who are currently receiving English Learner (EL) program services and those who never qualified for that support.
- **Bilingual staff:** Employees who are speakers of more than one language. They may use their language skills to assist with basic interactions as part of their regular work. They're not necessarily trained or certified as interpreters for formal meetings.
- **Vital documents:** Records containing critical information for accessing district programs and services, such as enrollment forms, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and health and safety notices. [Full definition.](#)
- **Trained or certified interpreters:** Professionals who have completed specialized training to ensure accuracy and confidentiality. These individuals are prioritized for academic and special education meetings.

LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION



During enrollment:

All families complete the Minnesota Language Survey (MNLS), which identifies a student's language experiences through parent/caregiver responses.

This data is stored in the student's profile within the district's student information system. Families also identify their preferred language for school communications and whether they would benefit from interpreter support. This enables schools to identify families who need language assistance and provide appropriate language services.

Families can update their preferred language at any time.



Parents/caregivers: Preferred language

During enrollment, parents and guardians specify their preferred language, which is recorded in their profile within the district's student information system. This enables schools to identify families who need language assistance and provide appropriate language services.


Families can update their preferred language at any time.

NOTICE OF LANGUAGE SERVICES

Osseo Area Schools is proud to provide language services throughout the district. These services are actively being shared to ensure families and staff are aware and have the resources and training to use them effectively.

Multilingual Specialists: Our district's Multilingual Community and Communication Specialists support families with communication updates, interpreting and translation services, and other helpful resources and supports. These documents further explain the role and how to contact to reach out to them:

- [Multilingual specialist flyer](#)
- Multilingual specialist magnet and bookmark

School and district websites: Translate any page on district and school websites by clicking the button () at the top right of all webpages within the district.

Language services webpage via
OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices:

Learn about language services, find out how to connect with Multilingual Specialists, and view the district's Language Access Plan.

Multilingual learners webpage via
OsseoSchools.org/MultilingualLearners:

Find information about the Multilingual Learner Program (commonly known as EL), get details on how entering and exiting works, and answers to frequently asked questions.

NOTICE OF LANGUAGE SERVICES

Multilingual Facebook pages

Español: facebook.com/ISD279Espanol

Lus Hmoob: facebook.com/HmongISD279

Soomaali: facebook.com/ISD279Soomaali

Tiếng Việt: facebook.com/VietNamISD279

Orom: facebook.com/ISD279Oromo

School and district e-newsletters:

Translate any district or school e-newsletter by clicking the button (translate icon with translate verbiage next to it) at top right corner of each e-newsletter.

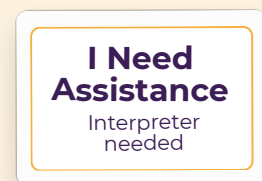
District and school handbooks: Each back-to-school handbook will include information about our district's commitment to language services, family rights and how to find more information on what's offered.

We're Glad You're Here posters and flyers:

Each school's main office area displays posters and flyers sharing that language services are offered. Community members scan a QR code to learn more about their rights and the language services our district provides.

I Need Assistance cards:

Each school has small cards for families to pick up in their school's main office or at various events.



These can be kept and shown to district and school staff anytime language services are needed.

INTERPRETER SERVICES

Spoken interpretation (verbal):

Interpretation from qualified interpreters is available for communications related to academic outcomes, progress, determinations, and placement of students in specialized programs and services, as well as parent/caregiver and teacher conferences, enrollment, informational meetings, and more. This is a free service.

In-person and video interpretation:

Qualified interpreters are available for parent-teacher conferences, special education (IEP) meetings, and other school appointments. Families may request these services through their school office or complete this form to schedule an in-person or video/online interpreter.

On-demand phone interpretation:

We use the *Language Line* to provide immediate support in over 200 languages. This service is available 24/7 for quick questions or phone calls with school staff.

Virtual meetings: Interpretation can be added to virtual meetings (such as Google Meet or Microsoft Teams) by coordinating with school staff in advance.

Direct dial numbers:

Español:

1-855-891-8364

Lus Hmoob:

1-844-577-9549

Soomaali:

1-855-891-5322

Tiếng Việt:

1-855-891-8365

Russian:

1-855-891-5321

Staff should refer to the Interpreting and Translating page on the staff portal, OsseoSchools.org/LanguageResources, for information about how to access and work with interpreters.

TRANSLATION SERVICES




Vital school documents

We prioritize the professional translation of documents that affect a student's legal rights, health, or safety.



District and school websites

Families can instantly translate any page on OsseoSchools.org by clicking the globe icon  at the top right of the site.



Direct text messaging

Teachers and support staff use TalkingPoints to send text messages to families in their preferred language. This allows families to reply in their preferred language, and messages are then translated back into English for the teacher.



E-newsletters

District and school e-newsletters include a translation feature at the top of each message.

Staff should refer to the Interpreting and Translating page on the staff portal, OsseoSchools.org/LanguageResources, for information about how to request translated documents.

COMMUNICATING LANGUAGE SERVICE OFFERINGS

This Language Access Plan will be available on the district website via OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices.

Information on how to access services will be on the site and shared annually in the district's back-to-school updates via the Insider (staff) and Connect (parent/caregiver) e-newsletters, article area of district and school homepages, and district social media. See the [communication plan for further detail](#).

Staff: All staff receive training through professional development sessions, video tutorials, and step-by-step guides.

Families: Language services are offered to families who indicate a preferred language other than English. Information about language services is shared with all families through regular communication outlets (e-newsletters, websites, and social media pages), printed handouts, and in handbooks.

Community: Community-wide communication outlets such as the Have You Heard newsletter and district and school websites.

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure every family has the same access to information and services, our staff members hold the following responsibilities:

School Board: Formally adopts the Language Access Plan every two years. They ensure the district has the resources and budget to meet all state and federal language access laws.

Superintendent and Cabinet: Oversee the district-wide use of this plan. They ensure that all departments – from Transportation to Enrollment – prioritize clear, multilingual communication.

Multilingual Community and Communication Specialists: * Act as a primary bridge between the district and multilingual families to build strong, supportive relationships.

- Coordinates projects for electronic, print, and verbal communication to ensure they are culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- Advocates for scholars and families to ensure they have an equal voice in school activities and decision-making.
- Collaborates with community partners to manage family outreach and engagement activities.

Multilingual Learning (ML) department: Manages the quality of professional translation and interpretation services. They provide the necessary tools, standardized systems, and training for all district staff.

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Community Relations team: Ensure multilingual communications continue to be at the forefront of all messaging districtwide. Provide information on the tools to accomplish this as well as the direction for how to use them – specifically for our parent/caregiver audience.

Principals and site leaders: Ensure their schools are welcoming and inclusive. Fulfill expectations and utilize provided resources – and then share with staff as applicable. Office teams (Assistant Principals, OAPs, Business/Resource Managers, etc.): Ensure their schools are welcoming and inclusive. Fulfill expectations and utilize provided resources.

Teachers and support staff: Responsible for checking family language preferences in Synergy before communicating. They must use approved district tools (like TalkingPoints, the Language Line or Synergy) to ensure families are informed about their child's academic progress and school events.

All staff: Every employee is responsible for protecting the civil rights of students and families. This includes providing meaningful access to school programs and maintaining the privacy (FERPA) of family information during interpreted conversations.

REVIEW AND YOUR RIGHTS

Feedback on language services is collected from families and staff through surveys and meetings, providing valuable insight to refine and enhance the plan. The plan will be reviewed and updated every two years.

Your rights and the review process

Families have the right to receive important school information in a language they understand. If you feel that your language needs have not been met, or if an accommodation was not provided, you have the right to appeal (request a formal review).

To file an appeal or provide feedback:

1

Step 1: Contact your school's Principal to discuss your concerns.

2

Step 2: If the issue is not resolved, contact the District Office at info@district279.org or via mail at 11200 93rd Ave N, Maple Grove, MN 55369.

3

Step 3: The district will review your request and provide a response regarding the language assistance accommodations.



Language Access Plan to Ensure Effective Communication with Multilingual Students and Families at Osseo Area Schools

OUR COMMITMENT

Osseo Area Schools is dedicated to ensuring that every family has timely and meaningful access to information and services. With more than 125 languages spoken in our district, we are committed to providing multilingual communication that promotes the inclusive participation of all community members. This Language Access Plan provides information about tools, processes, and resources available for students, families, and staff at Osseo Area Schools. This plan aligns with [Minnesota Statute 123B.32](#) and federal civil rights laws to ensure students and families can participate fully in their education.

PURPOSE

A Language Access Plan (LAP) is a comprehensive document that outlines a school district's commitment and strategies to ensure equitable access to services for individuals who speak a language other than English or require additional assistance due to a disability.

What is language access?

- Language access means providing individuals who communicate in a language other than English with **timely and reasonable access to the same information and services** as English-speaking individuals.
- Meaningful access:
 - Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the individual.
 - For English Learners, meaningful access denotes access that is not unreasonably restricted, delayed, or inferior, as compared to access to programs or activities provided to English-proficient individuals.

DEFINITIONS

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- **Bilingual staff:** Employees who are speakers of more than one language. They may use their language skills to assist with basic interactions as part of their regular work. They're not necessarily trained or certified as interpreters for formal meetings.
- **Vital documents:** Records containing critical information for accessing district programs and services, such as enrollment forms, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and health and safety notices. [Full definition](#)
- **Trained or certified interpreters:** Professionals who have completed specialized training to ensure accuracy and confidentiality. These individuals are prioritized for academic and special education meetings.

LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION

During enrollment, all families complete the [Minnesota Language Survey \(MNLIS\)](#), which identifies a student's language experiences through parent/caregiver responses. This data is stored in the student's profile within the district's student information system. Families also identify their preferred language for school communications and whether they would benefit from interpreter support. This enables schools to identify families who need language assistance and provide appropriate language services. Families can update their preferred language at any time.

Parents/caregivers: Preferred language: During enrollment, parents and guardians specify their preferred language, which is recorded in their profile within the district's student information system. This enables schools to identify families who need language assistance and provide appropriate language services. Families can update their preferred language at any time in ParentVue or by contacting the Administrative Professional at their child's school.

STAFF PROCEDURES

Enrollment Center staff collect information from students and families about their language preferences for written and oral communication and whether they would benefit from interpreter support upon enrollment. They enter that information into Synergy. Parents can update that information annually via the back-to-school verification process in ParentVue.

Consider how you can incorporate assisting families with updating their language and interpreter support preferences annually at school events and conferences. Many families do not update this information via the back-to-school verification process in ParentVue, so we do not have updated information for many families.

- Site Administrative Professionals (OAPs) can update Language to Home and Interpreter Needed preferences in Synergy when families indicate an update is needed.
 - Use report U-TRNSL8: Parent Interpreter Languages as needed to determine who needs interpreter services and families' language preferences.
- Multilingual Community and Communication Specialists can update the Interpreter Needed field in Synergy.
- Site Administrative Professionals, ML Specialists, Administrators, and teachers can all update the parent's primary language field on the Parent/Guardian tab of the Student screen in Synergy. Insert how to document/video here.

Before communicating, ensure you have the most accurate language profile for the family.

- **Initial Verification:** Confirm and update language preferences with families during **Open House** or your **first meeting** of the year.
- **How to Check:** Reference **Synergy** to view the "Language to Home" preferences on the Student page and "Interpreter Needed" and parent language fields in the Parent/Guardian tab on the Student page.
 - Insert demonstration video here to show how to locate this information.
- **How to Update:** ***Staff:** Your building **OAP** can update these preferences directly in **Synergy**.
 - **Families:** Parents/Guardians can update their own language preferences and interpreter needs through **ParentVUE**.

NOTICE OF LANGUAGE SERVICES

Osseo Area Schools is proud to provide language services throughout the district. These services are actively being shared to ensure families and staff are aware and have the resources and training to use them effectively.

Multilingual Specialists: Our district's Multilingual Community and Communication Specialists support families with communication updates, interpreting and translation services, and other helpful resources and supports. These resources further explain the role and how to contact to reach out to them:

- [Multilingual Specialist flyer](#)
- Multilingual Specialist magnets and bookmarks
- These resources should be displayed in every front office and made available to students and families at school events.


School and district websites: Translate any page on district and school websites by clicking the button (globe icon with EN) at the top right of all webpages within the district.

Language services webpage via OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices: Learn about language services, find out how to connect with Multilingual Specialists, and view the district's Language Access Plan.

Multilingual learners webpage via OsseoSchools.org/MultilingualLearners: Find information about the Multilingual Learner Program (commonly known as EL), get details on how entering and exiting works, and answers to frequently asked questions.

Multilingual Facebook pages

- Español, facebook.com/ISD279Espanol
- Lus Hmoob, facebook.com/HmongISD279
- Oromoo, facebook.com/ISD279Oromoo
- Soomaali, facebook.com/ISD279Soomaali
- Tiếng Việt, facebook.com/VietNamISD279

School and district e-newsletters: Translate any district or school e-newsletter by clicking the translate button  at the top right corner of each e-newsletter.

Share this [document](#) with families at the beginning of the year so they know how to translate the e-newsletter on their device.

[District and school handbooks](#): Each back-to-school handbook will include information about our district's commitment to language services, family rights, and how to find more information on what's offered.

[We Are Glad You Are Here posters and flyers](#): Each school's main office area displays posters and flyers sharing that language services are offered. Community members can indicate their language by pointing to it. Staff will then access services.

These resources should be displayed in every front office and made available to students and families at school events.

[I Need Assistance cards](#): Each school has small cards for families to pick up in their school's main office or at various events. These can be kept and shown to district and school staff anytime language services are needed.

These resources should be displayed in every front office and made available to students and families at school events.



Point to Your Language Signs: Posters in each school's main office allow individuals to indicate their language. Staff members will arrange appropriate language services.

These resources should be displayed in every front office. Refer to the information in your site's Language Access Plan kit for additional details about what to display where.

INTERPRETER SERVICES

Spoken interpretation (verbal): Interpretation from qualified interpreters is available for communications related to academic outcomes, progress, determinations, and placement of

students in specialized programs and services, as well as parent/caregiver and teacher conferences, enrollment, informational meetings, and more. This is a free service.

- **In-person and video interpretation:** Qualified interpreters are available for parent-teacher conferences, special education (IEP) meetings, and other school appointments. Families may request these services through their school office or complete [this form](#) to schedule an in-person or video/online interpreter.
 - Information about how staff can arrange for interpreting services is included in the chart below.
- **On-demand phone interpretation:** We use the *Language Line* to provide immediate support in over 200 languages. This service is available 24/7 for quick questions or phone calls between school staff and families.
 - Information about how staff can access Language Line interpreting services is included in the chart below.
 - Direct dial numbers that families can call to get an interpreter on the line are:
 - Español: 1-855-891-8364
 - Lus Hmoob: 1-844-577-9549
 - русский: 1-855-891-5321
 - Soomaali: 1-855-891-5322
 - Tiếng Việt: 1-855-891-8365

These resources should be displayed in offices and available at school events.

- **Virtual meetings:** Interpretation can be added to virtual meetings (such as Google Meet or Microsoft Teams) by coordinating with school staff in advance.


STAFF PROCEDURES

Staff should refer to the Interpreting and Translating page on the staff portal, OsseoSchools.org/LanguageResources, for detailed information about how to access and work with interpreters. Staff can only work with interpreters on our list; they have completed required training and agreed to terms. **Never rely on students, siblings, or untrained staff to interpret.**

Trained interpreters **must** be used for communication related to academic outcomes, progress, determinations, and placement of students in specialized programs and services.

- Examples include IEP/504 meetings, disciplinary meetings, parent/family conferences, MTSS/Child Study meetings, enrollment/registration meetings, health & medical discussions, and family engagement events

Scenario	Action / Resource

<p>Scheduled Meetings</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access the Interpreting/Translating page on the Staff Portal. 2. Locate interpreters you could work with on the district Interpreter List. 3. Coordinate with your site's Administrative Professional (OAP) for site-specific procedures and scheduling for interpreters. 4. Provide feedback forms to families and staff who worked with an interpreter to gather information about their experience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Electronic feedback form (multilingual) ● Paper forms are available on the Interpreting/Translating page on the Staff Portal. 5. Submit required verification paperwork.
<p>Immediate Needs (Sick child, behavior, check-ins)</p> <p><i>Insert image of Language Line staff badge</i></p> 	<p>Use LanguageLine (access instructions listed below) to connect with an interpreter on the phone. You can also request an interpreter to join a Google Meet.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dial 1-855-289-4540. 2. Select Desired Language: Press 1 for Spanish. Press 6 for all other languages. 3. The operator will ask for the following information and then connect you with an interpreter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access code: 845140 ● Language needed ● Staff member's full name <p>Additional information is available on the Interpreting/Translating page on the Staff Portal.</p>

TRANSLATION SERVICES

Written translation (text/documents)

- **Vital school documents:** We prioritize the professional translation of documents that affect a student's legal rights, health or safety.
- **District and school websites:** Families can instantly translate any page on [OsseoSchools.org](#) by clicking the globe icon at the top right of the site.
- **Direct text messaging:** Teachers and support staff use TalkingPoints to send text messages to families in their preferred language. This allows families to reply in their preferred language, and messages are then translated back into English for the teacher.
- **E-newsletters:** District and school e-newsletters include a translation feature at the top of each newsletter.

STAFF PROCEDURES

Staff should refer to the Interpreting and Translating page on the staff portal, OsseoSchools.org/LanguageResources, for information about how to request translation services. **Never rely on students, siblings, or untrained staff to translate documents.**

Scenario	Action / Resource
<p>Daily Messaging between Licensed Staff and Families</p>	<p>Required to use <i>TalkingPoints</i> for classroom-wide and individual family texts and/or short audio/video messages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instant Messages: Send immediately using machine-based translation. • Scheduled Messages (Recommended whenever possible): For group messages or non-urgent updates, schedule the message in advance. This allows for human translator review, ensuring significantly higher accuracy for families. • Translation for Attachments: You can attach English documents (up to 5 pages long) to a message. TalkingPoints provides an automated translation of the document for the family. <i>This should not be used for any legal documents (ex. IEP).</i> <p>Required to utilize <i>Synergy</i> for classroom-wide emails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual emails should go through Outlook.
<p>School/site leaders and office team communication</p>	<p>Required to use <i>Mass Notification</i> for a large distribution email, text, and/or call.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can additionally choose to send via TalkingPoints.
<p>Document Translation</p> <p>*Turnaround Time: Plan ahead to allow sufficient time for translation. Requests for the district's top languages will be completed</p>	<p>The "Vital Document" Rule</p> <p>Does it need a formal translation request? Use the "YES" test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yields a Legal Right? (IEP, Section 504, Enrollment) • Essential for Health/Safety? (Medication forms, Crisis plans) • Signature Required? (Permission slips, Disciplinary notices) <p>Action: If it meets the YES test, you must submit a translation request to the ML Department. Do not use AI/machine-based translation (e.g. Google Translate). Additional information is available on the Interpreting/Translating page on the Staff Portal.</p> <p>Non-Vital Document Translation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff can submit any document for translation via our translation request form.

<p>within 3 business days.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TalkingPoints Translation for Attachments: You can attach English documents (up to 5 pages long) to a message. TalkingPoints provides an automated translation of the document for the family. <i>This should not be used for any legal documents (ex. IEP).</i>
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COMMUNICATING LANGUAGE SERVICE OFFERINGS

This Language Access Plan will be available on the district website via OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices. Information on how to access services will be on the site and shared annually in the district’s back-to-school updates via the Insider (staff) and Connect (parent/caregiver) e-newsletters, article area of district and school homepages, and district social media. See the [communication plan for further details](#).

Staff: All staff receive training through professional development sessions, video tutorials, and step-by-step guides.

[Complete role-specific training by the required deadlines annually. Contact the Language Access Champion at your school if you need resources or support.](#)

Families: Language services are offered to families who indicate a preferred language other than English. Information about language services is shared with all families through regular communication outlets (e-newsletters, websites, and social media pages), printed handouts, and in handbooks.

Community: Community-wide communication outlets such as the Have You Heard newsletter and district and school websites.

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure every family has the same access to information and services, our staff members hold the following responsibilities:

- **School Board:** Formally adopts the Language Access Plan every two years. They ensure the district has the resources and budget to meet all state and federal language access laws.
- **Superintendent and Cabinet:** Oversee the district-wide use of this plan. They ensure that all departments—from Transportation to Enrollment—prioritize clear, multilingual communication.
- **Multilingual Community and Communication Specialists:** * Act as a primary bridge between the district and multilingual families to build strong, supportive relationships.
 - Coordinate projects for electronic, print, and verbal communication to ensure they are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

- Advocate for scholars and families to ensure they have an equal voice in school activities and decision-making.
- Collaborate with community partners to manage family outreach and engagement activities.
- **Multilingual Learning (ML) Department:** Manages the quality of professional translation and interpretation services. They provide the necessary tools, standardized systems, and training for all district staff.
- **Community Relations team:** Ensure multilingual communications continue to be at the forefront of all messaging districtwide. Provide information on the tools to accomplish this as well as the direction for how to use them – specifically for our parent/caregiver audience.
- **Principals and site leaders:** Ensure their schools are welcoming and inclusive. Fulfill expectations and utilize provided resources – and then share with staff as applicable. These documents share further detail:
 - [Presentation](#) outlining various communication tools, and when and how to use them.
 - This [communication plan](#) outlines the annual to-dos surrounding multilingual notification to staff and families. School/site action steps are highlighted in light yellow.
- **Office teams (Assistant Principals, OAPs, Business/Resource Managers, etc.):** Ensure their schools are welcoming and inclusive. Fulfill expectations and utilize provided resources. These documents share further detail:
 - This [presentation](#) outlines various communication tools, and when and how to use them.
 - This [communication plan](#) outlines the annual to-dos surrounding multilingual notification to staff and families. School/site action steps are highlighted in light yellow.
- **Teachers and support staff:** Responsible for checking family language preferences in Synergy before communicating. They must use approved district tools (like TalkingPoints, the Language Line, or Synergy) to ensure families are informed about their child's academic progress and school events.
- **All staff:** Every employee is responsible for protecting the civil rights of students and families. This includes providing meaningful access to school programs and maintaining the privacy (FERPA) of family information during interpreted conversations.
 - All staff must utilize established protocols and resources to provide multilingual communication as a standard practice.
 - Ensure that multilingual communication is simultaneous - not delayed or inferior to English communication - by using multilingual communication tools (i.e. TalkingPoints, interpreters, translated documents, templates)
 - Refer to information in Synergy to contact families in their preferred language.

STAFF TRAINING

All staff will complete annual universal training to ensure every family has timely and meaningful access to information and services. The following employee groups will receive additional training each year that is specific to their role.

- Enrollment Center staff
- Front office staff
- Community Education staff, including building supervisors
- Principals and site leaders
- New Teachers and Education Support Professionals (ESPs)
- Educational Service Center Staff
- Nurses
- Student Management Specialists (SMSs)
- Student Services staff, including counselors, due process ESPs, SEBCs
- Multilingual Community & Communication Specialists

Training and implementation resources will be provided annually in kits for each site. Staff will utilize these resources and make them available to students and families.

Language Access Champion: Each school building will designate a Language Access Champion from within the school's communication or leadership team. This role serves as the primary on-site lead for ensuring the school effectively implements the Language Access Plan and remains in compliance with state and federal requirements.

- Training & Professional Development
 - Partner with leadership to deliver annual Language Access Plan training
- Conflict Resolution
 - If a breakdown in communication occurs, assist families and direct them to the formal district review/appeal process

Staff who want to work as interpreters in the district need to complete a 20-hour foundational course for community-based interpreters. State statute requires school districts to utilize trained or certified interpreters. Staff must complete this 20-hour foundational training course or show evidence of completion of other acceptable training/certification in order to provide interpreting services in Osseo Area Schools. Training is offered in collaboration with our Adult Basic Education program and includes the following topics.

- Interpreting [code of ethics](#)
- The interpreter's role and basic protocols
- Educational terminology and processes, including those related to Special Education programming and services
- Procedures for working in our schools

REVIEW

Feedback on language services is collected from families and staff through surveys and meetings, providing valuable insight to refine and enhance the plan. The plan will be reviewed and updated every two years.

Your rights and the review process

Families have the right to receive important school information in a language they understand. If you feel that your language needs have not been met, or if an accommodation was not provided, you have the right to appeal (request a formal review).

To file an appeal or provide feedback:

- **Step 1:** Contact your school's Principal to discuss your concerns.
- **Step 2:** If the issue is not resolved, contact the District Office at info@district279.org or via mail at 11200 93rd Ave N, Maple Grove, MN 55369.
- **Step 3:** The district will review your request and provide a response regarding the language assistance accommodations.

Internal Monitoring Process of Language Assistance Services

Sites and district divisions/programs will analyze data related to Language Assistance services multiple times a year in alignment with data dig cycles. The core Language Access Plan team will collect and review data from sites and programs. Data will be used to inform training for staff, measure progress related to our implementation goals, and make adjustments to the Language Access Plan.

Data to be collected and analyzed includes:

- ParentVue access and use: who has logged in within the past month/ three months, scheduled conferences; particular focus on reviewing access and usage data for multilingual families
- Physical site audits/walkthroughs: Review of signage, staff capacity to access language assistance services, etc. [Example](#)
- Digital access audits: Review of websites, translation library, communications sent from sites, departments each month/quarter, etc.
- Review of translation quality: accuracy, accessible language, cultural nuance, etc.
- Feedback from families: quality of interpretation services, ease of access, effectiveness of communication, family stakeholder survey data related to communication
- Multilingual communication tool use: TalkingPoints and Mass Notification messaging (staff and families), interpreter and translation request logs, multilingual webpage and Facebook page engagement