

TALLADEGA COUNTY SCHOOLS

DIGITAL COMPUTING

DEVICE POLICY

2024-2025

T C B  E

Talladega County Schools

#LeadingTheWay

Dear Parent/Legal Guardian and Student:

The Talladega County School System uses Instructional Technology as one way of enhancing the system vision of providing a challenging, rigorous curriculum empowering all students to be successful in a global and technological society. To support this vision, students in Talladega County Schools are taught a variety of 21st Century skills like collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking in a multitude of ways throughout the school day. This requires that technology is seamlessly integrated throughout the educational program. In an effort to increase access to these 21st century skills, Talladega County Schools will offer students 24/7 accessibility to their learning by providing *on loan* a digital computing device in the form of an iPad or HP Chromebook (depending on the educational setting). The individual use of technology is a way to empower students to maximize their full potential and to prepare them for college and the workplace.

An important component of using an electronic computing device in the classroom will be digital citizenship, appropriate online behaviors, and proper maintenance and care of the device. The policies, procedures, and information within this document will apply to all digital computing devices used in Talladega County Schools. Please read it carefully and sign the Student Digital Computing Device Agreement. This signed agreement is a required component before any student is allowed to remove any computing device from Talladega County Schools property.

We look forward to an exciting year and the opportunities being offered to our students as they prepare for a future filled with possibilities.

Sincerely,

Dr. Suzanne Lacey, Superintendent

1. Receiving and Returning your Device

1.1 RECEIVING YOUR DEVICE

Devices will be distributed at the beginning of each school year. **Parents must read and digitally sign the Student Digital Computing Device Agreement through the online registration process before a device will be issued to a student.**

1.2 RETURNING YOUR DEVICE

Devices will be returned at a date, time, and location as designated by the local school Principal, Media Specialist, and/or Technology Integration Specialist. Typically, this return date would occur as the school year is ending. **If a student withdraws, is expelled, or is assigned to the Genesis Alternative School prior to the device return date, he or she must surrender the device immediately.**

1.3 FAILURE TO RETURN YOUR DEVICE

Individual devices and accessories (including all cables, chargers, protective cases, backpacks, etc.) must be returned at the end of each school year or upon demand by school staff (see Section 1.2). If a student fails to return a device and/or accessories, the student and his or her guardian will be responsible for the replacement cost of the items and may be subject to criminal prosecution or civil liability. **Failure to return the device or any accessories will result in a report of theft being filed with the appropriate authorities.**

2. Care of Your Device

Students are responsible for the general care of the device they have been issued by the school. Devices that are broken or fail to work properly should be immediately taken to the location designated by the local school for an evaluation of the equipment.

2.1 GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

- The device is the property of Talladega County Schools and all users will follow the policies contained in this document, the Talladega County Schools Acceptable Use Policy for technology, and the Student Responsibilities and Privileges: Code of Conduct.
- Only use a clean, soft cloth to clean the screen or other parts of your device.
- To prevent damage, all cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the device.
- Devices must remain free of any writing, art work, stickers, or labels that are not the property of Talladega County Schools.
- Devices must never be left in an unlocked locker, unlocked car or any unsupervised area, including locker rooms and athletic events.
- Students are responsible for ensuring their device battery is charged for school each day.

2.2 CARRYING DEVICES

In order to assist in protecting your device, a protective case with sufficient padding is provided by the local school to protect the device from **normal** treatment and to provide a suitable means for carrying the device within the school.

Take note of the following: Devices should **always** be within the protective case when carried. Some carrying cases can hold other objects (such as folders and workbooks), but these must be kept to a minimum to avoid placing too much pressure and weight on the device screen and other sensitive parts. A large number of broken screens are due to pressure within the carrying case caused by objects that do not belong.

2.3 SCREEN CARE

The device screens can be damaged if subjected to rough treatment. The screens are particularly sensitive to damage from excessive pressure

- Do not lean on the top of the device when it is closed.
- Do not place anything near the device that could put pressure on the screen.
- **Do not place anything in the carrying case that will press against the cover or the screen.**
- Clean the screen with a soft, dry cloth or anti-static cloth.
- Do not “bump” the device against lockers, walls, car doors, floors, etc., as it could cause major damage.

3. Using Your Device at School

Devices are intended for use at school each day. In addition to teacher expectations for their use, school messages, announcements, calendars and schedules may be accessed using the device. Students are responsible for bringing their device to all classes, unless specifically instructed not to do so by their teacher.

3.1 DEVICES LEFT AT HOME

If students leave their device at home, they are responsible for getting the coursework completed as if they had their device present. If a student repeatedly leaves their device at home, they may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

3.2 DEVICE UNDERGOING REPAIR

Should a student's assigned device need repair, a “loaner” device may be issued. There may be a delay in getting a device should the school not have sufficient inventory on hand. If the repair or replacement of a device is necessary due to negligence of the student and/or violation of the device usage agreement, a student will **not** be issued a device until repair or replacement costs are paid in full by cash or money order. Costs must be paid to the local school administrator.

3.3 CHARGING YOUR DEVICE'S BATTERY

Devices **must** be brought to school each day in a fully charged condition, and students are expected to charge their devices each evening. Repeat violations of this policy may result in the imposition of disciplinary consequences. During heavy use of devices, charging will be offered at the student's local campus at designated locations and times.

3.4 SCREENSAVER/BACKGROUND PHOTOS

Inappropriate media may not be used as a screensaver or desktop photo. Presence of guns, other weapons, pornographic materials, inappropriate language, alcohol, drug, gang-related symbols or any other inappropriate materials will result in disciplinary actions. Other questionable images may be restricted at the discretion of school administration. In some cases, the school district may impose a desktop photo that may not be changed. **Students may not set passwords for screen savers.**

3.5 SAVING DOCUMENTS AND OTHER WORK

For document storage, students are encouraged to email documents and/or save work on appropriate “cloud” servers such as Google Drive. Each student in the district is provided with an advertisement free and completely secure Google Apps account which includes unlimited storage of documents/files.

At the conclusion of the school year, when a student withdraws, or when a necessary repair or technical request is addressed, a student may lose all information should it be necessary to re-image or “wipe” the device. Talladega County Schools assumes no responsibility for lost work due to failure to complete a necessary backup of important information to a cloud server, external hard drive, etc.

4. Software on Devices

4.1 SOFTWARE ON DEVICES

The software/applications installed by Talladega County Schools must remain on devices and be easily accessible at all times. From time to time the school may add or remove software applications for use in a particular course.

4.2 SOFTWARE UPGRADES

Upgraded licensed software/applications are available from time to time. Students will be required to install updates as appropriate to ensure the device continues to operate properly.

5. Acceptable Use

Through the use of technology, students will be able to communicate with other schools, colleges, organizations, and people around the world through the Internet and other electronic information systems/networks. Students will have access to hundreds of databases, libraries, and computer services all over the world. With this opportunity comes responsibility. It is important that students and parents read the Talladega County Schools Acceptable Use Policy and ask questions if help is needed in understanding them. It will be the student's responsibility to follow the rules for appropriate use. Inappropriate system use may result in the loss of the privilege of using this educational and administrative tool.

Please note that the Internet is a network of many types of communication and information networks. It is possible that you may encounter some material you might find objectionable. While Talladega County Schools will use filtering technology to restrict access to such material, in some cases access to objectionable materials cannot be prevented. Often this is due to willful circumvention of the filters by a student or because a website containing objectionable material has "disguised" itself as something a typical work or school internet filter would not detect as inappropriate. It will be THE STUDENT'S responsibility to follow the rules for appropriate use and to report any inappropriate websites discovered by accident or through the purposeful actions of others. Violations of the Acceptable Use policies of the Talladega Board of Education will result in appropriate disciplinary action, and when necessary, law enforcement agencies will be contacted.

5.1 PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Talk to your children about values and the standards expected of your child during Internet use just as you do regarding other media information sources such as television, telephones, movies, and radio.
- Monitor student use of the digital device while it is connected to the Internet provided through their personal home network or any network which is not associated with Talladega County Schools.
- Ensure the device is used only by your child and for educational purposes only. Prohibit use of the device by other family members, friends, or guests.

5.2 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Participate in all class activities and assignments as directed by teachers and staff both responsibly and ethically.
- Obey general school rules concerning behavior and communication that apply to digital device use.
- Use all technology resources in an appropriate manner so as to not damage school equipment. This "damage" includes, but is not limited to: the loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries or service interruptions caused by the students own negligence, errors or omissions.
- Help Talladega County Schools protect our digital devices by contacting an administrator regarding any security problems you encounter.
- Monitor all activity on your account(s).
- Always turn off and secure your device after you are finished working to protect your work and information.
- Print a copy or make a screen capture and deliver to the local school Principal or Assistant Principal any message, email, or correspondence you receive that violates school policies or is threatening, demeaning.
- Return your device to the Media Center or designated location at the end of each school year.

5.3 PROHIBITED STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- Any action that violates Board policy, the Acceptable Use guidelines, this User Agreement, the Student Responsibilities and Privileges Code of Conduct, or federal/state law
- Possession, sending, accessing, uploading, downloading, producing or distributing offensive, profane, threatening, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit materials
- Cheating, including the use of chat rooms, sites selling term papers, book reports, and other forms of student work
- Messaging services; for example; Gmail chat, Yahoo chat, Twitter, Messenger by Facebook are just a very small example of messaging services available to young people in our technologically diverse society.
 - Messaging services may be used at the teacher's discretion if the messaging interactions are pertinent to the coursework being taught and are used strictly in an educational manner. **Anonymous messaging, websites, or apps are prohibited.**
- Download, installation, use, or transmission of: copyrighted materials, Internet/computer games, personal media (music, video, photos, etc.), or unauthorized apps or extensions. Legal consequences may apply.
- Use of outside data disks or external attachments without prior approval from the administration.
- Changing of device settings (exceptions include personal settings such as font size, brightness, wallpaper, etc.)
- Downloading unauthorized apps. There should be NO downloads from App Stores or websites without permission. •Gaining access to other student's accounts, files, and/or data.
- Use of the device and/or the Internet for spamming, financial or commercial gain, or for any illegal activity •Use of anonymous and/or false communications using messaging apps, sites, or services
- Students are not allowed to give out personal information, for any reason, over the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, setting up Internet accounts including those necessary for messaging services, Ebay, email, etc.
- Vandalism (any malicious attempt to harm or destroy hardware, software or data, including, but not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses or computer programs that can infiltrate computer systems and/or damage software components) of school equipment will not be allowed
- Transmission or accessing materials that are obscene, offensive, threatening or otherwise intended to harass or demean recipients. **Cyber-bullying in any form will not be tolerated and will be dealt with appropriately but with the maximum penalty.**
- Identity theft or impersonation of any student or employee or using TCBOE digital devices for these purposes
- Filming or photographing** any student or Talladega County Schools employee without permission to do so from the student or employee **AND publishing or posting video or photographs** of any student or Talladega County Schools employee to any website, photography database, social media site, etc. without permission to do so from the student or employee
- Bypassing the Talladega County Schools Internet filter through a web proxy.

5.4 DISTRICT/SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide Internet and email access to its students
- Provide Internet blocking of inappropriate materials as able
- Provide network data storage solutions. It is the STUDENT'S responsibility to choose the storage method most appropriate for their needs. The Talladega County School system reserves the right to review, monitor, and restrict information stored on or transmitted via Talladega County Schools equipment and to investigate inappropriate use of resources. The district provides Google Apps for Education accounts for all students, including cloud storage services.
- Provide staff guidance to aid students in doing research and help assure student compliance of the acceptable use policy
- Provide technical assistance and device repair services

5.5 RESPONSIBLE DEVICE CARE

- Students will be held responsible for maintaining their individual devices and keeping them in good working order.
- Devices that malfunction or are damaged must be reported to school administrators, the media specialist and/or the technology integration specialist. The school district will be responsible for repairing devices that malfunction.

•Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for any and all damage to devices through negligence, misuse, and intentional abuse. Negligence, misuse, and intentional abuse are not covered by the optional Protection Plan. If a Protection Plan is not purchased, parents and students are financially responsible for any damages or loss of the device while in their care, including accidental drops, liquid damage, theft, etc.

•Devices that are stolen must be reported immediately to local school administrators who will then contact the appropriate authorities. **Theft is a crime and will be dealt with using the strictest of penalties.**

5.6 LEGAL PROPRIETY

- Students must comply with trademark and copyright laws and all license agreements. Ignorance of the law is not immunity. If you are unsure, ask a teacher, a school administrator, or your parent/guardian.
- **Plagiarism is cheating** and is a violation of the *Talladega County Schools Responsibilities and Privileges Code of Conduct and Attendance*. Give credit to all sources used, whether quoted or summarized. This includes all forms of media on the Internet, such as graphics, movies, music, and text.

Violation of applicable state or federal law will result in criminal prosecution and/or disciplinary action by the District.

5.7 STUDENT DISCIPLINE

If a student violates any part of the policy contained within this document, the school system's acceptable use policy, and/or the *Talladega County Schools Student Responsibilities and Privileges Code of Conduct and Attendance*, he/she will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

6. Protecting and Storing Your Device

6.1 DEVICE IDENTIFICATION

In order to track and identify digital devices owned by the Talladega County School System, each student device is labeled by the Talladega County School System and the local school. Devices are identified by serial number and barcode. **Students are prohibited from altering these identifying marks.** Should a barcode sticker need to be replaced, the student must immediately notify the school media specialist.

6.2 DEVICES LEFT IN UNSUPERVISED AREAS

Under no circumstances should a digital device be left in an unsupervised area inside or outside of the school building. Some examples include: cafeteria, computer lab, locker room, media center, unlocked and unoccupied classroom, athletic field, band room, restrooms, and hallways. Any device left unattended is in danger of being stolen or damaged. If a device is found unattended, it will be taken to the school administrators and the owner of the device or responsible student may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

7. Protection Agreement

7.1 PROTECTION PLAN

All students may purchase an **OPTIONAL** Protection Plan for their device. This Protection Plan offers protection against a variety of incidents, which without the Protection Plan, would be the financial responsibility of the student and parent. This plan is covered in detail in the following section and is assessed according to the type of device the student is assigned. ***The Protection Plan does not cover the replacement costs of other equipment such as***

chargers, sync cables, cases. Replacement costs for these items will be charged at the current market cost for replacement.

| Device | Protection Plan |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| HP Chromebook G7/G8/G9 | \$25.00 |
| iPad 10.2 Inch, 32 GB, WiFi/Cellular | \$25.00 |

7.2 **ESTIMATED REPLACEMENT COSTS**

Replacement costs for devices and their related equipment are subject to change and vary according to current market prices. Below, you will find a table showing the current pricing structure for devices and equipment.

| Device | Replacement Cost |
|--|----------------------|
| HP Chromebook G7/G8/G9 | \$315.00 |
| Chromebook Charger | Current Market Value |
| Messenger Bag Chromebooks and iPads | \$25 |
| Chromebook Clear Shield | \$20 |
| iPad 10.2 Inch, 32 GB, WiFi/Cellular | \$299 |
| iPad Charger | Current Market Value |
| iPad Otterbox Case | \$30 |

7.3 **PROTECTION AGREEMENT**

In return for the payment of premium shown on the Declarations Page, we will pay for direct physical loss or damage to the digital computing device covered by this agreement.

7.4 **DEFINITIONS**

WE, US, OUR means Talladega County Schools.

YOU AND YOUR means the name of the student to whom the digital computing device is assigned (shown on Declarations Page) and parent/legal guardian of the student. No other person should be given control of the device and this Protection Plan does not cover damages while under the control of any person other than the student to which it is assigned, the parent/legal guardian, or any person delegated by the parent/legal guardian to act in their capacity on a temporary basis.

SCHEDULED COVERED PROPERTY means any digital computing device assigned to a student for which Talladega County Schools has entrusted user's care, custody, or control and for which the student has been assigned by the local school for daily use during the course of the school day and while at home.

ELECTRONIC COMPUTING DEVICE means portable electronic computing devices (iPad, Chromebook) owned by Talladega County Schools. This does NOT include peripheral devices such as power cords, sync cords, backpacks, or carrying cases.

SOFTWARE refers to the operating system loaded and managed by Talladega County Schools.

LOSS means the direct physical damage of scheduled covered property as listed on the Declarations Page.

OCCURRENCE means any one loss or series of losses arising out of one event for any one scheduled item.

LIKE KIND AND QUALITY means any part equal to or better than the replaced part that is acquired from a licensed computer equipment manufacturer or dealer or reseller and includes factory authorized parts or replacements.

7.5 COVERAGES

WE will pay for direct physical loss or damage to the **SCHEDULED COVERED PROPERTY** caused by or resulting from a covered cause of loss as outlined in the following coverage sections(s), Section 10.

8. Conditions of Protection Agreement

8.1 POLICY PERIOD/POLICY TERRITORY

•Under this Policy:

•The loss must occur:

- During the Policy period shown on the Declarations Page; and
- Within the Policy territory.

•The Policy Territory is:

- The United States of America, the District of Columbia.

8.2 LIMIT OF PROTECTION PLAN

Your deductible (the amount you are required to pay) will increase as shown on the Declarations Page with each subsequent claim.

Your Protection Plan will cover a maximum of three occurrences. After the third occurrence, the Protection Plan will no longer be in effect.

The Protection Plan does NOT cover theft. Theft must be covered by your personal homeowner's or automobile policy.

8.3 DEDUCTIBLE

In the event of damages, you are responsible for the applicable deductible or the actual cost of the repair, **whichever is lesser**. The deductible applies on a per scheduled item and per occurrence basis. We will first subtract the deductible amount shown on the Declarations Page as related to the claim number from the amount we would otherwise pay for the cost of repair under this Protection Plan. We will then cover the amount in excess of the deductible.

| Claim | Deductible |
|--------------|------------|
| First Claim | \$60.00 |
| Second Claim | \$60.00 |
| Third Claim | \$60.00 |

8.4 YOUR DUTIES IN THE EVENT OF DAMAGE

The student to whom the device is assigned, or their parent/legal guardian, must do the following in the event of damage:

- DO NOT attempt repairs to the device or surrender the device to any repair facility.
- Notify the Principal of the local school of the damages.
- Surrender the digital device to the local school IT specialist or the Principal.
- Complete a claim form detailing the events, including how, when, and where the damage occurred.
- Allow us a reasonable time and opportunity to examine the property and to get a cost of repairs.
- Pay the required deductible by cash or money order prior to any repair completed according to the terms of this Protection Plan.

8.5 DEVICE UNDERGOING REPAIR

Should a student's assigned device need repair, a "loaner" device may be issued if such device is available. There may be a delay in getting a device should the school not have sufficient inventory on hand. If the repair or replacement of a device is necessary due to negligence of the student and/or violation of the device usage agreement, a student will **not** be issued a device until the deductible required according to this Protection Plan is paid by cash or money order. Costs must be paid to the local school administrator. Should the original device issued to the student be beyond repair, a comparable device will be issued from the local school inventory. If deemed necessary, the local school may also restrict use of any loaner computer or repaired computer as a consequence of disciplinary action.

8.6 APPRAISAL OF DAMAGES

We retain the right to select a certified repair facility of choice to complete all repairs. According to the Digital Device Policy, Talladega County Schools will use only certified repair facilities. The use of certified repair facilities retains the warranty, while other, **non-approved repair services will void the warranty.**

8.7 UNAUTHORIZED REPAIRS

We retain the right to deny any claim when repairs are completed by any person or agency other than a representative authorized by the Talladega County Board of Education. **Should unauthorized repairs be completed, this Protection Plan will be voided without refund. The device will be considered a total loss, and the student will be charged for the device according to the terms of the Digital Device Policy.**

8.8 INSPECTION OF DIGITAL DEVICES

We have the right to:

- Make inspections of digital devices at any time
- Give you reports on the conditions we find; and
- Submit the device for repair under the terms of this Protection Plan
- Request the deductible amount be paid according to the terms of this Protection Plan
- Retain possession of the device until payment of the deductible is paid and/or the terms of any disciplinary action as a result of damages has been satisfied

8.9 TRANSFER OF PROTECTION PLAN

This plan may not be transferred to any other individual at any time. Should a student withdraw, be expelled, or be assigned to the Genesis Alternative School, there will be no refund of premium(s) paid to place this Protection Plan in force.

8.10 CANCELLATION

You may cancel this Protection Plan by submitting the cancellation request in writing with signature and date. However, there are no refunds made due to cancellation.

We may cancel this Protection Plan by mailing or delivering to you written notice of cancellation at least twenty (20) days prior to the effective cancellation date. We will mail or deliver our notice to you at your last mailing address known to

us. Notice of cancellation will state the effective date of cancellation, and the Protection Plan will end on that date. If this Protection Plan is canceled, you will not be refunded any portion of the premium. Cancellation of Protection Plans or refusal to initially provide a Protection Plan will be enforced for the following:

- A total of three claims
- Concealing or misrepresenting any material facts or circumstances surrounding damages to the digital device
- Making false statements during the course of investigation to determine fault
- **Failure to report damages**
- **Failure to pay deductibles**
- Completion of repairs not authorized by Talladega County Schools

8.11 DIGITAL DEVICE POLICY

Acceptance of this Protection Plan and payment of the premium means you agree to take due care to maintain the recommendations and policies outlined in the Talladega County Schools Digital Device Policy.

8.12 ASSIGNMENT OF DEVICE FOR PROTECTION PLAN

The digital device covered by this Protection Plan is identified as the device issued to the student and RECORDED IN THE LOCAL SCHOOL INVENTORY SYSTEM by the local school's media specialist.

9. Accidental Damage Coverage Section

ONLY DAMAGES OR LOSSES CONSIDERED ACCIDENTAL PHYSICAL DAMAGE ARE COVERED BY THIS PROTECTION PLAN.

9.1 DEFINITIONS

Accidental physical damage means an unexpected and unintentional external event that results in physical damage to your digital device. The damage shall not be foreseeable and shall be beyond your control. Damages may NOT be covered if you have violated the Digital Device Policy regarding who may access and/or control your device.

Neglect means your disregard to use all reasonable means to save and preserve your digital device from damage. Neglect is determined by the investigation of the local administrator or may be uncovered during the course of the trouble-shooting/repair.

Abuse means:

- Improper usage or careless treatment of scheduled covered property by you
- Intentionally or recklessly damaging or destroying the digital device
- Operating your digital device outside the permitted or intended uses as described in the Digital Device Policy

9.2 MECHANICAL AND/OR ELECTRICAL BREAKDOWN

Mechanical and/or electrical breakdown means the failure of a covered device due to faulty workmanship or faulty materials supplied by the original manufacturer or authorized repair center whenever the device is operated according to the manufacturer's instructions. **You are not responsible for any repair costs related to mechanical and/or electrical breakdown.**

9.3 PREEXISTING CONDITION

Pre Existing condition means failures, defects, or damages that you should have reasonably known to be present or that have been documented by Talladega County Schools prior to the effective date of this policy. **Preexisting conditions are NOT covered by this Protection Plan.**

9.4 WEAR AND TEAR

Wear and tear means the reduction in value to the digital device stemming from routine use and exposure. A Talladega County Schools authorized representative will determine if a condition of a digital device constitutes routine wear and tear. **Wear and tear are not covered by this Protection Plan.**

10. Protection Plan - Covered Cause of Damage/Loss

9.4 Covered Cause of Damage/Loss

We will provide coverage to your digital device against direct, physical damage or loss caused by:

1. Fire and smoke (Fire Department report required)
2. Lightning
3. Internal explosion
4. Windstorm/hail
5. Explosion
6. Riot or civil commotion
7. Aircraft
8. Vehicles
9. Volcanic eruption
10. Vandalism and/or mischief
11. Falling objects
12. Weight of ice, snow or sleet
13. Accidental discharge of water or steam
14. Sudden cracking of a steam or hot water heating system
15. Freezing
16. Sudden damage from artificial electric currents
17. Flood
18. Accidental water damage (please note that **neglect** will not be covered)
19. Accidental damage due to impact (please note that **neglect** will not be covered)
20. Any other **accidental** direct, physical damage or loss not listed

***Please note that theft is not covered under this Protection Plan**