



Great Falls Public Schools

All kids engaged in learning today...for life tomorrow

# Information Technology Plan 2025 – 2028

Great Falls Public Schools  
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Great Falls, Montana 59405



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# Introduction

Technology is a tool that supports our overall mission to successfully educate students to navigate their future. For students today, technology is an extension of their life, so it is essential that GFPS transform how students learn and provide enriching opportunities to enhance learning in a fair and equitable manner. Technology that engages students and promotes collaboration, critical thinking skills, and multi-dimensional problem solving, leads to greater academic success and achievement. To support that vision, teachers and staff must also be engaged in technology. Providing professional development coupled with onsite support and efficient and effective resources that are “always on” and fully available are paramount to making student achievement a realization. At GFPS, our primary objective is to prepare our students to be citizenship ready and prepared for a career and/or college in adapting and using technology for life.

This three-year technology plan encompasses key components to make integration of technology within the classroom a reality and success.

This plan was unanimously approved by the GFPS School Board on May 12, 2025.

# Evaluation

This plan will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis. Accomplishments and revisions will be reported to the School Board in an annual Technology Report.

# Stakeholders

## Who will be impacted by the plan?

- Students
- Teachers, Administrators, and Staff
- Parents
- Community
- Local Businesses, Higher Education, and Military

# GFPS Technology Mission & Vision Statements

**Vision:** “Engaging, collaborative, transformative technology for all students.”

**Mission:** “We strategically use technology to promote greater academic success and achievement.”

## **Belief statements:**

- Technology is a tool that supports our mission to successfully educate students to navigate their future.
- Technology is an extension of students’ current reality.
- Technology engages students and promotes collaboration.
- Technology facilitates critical thinking skills and multi-dimensional problem solving.
- Effective, efficient use of technology is a partnership with students, staff, teachers, and resources to augment learning in a fair and equitable manner.
- Effective, efficient use of technology prepares our students to be citizenship ready and equipped for further education and/or a career.

# Acronyms

AI – Artificial Intelligence  
ANB – Average Number Belonging  
AT – Assistive Technology  
ATT – Assistive Technology Team  
CIPA – Children’s Internet Protection Act  
COPS SVPP – Community Oriented Policing Services School Violence Prevention Program  
CTE – Career Technical Education  
DPA – Data Privacy Agreement  
ECF – Emergency Connectivity Fund  
ELA – English Language Arts  
ESSER – Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund  
FCC – Federal Communications Commission  
Gbps – Gigabit per second  
GFC MSU – Great Falls College Montana State University  
GFPS – Great Falls Public Schools  
IEP – Individualized Education Plan  
IT – Information Technology  
LEA – Local Education Agency  
Mbps – Megabit per second  
MTSBA – Montana School Board Association  
OPI – Office of Public Instruction  
OS – Operating Systems  
PD – Professional Development  
PIR – Pupil Instruction Related  
PLC – Professional Learning Community  
PTA – Parent Teacher Association  
RFP – Request for Proposal  
SSO – Single Sign On  
TBD – To Be Determined  
USAC – Universal Service Administrative Company  
WAN – Wide Area Network

# Goals-Objectives Summary

Goals	Objectives
1. Technology Curriculum	1.1 Digital Responsibility at All Levels 1.2 Review of Online Content for New and/or Updated Curriculum 1.3 Evaluate Virtual/Online Courses and Textbooks 1.4 Emerging Technology for Future-Ready Learning 1.5 Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) 1.6 Technology Industry Pathways Development
2. Technology Professional Learning	2.1 Customized Individual Learning 2.2 Use of Video-Based Learning 2.3 Online Training through the KnowBe4 Platform 2.4 Technology-Focused PIRs 2.5 New Hire Training 2.6 Professional Learning Opportunities
3. Hardware & Software Selection, Approval, and Use	3.1 All Hardware and Software Purchasing Coordinated through Information Technology 3.2 New vs Refurbished Equipment 3.3 Google vs Microsoft Applications 3.4 Implement Integrated Communication Tools 3.5 Evaluation, Selection, and Implementation of Single Sign On 3.6 Evaluation, Support, and Maintenance of Classroom Management Application 3.7 Active Directory Password Management 3.8 Providing Current Operating Systems for Endpoint Devices
4. Infrastructure Upgrades for Performance, Reliability, Redundancy, Security, and Safety	4.1 Provide Access and Improvements to Current Private WAN Fiber and Internet Services 4.2 Network Switch Replacement and Standardization 4.3 Wireless Access Increase and Refresh Cycle 4.4 Continued Internet and WAN Bandwidth Monitoring and Evaluation 4.5 Utilize E-Rate Funding for Network 4.6 Digital Classroom and Virtual Offices 4.7 Transition from VMWare to an Alternative Hypervisor 4.8 Complete Replacement of Video Surveillance System
5. Ubiquitous Access	5.1 Maintain 1:1 in Grades 2–6 and 2:1 for Grades K-1 5.2 Maintain 1:1 Program for Grades 7-12 5.3 Support Access with Assistive Technology (AT) 5.4 Equitable Level of Technology Across the District

	5.5 Equitable Access from Home
6. Hardware Maintenance to Enable Reliable and Sustainable Fleet of Equipment	6.1 Refresh Schedule – Minimum Specs, Age, and Warranty 6.2 Achieve 5-year Hardware Replacement Cycle 6.3 Sustainability Model for Grants and Foundation Awards
7. Support Structure to Facilitate Consistent & Uninterrupted Processes and Operations	7.1 IT Support Structure and Processes 7.2 Technology Coaches Support Structure and Processes
8. Security/Privacy to Protect Student and Employee Data	8.1 Annual Security/Privacy Staff Awareness Training 8.2 Security Assessment and Remediation Process 8.3 Montana Pupil Online Personal Information Protection Act 8.4 Evaluate Strategies for Password Management 8.5 Evaluation, Selection, Implementation of Laptop Encryption 8.6 Use of Raptor Visitor Management System 8.7 Provide Data Retention Techniques for Staff Use 8.8 Develop and Regularly Evaluate and Revise, as Needed, Plans for the Incident Response Plan, Disaster Recovery, and Provide Change Management
9. Budget Funding to Support Technology Plan	9.1 Technology Levy Increase 9.2 Grants, Donations and Foundation Awards 9.3 E-Rate Opportunities and Federal Assistance

# Goal 1. Technology Curriculum

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## Objective 1.1 Digital Responsibility at All Levels

Digital literacy, digital citizenship, and cybersecurity have a focus on the safe, legal, and ethical use of both information and technology, by addressing the issues of safety when navigating on the Internet, protecting personally identifying information, preventing cyberbullying, and using intellectual property. This objective is integrated across all technology standards, as well as providing opportunities for explicit direct instruction.

## Objective 1.2 Review of Online Content for New and/or Updated Curriculum

As the Curriculum department evaluates new and updated curriculum, they will also evaluate the feasibility of purchasing digital/online content. In addition, Student Services also adds new and updated curriculum for the Special Education classrooms and will comply with the same standards of review and evaluation as the general education Curriculum department. However, they will also consider assistive technology (AT) on an as needed basis and follow the prescribed guidelines as outlined in Objective 5.3.

Evaluation will mirror the District's philosophy of prioritizing the educational value of online content and platforms in support of curriculum standards and a blended learning style which focuses on face-to-face instruction backed with technology exercises as appropriate. Montana's schedule for reviewing the general education curriculum for the next 3 years is:

- 2025-26 – Math, World Languages, English Language Arts & Literacy
- 2026-28 – Based on Montana's OPI curricular review schedule

## Objective 1.3 Evaluate Virtual/Online Courses and Textbooks

Virtual and online courses provide the flexibility of being able to take them anytime from anywhere and to fill in gaps when students require specialized transformational learning. GFPS utilizes the Montana Digital Academy platform and students are approved and assigned by building administration. In addition, an Online Grades 7-12 Academy is being developed by GFPS to expand access for both credit recovery and credit accrual. The Curriculum department and District leadership will continue to evaluate these platforms as well as other options available. Further, the Curriculum department will evaluate the feasibility of online textbooks and student digital licenses as compared to the annual consumable textbooks and resource replacement cost. The primary advantage is having the content continually updated. A hardcopy set for each classroom should also be purchased as a backup in case the internet or website is down.

## Objective 1.4 Emerging Technology for Future-Ready Learning

GFPS will use a structured process for vetting, piloting, and evaluating new and emerging technology devices, platforms, and educational opportunities to ensure they align with instructional goals, equip students to navigate their futures, and provide a secure and accessible environment. The vetting process will involve collaboration between educators, technology staff, and administrators to assess potential tools based on educational value, data privacy compliance, ease of integration, available professional learning, and cost-effectiveness. Approved technologies will undergo a pilot phase in

select classrooms or schools, during which participants will engage in professional learning before and during implementation. All stakeholders will provide regular feedback on usability, effectiveness, and impact on learning outcomes throughout the pilot phase. A final review will determine whether the technology should be approved for use in the district as is, modified for better implementation, or discontinued. This process ensures the District is able to adequately support, implement, and provide opportunity for advancement with high quality, emerging technology.

### **Objective 1.5 Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

GFPS has established clear guidelines for the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance teaching and learning while ensuring student safety, data privacy, and academic integrity. AI-powered tools and platforms will be carefully vetted to align with educational goals, comply with data security regulations, and support equitable access for all students. The District will provide school-friendly AI platforms that are designed for educational environments, ensuring they promote critical thinking, creativity, and personalized learning while safeguarding against misinformation and bias. Educators and students will receive training on appropriate AI use, including understanding its capabilities and limitations, fostering digital literacy, and maintaining academic honesty. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will ensure AI tools remain effective, relevant, and aligned with best practices in education. Through these measures, the District will leverage AI as a supportive resource while maintaining a secure and student-centered learning environment.

### **Objective 1.6 Technology Industry Pathways Development**

The demand for a skilled, qualified workforce in the technology industry continues to evolve. GFPS will foster partnerships with higher education institutions for dual credit programs in various technology-based fields. This educational focus will provide the building blocks for our students to seek a career in a growing and desirable industry.

#### **Current Assessment:**

- These objectives are ongoing processes and will be reevaluated and/or modified as needed annually.

#### **Accountability:**

- Teachers are accountable for implementing the curriculum and technology standards with students and following procedures for technology use in the classroom.
- The Curriculum department is responsible for reviewing new standards and selecting resources for curriculum.
- The Student Services department is responsible for reviewing and selecting resources for Special Education classrooms.

#### **Support:**

- Executive Directors, Curriculum Coordinators, Director of Information Technology, Student Services Coordinators, Principals, and Instructional/Technology Coaches will provide support to teachers.

**Measure:**

- Completion of training
- Curriculum reviewed and approved
- Programs operational

**Funding:**

- Instructional Technology Coaches
  - Information Technology General Fund
- New curriculum with online platforms
  - Curriculum General Fund
  - Student Services General Fund

**Timeline:**

2025-2026	Support ongoing objectives Prepare materials and Information for Technology Levy increase Evaluate running a Technology Levy to support budget - Pending Board Authorization
2026-2027	Support ongoing objectives
2027-2028	Support ongoing objectives

# Goal 2. Technology Professional Learning

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## Objective 2.1 Customized Individual Learning

Instruction on the specific device/application along with integration of curriculum and classroom activity is essential. Our Technology and Instructional Coaches continue to be an integral piece of making technology functional in the classroom. Teachers can make individual appointments with coaches and customize training for their specific needs. GFPS will continue to require professional learning as a condition of use.

## Objective 2.2 Use of Video-Based Learning

Video-based learning offers the benefits of being accessed from anywhere at any time, easily shared, engaging, and time-efficient. There are recording platforms, like ScreenCastify and YouTube, that have been approved by GFPS and are available for use. The use of video for both training and instruction in appropriate and beneficial scenarios will continue to be supported.

## Objective 2.3 Online Training through the KnowBe4 Platform

GFPS has purchased the KnowBe4 platform for required Human Resources (HR) and Cybersecurity staff training. While KnowBe4 is primarily a training tool for phishing and security awareness training, it also contains modules for regulatory (e.g., FERPA, HIPPA, etc.) and HR (e.g., discrimination, harassment, ethics, etc.) requirements. In addition, custom content can be uploaded for online training specific to GFPS needs. The benefit of this training is that authorized staff can easily push out new training to all or a group of individuals, and it tracks compliance with completing the training.

## Objective 2.4 Technology-Focused PIRs

Mastery of technology literacy is an important element of building a foundationally sound, sustainable model of pedagogy in the 21st century. Staff can earn PIR credits by participating in technology-focused courses. These PIR courses will be offered by GFPS annually; aligned with current instructional technology, curriculum, and standards; and intended to maximize the impact technology can have on academic success and achievement.

## Objective 2.5 New Hire Training

GFPS will provide at least one full day of new certified staff training in support of setting up login credentials, ensuring correct access, and learning the navigation and case use for the core applications used by GFPS. Ongoing support for access and navigating these applications will be provided by technology and instructional coaches, as needed.

## Objective 2.6 Professional Learning Opportunities

In an effort to stay abreast of evolving and emerging educational technology, GFPS will support professional learning opportunities. Each Wednesday, time is dedicated for Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Principals are encouraged to reserve at least one session per year for technology-related training. GFPS will budget annually for

training opportunities such as bringing in speakers, hosting webinars, and sending teams to conferences.

### Current Assessment:

- Technology coaching is instrumental in elevating the confidence our staff has in using the technology at their disposal, thereby raising the expectations for their students in its use as well.
- Video-based learning leverages our 1:1 programs in addition to the technology professional learning staff receive each year.
- Continued and increased use of online training to instruct staff in the common Cybersecurity styles will increase our ability to prevent malicious attacks on the District. This resource will also be a considerable training resource for additional GFPS processes.
- As technology continually changes, our PIR training must be continually evaluated and modified to provide the best support for our staff in its use.

### Accountability:

- Executive Directors, Principals, Teachers, Technology/Instructional Coaches

### Support:

- Information Technology, Human Resources, Principals, and Technology/Instructional Coaches will provide support to teachers.

### Measure:

- Completion of training and certifications.
- Renew subscriptions for training tools.
- Progress towards meeting identified needs/skills.
- Training budget established.

### Funding:

- PIR and PLC
  - Elementary and Secondary General Funds
  - Curriculum General Funds
  - Building PD Funds
- Technology Coaches
  - Information Technology General Fund

### Timeline:

2025-2026	Support ongoing objectives Prepare materials and Information for Technology Levy increase Evaluate running a Technology Levy to support training budget - Pending Board Authorization
2026-2027	Support ongoing objectives Evaluate PIR content
2027-2028	Support ongoing objectives Evaluate PIR Content

# Goal 3. Hardware & Software Selection, Approval, and Use

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## Objective 3.1 All Hardware and Software Purchasing Coordinated through Information Technology

In order to standardize, reduce duplication and costs, and provide adequate support, all hardware and software purchasing should continue to be coordinated through Information Technology to make sure it meets defined specifications and is in alignment with District objectives. In addition, purchases involving new items should be reviewed and approved by a team representing the requestor, Principal, Executive Director, Director of Information Technology, and Technology Coach. All major software and hardware should be centralized and run through the budgets governed by Information Technology. See Appendix A for approved software and hardware. Using the established process for submitting requests for Web 2.0 tools, Information Technology will evaluate requests for Web 2.0, Chromebook, and iPad applications in an efficient and time-sensitive manner. Applications will be reviewed for content, relevance, duplicity, privacy/security concerns, and/or securing data privacy agreements.

## Objective 3.2 New vs Refurbished Equipment

In the past, GFPS purchased refurbished equipment based on the economics and cost as compared to purchasing new equipment. Due to hardware failure issues with the refurbished equipment, the department has moved away from this process. With ESSER funding, the District was able to replace all refurbished equipment. The goal remains to purchase new equipment with a minimum of 3 years manufacturer warranty when economically feasible as currently the cost of Chromebooks are becoming substantially more expensive than in the past. Due to this increase in price, in 2025, the Board allowed a one-time purchase for new Chromebooks without the extended warranty. Any continued purchasing of new equipment, with the additional cost of the extended warranty, will require additional funding, such as a Technology Levy, to sustain.

## Objective 3.3 Google vs Microsoft Applications

Both Google for Education and Microsoft's suite of applications provide a very rich and robust learning environment. While each has their strengths and weaknesses, they both play a prominent part in the set of tools used at GFPS. It is the recommendation that GFPS remain in a hybrid model and support both platforms. The simplicity of Google delivers an ideal setting for the classroom, while our community business leaders continue to express that prospective candidates should know Microsoft products to be productive in their environment.

## Objective 3.4 Implement Integrated Communication Tools

GFPS's 2024-27 Strategic Plan goal for Stewardship and Accountability is to develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan to improve communication between the district, staff, parents, students, and the community. The District will work to provide a suite of communication products that include website hosting, mass notifications,

teacher-parent communication, and a mobile app to produce a cohesive and as homogenous communication platform as possible.

### **Objective 3.5 Evaluation, Selection, and Implementation of Single Sign On**

A recent study done by NordPass indicated the average person has 100 passwords to remember. Security best practices specify that individuals should not reuse passwords and have a unique one per application. Password management is often a complaint with over 200 applications approved for use, to include required curriculum platforms, within the GFPS inventory of applications. Single Sign On (SSO) technology allows a user to sign on once with a single password and then have access to all applications for which the person is approved for without requiring additional login credentials for each one. The main benefit is only having to remember one password with immediate access to the most commonly used platforms. However, the caution is if the password is compromised, it is compromised across many applications. The Information Technology department is currently in the process of implementing SSO for the District that will simplify most of the current application logins. We will continue to work to make this process unilateral for all remaining applications and evaluate the implementation and security of this password management approach.

### **Objective 3.6 Evaluation, Support, and Maintenance of Classroom Management Application**

Management technology allows classroom teachers the ability to monitor a student's use of computers to ensure that they stay on-task. This technology continues to evolve, requiring GFPS to now shift from implementation to continual evaluation of the current product and its ability to provide this capability with newer equipment and operating systems. The Technology Department will continue to periodically evaluate how well our current Classroom Management solution works in our environment and its ability to provide classroom teachers this functionality.

### **Objective 3.7 Active Directory Password Management**

In the past, managing passwords, especially at the beginning of the school year, was time-consuming and frustrating to staff and students. In addition, trying to change a password off the GFPS network was not possible. Due to this, the District implemented an application to allow staff and students the ability to change their passwords from the GFPS Bookmarks page. This allows the changing of passwords from a web browser even when not on the District network. Having the capability for staff and students to change their password from anywhere using any device, along with a self-administered password reset utility, has helped reduce calls to the help desk and instructional time lost waiting for resets to happen.

Password management is one of the primary cybersecurity defenses the District employs to safeguard our network, staff, and students against loss of private information. We are not alone in this as the current Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency's (CISA) password suggestions are: 1) password lengths of at least 16 characters; 2) mixed characters including numbers, uppercase letters and special characters; and 3) mandate password changes every 90 days without reuse of the last 8 previous passwords.

Because of working with a student population who is learning how to manage passwords, GFPS has opted to use the following password protocols: 1) password length must be at least 8 characters; 2) include at least three of the four character combination of uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters; and 3) password changes must happen annually or whenever compromised without reuse of the last 3 previous passwords. Staff are set to automatically require Active Directory (AD) password resets annually, while student AD passwords are manually reset at the beginning of each school year.

### **Objective 3.8 Providing Current Operating Systems for Endpoint Devices**

As technology progresses, the most fluid and fast-changing aspect is the Operating System (OS) on the devices we use. GFPS, with ESSER Funds, updated all staff laptops, provided a District-wide 1:1 program for students grades 2-12, and a 2:1 program for students K-1st grades. These hardware purchases came with the most recent operating systems at the time. As time progressed, the provided OS aged and became a “past version” to newer versions (e.g., Windows 10 moved to Windows 11, etc.). The Technology Department will continually evaluate newer versions of OS and how they will interact with the District software applications across all departments. As the newer OS is vetted, it will be installed on all capable devices. This will be an ongoing process to ensure that our programs interact reliably and provide security enhancements that come with updated operating systems.

#### **Current Assessment:**

- The established process for evaluating hardware and software applications will continue to be evaluated for speed and accuracy.
- Purchasing new equipment in lieu of refurbished equipment will continue to be the standard for future technology purchases.
- Information Technology will continue to support curriculum efforts to expand both Google and Microsoft applications as they are evaluated to be beneficial to the District.
- In the summer of 2025, the implementation of an integrated communication tool will be completed after the pilot has been evaluated and proven in performance.
- Single Sign On (SSO) will be implemented in the summer of 2025 with yearly evaluation of additional applications to the SSO as deemed necessary by the District.
- Our current Classroom Management Technology platform will be evaluated for any beneficial upgrade as well as any newer technology that may benefit GFPS.
- Ongoing staff familiarization with District Active Directory password management, as well as continuation of new staff training, will benefit staff use.
- As newer Operating Systems (OS) become available, they will be vetted against our current environment and implemented, if advantageous.

#### **Accountability:**

- Executive Directors, Principals, Administrative Assistants, Information Technology, Technology/Instructional Coaches

#### **Support:**

- Information Technology, Principals, Administrative Assistants, Technology/Instructional Coaches

### Measure:

- Policy and procedure for hardware and software purchases
- Standardize and streamline communication using an integrated solution
- Teachers able to monitor students' work and prevent misuse
- Improved and simplified management of passwords

### Funding:

- Infrastructure and Endpoint Refresh
  - Technology Levy Budget
  - Building Technology Funds
  - Information Technology General Fund
- Instructional Technology Coaches
  - Information Technology General Fund
- Microsoft Licensing
  - Technology Fund
  - Technology Levy

### Timeline:

2025-2026	Implement SSO Implement Integrated Communications Application Refresh endpoint devices as able with current funding Evaluate the current Classroom Management Application Prepare materials and Information for Technology Levy increase Renew subscriptions to PowerSchool, Frontline Leverage E-Rate funding for refresh of any Network Infrastructure hardware purchase Evaluate running a Technology Levy to sustainability of objectives - Pending Board Authorization
2026-2027	Support ongoing objectives Refresh endpoint devices as able with current funding Leverage E-Rate funding for refresh of any Network Infrastructure hardware purchase
2027-2028	Support ongoing objectives Refresh endpoint devices as able with current funding Leverage E-Rate funding for refresh of any Network Infrastructure hardware purchase

# Goal 4. Infrastructure Upgrades for Performance, Reliability, Redundancy, Security, and Safety

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## Objective 4.1 Provide Access and Improvements to Current Private WAN Fiber and Internet Services

The installed dedicated dark fiber system provides GFPS with its network between sites as well as to the outside world. This fiber network has the capability to expand and provide foreseeable increases in the District's network speed requirements. Although the fiber network is dedicated to the District, the actual connections are not District-owned. The District leases, by agreement and funded by the federal E-Rate program, the use of the fiber network. The Internet Service Provider (ISP) that provides the District with internet services is also funded using the E-Rate program. These agreements allow the District to not only continue to provide quality and dependable network services between sites but also provides the capability to expand those services as future demands may dictate, based on periodic evaluation by the Technology Department.

## Objective 4.2 Network Switch Replacement and Standardization

While desktop computers and laptops generally follow a five-year industry standard replacement schedule, network components typically do not. By and large, network components are replaced due to end of support by vendors, equipment failures, lack of functionality needed for new technology, or inability to integrate with other network components. It is best practice to standardize with a single manufacturer to simplify management and replacement, ensure compatibility and performance, and reduce training and vendor relationships. GFPS currently employs Brocade ICX series switches as our standard model. Portable network switches, used when wiring is not available, should be avoided if possible and only employed if approved and installed by the Technology Department. In 2025, the current inventory of network switches will be two years old.

## Objective 4.3 Wireless Access Increase and Refresh Cycle

Trends continue to indicate that school districts are adopting more mobile technology to allow greater flexibility within and between classrooms; GFPS is no different. Wireless technology continues to advance and has become a stable, reliable, and efficient form of data communication, reaching speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second (Gbps). There are multiple factors, however, that can influence performance and present challenges. The District currently has Ruckus R750 wireless access points which were refreshed in 2024. Although these access points are currently providing adequate coverage, we continue to grow our inventory of wireless devices past even our 1:1 and 2:1 programs. GFPS will continue to refine the implementation by conducting post wireless surveys and tweaking configurations to achieve maximum performance. The goal will be to provide complete building coverage for each school, which may require additional access points and an upgrade at some point in the future.

## **Objective 4.4 Continued Internet and WAN Bandwidth Monitoring and Evaluation**

For the 2025-2026 school year, the FCC recommended the target of at least 1 Mbps internet service for each student. That estimate has not changed since 2022 when the previous Technology Plan was written. GFPS currently provides a 10 Gbps internet service via our dark fiber WAN network. Currently our monitoring shows we are only using 20% of that capacity. We will continue to monitor and make recommendations on any needed increases in our service bandwidth, but there is no foreseeable need at this time to consider this. Some exploration of an auxiliary or failsafe network provider to ensure connectivity in the event of failure of service by the primary provider has been conducted. Unfortunately, that would not be possible with our current dark fiber provider per contract. Any such failsafe network would also require complete funding by the District, making the expense exorbitant.

## **Objective 4.5 Utilize E-Rate Funding for Network**

The federal E-Rate program continues to be an integral part of keeping our infrastructure up to date. Eligible schools and libraries can submit RFPs for broadband equipment and services, through a competitive bidding process. Instruction on digital citizenship is not only an educational obligation but a requirement for the E-Rate federal program, which provides the District with affordable broadband equipment and services. GFPS must comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA, see Appendix B) in order to participate in E-Rate. Awards must be approved by Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), and reimbursement percentage is based on the free and reduced lunch rate of the school district. As of 2025, GFPS's reimbursement rate is 80%. This program allows us to purchase network switches, wireless access points, Cat 6 wire, fiber optic cable, and internet and WAN services for an affordable amount. We would not be able to afford it without this program. As of the writing of this plan, the current expectation is that the FCC-controlled E-Rate program will continue in the current political climate.

## **Objective 4.6 Digital Classroom and Virtual Offices**

The Covid pandemic taught us that we need to be prepared to support remote learning. GFPS believes there will always be some form of remote learning, including homebound students. Due to this belief, the District will retain the functionality to support remote learning through various virtual meeting applications and digital classroom hardware for both instruction and administrative use. These technologies, along with our 1:1 program, will allow teachers to be prepared to implement remote learning should it be needed again.

## **Objective 4.7 Transition from VMWare to an Alternative Hypervisor**

GFPS's virtual environment consists of multiple virtual servers (e.g., PowerSchool, our Student Information System) that sustain and provide electronic files and network processes for the District. These servers exist on a virtual hypervisor provided by a virtualization software called VMWare, which requires licensing. In 2024, VMWare was purchased by a company called BroadCom. This acquisition allowed BroadCom to significantly increase licensing charges, up to 300% of the original costs, for customers who were current VMWare customers. This created an untenable financial situation for GFPS to maintain and continue to use VMWare as our virtualization product. At this

point, plans have been made to transition the District's virtual environment to an alternative hypervisor that is economically feasible to maintain. This plan was created in three phases: 1) maintain VMWare licensing for an additional year (2026); 2) purchase parallel server infrastructure and alternative hypervisor software platform; 3) and, once a new hypervisor environment is established, implement transition of all GFPS servers to the new hypervisor environment.

## **Objective 4.8 Complete Replacement of Video Surveillance System**

GFPS currently has over 1,000 cameras installed, and every building is covered with a basic campus-wide system. Due to the District's old video surveillance system being placed on the FTC ban list as a threat because of security vulnerabilities in the software, GFPS applied for a grant through the COPS School Violence Prevention Program to replace all old cameras and recorders in the middle and high schools. The old elementary school cameras and recorders were replaced with ESSER funding. Currently only the District Office Building (DOB), the Annex, and the Little Russell Maintenance/Technology building are left to be replaced. The District will evaluate the budget to replace these remaining cameras and recorders in 2025.

### **Current Assessment:**

- The current E-Rate contract for our dark fiber network will end in 2028 with the option for two 1-year extensions. This will allow us to be budgetarily stable for this service.
- The current network infrastructure switches have lifetime warranties and are fully capable of increased bandwidth should GFPS require it.
- Wireless access in all schools is adequate for current needs, and those WAP units are new technology with current wireless standards.
- Bandwidth requirements for GFPS fall well below 50% of our current capacity.
- The E-Rate program will continue to be used to fund high-cost network infrastructure components and services.
- The continued benefit of virtual classroom and office capabilities will require this functionality to remain and be updated as needed.
- Our current virtualization environment will become financially untenable requiring a transition to a new virtualization environment.

### **Accountability:**

- Information Technology

### **Measure:**

- Video Surveillance system replaced at DOB, the Annex, and Little Russell complexes
- Continue with upgrades to virtual classroom and office applications as they become necessary
- Refresh cycle for network infrastructure continued with E-Rate 5-year funding cycle
- Successful virtualization environment transition

### **Funding:**

- Dark Fiber Network Lease
  - E-Rate Program

- o Technology Fund
- Category 1 Network Access / Dark Fiber Lease and Category 2 Network Infrastructure components (Switches, Routers, Firewall, Access Points)
  - o E-Rate Program funding at 80% of cost
  - o Technology Fund
- Remaining video security replacements
  - o Security Grant
  - o Facilities Fund
- Virtual classroom upgrades
  - o School Technology Fund
- Virtual office technology
  - o Technology Fund
- Virtualization environment transition
  - o Technology Fund
  - o TBD - Technology Levy

**Timeline:**

2025-2026	Replace existing firewall with a current device using E-Rate Program Secure 3-year lease on dark fiber network Monitor WAN/Internet bandwidth File annual E-Rate RFPs as needed Completion of video surveillance system at DOB, the Annex, and Little Russell Complexes Transition from VMWare to alternative Hypervisor Environment Evaluate running a Technology Levy to sustainability of objectives - Pending Board Authorization
2026-2027	Monitor WAN/Internet bandwidth File annual E-Rate RFPs as needed for network refresh Evaluate any virtual classroom and office technology needs
2027-2028	Monitor WAN/Internet bandwidth Make plans to upgrade WAN/Internet bandwidth if required File annual E-Rate RFPs as needed for network refresh

## Goal 5. Ubiquitous Access

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### Objective 5.1 Maintain 1:1 in Grades 2–6 and 2:1 for Grades K-1

GFPS currently maintains a 1:1 student to device ratio in elementary grades 2-6. Chromebooks are assigned to students, but they remain in the building; only if a remote learning situation warrants it will Chromebooks be taken home. The 1:1 ratio has been accomplished using one-time only funding. To maintain this proportion into the future, an increase in Technology Levy funding will be necessary. Kindergarten and First Grade share one set of Chromebooks between two classrooms (2:1). Their time on Chromebooks is minimal and approved applications are fewer, so a shared environment is appropriate for this group. If time on devices needs to increase due to additional learning platforms, GFPS will consider moving grades K-1 to a 1:1 student to device ratio. This will also need to be factored into a request for an increase in Technology Levy funding.

### Objective 5.2 Maintain 1:1 Program for Grades 7-12

At the secondary level, grades 7-12, GFPS adopted a model that provides a device to each student. At the high school level, grades 9-12, devices are assigned to students when they are a freshman or as a new incoming student. The student will care for and use this device throughout the remainder of their high school careers. At the middle schools, students are assigned devices by the school. All students, grades 7-12, are able to take devices home but are responsible for the care and condition of their devices. Devices are checked out every fall and then checked in at the end of each school year to account for inventory and assess for damages to ensure all devices are maintained in good working condition. This checkout and check-in process is managed at the building level with the support of GFPS technicians. Students will be assessed fines for damaged, lost, or unrepairable devices. Student families have the option to annually purchase a device insurance policy for a nominal fee as damage protection.

### Objective 5.3 Support Access with Assistive Technology (AT)

Assistive Technology (AT) must be considered for all students with disabilities who have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and/or 504 plans. Individualized plan teams must consider if a student's functional capabilities could be increased, maintained, or improved through the use of AT devices or services. The purpose of AT is to remove barriers, improve access to curriculum and educational materials, and help students reach their educational goals. GFPS is dedicated to supporting students with disabilities and uses District-specific AT guidelines to support education teams with the AT decision-making process. The District employs an Assistive Technology Team (ATT) that also includes the Director of Information Technology, one Technology Coach, and at least one of the following: Student Services Coordinator, Special Education Teacher, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and/or Speech Language Pathologist. The ATT will identify potential AT (e.g., devices, extensions, apps, software, alternative access) for students with disabilities to help ensure that all students have the technology required for educational participation and benefit, conduct a trial of a selected AT with students with disabilities, and evaluate each tool's effectiveness. Following the trial and evaluation period, the team will determine if the AT will be pursued for purchase by the District as is,

modified for better implementation, or discontinued. The team will also develop a plan for professional learning to support staff's ability to implement any purchased AT.

### **Objective 5.4 Equitable Level of Technology Across the District**

Both the Belief Statements of the District and this Technology Plan contain language pertaining to equity in instruction and equity in access to tools to achieve academic success. Technology equity will be maintained in three ways:

- A consistent level of funding for technology per student per school.
- Maintaining a 1:1 student to device ratio in grades 2-12 and 2:1 student to device ratio in grades K-1.
- Maintaining an inventory of similar device types and models for every school.

Supplemental funding sources (e.g., grants, Title funding, etc.) will challenge equity at times, but continued, careful oversight and planning, and a balance of building, District, and Technology funding will keep the system in check.

### **Objective 5.5 Equitable Access from Home**

The number of applications GFPS uses to educate our students increases each year. Access to these applications for our 9th-12th grade students through the 1:1 program depends on internet access inside as well as outside of our schools. In years past, this was a concern as internet access from those households that were without an Internet Service Provider (ISP) did not give the access required for the students to use their device. Current cell technology has resolved the majority of these instances by allowing all cell phones to have a hotspot connection to the cellular network for internet access. Additional access considerations have been made by retaining a small number of the Verizon hotspots the District used during Covid.

### **Current Assessment:**

- Currently Assistive Technology has become more centralized in management, allowing quicker response to changes needed.
- Continued assessment of newer AT that can benefit GFPS will ensure that students' needs continue to be met.
- New technological advances make mobile hotspots less critical, but reserves will be kept for unforeseen needs.

### **Accountability:**

- Information Technology, Executive Directors, Principals, Student Services

### **Measure:**

- Additional 2000 mobile devices purchased in 2025 to support students
- Establish and maintain 20% refresh of endpoint devices annually
- Annual technology plan review for each school
- Annual Assistive Technology needs review

### **Funding:**

- Assistive Technology
  - Student Services General Fund

- Devices
  - Technology General Fund
  - Building Funds
  - Technology Levy

**Timeline:**

2025-2026	Reevaluate and implement any Assistive Technology needs Prepare materials and Information for Technology Levy Evaluate running a Technology Levy to support training budget - Pending Board Authorization Annual technology plan with each school – maintain equity Maintain 1:1 and 2:1 programs
2026-2027	Reevaluate and implement any Assistive Technology needs Annual technology plan with each school – maintain equity Maintain 1:1 and 2:1 programs
2027-2028	Reevaluate and implement any Assistive Technology needs Annual technology plan with each school – maintain equity Maintain 1:1 and 2:1 programs

# Goal 6. Hardware Maintenance to Enable Reliable and Sustainable Fleet of Equipment

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## Objective 6.1 Refresh Schedule – Minimum Specs, Age, and Warranty

It is understood that over time, computer equipment will need to be replaced due to lack of performance and/or failure, end of support by vendors, end of warranty, specifications that no longer meet software requirements, and/or lack of functionality needed for new technology. On an annual basis, the Technology Department will identify the minimum and preferred specifications needed to keep equipment at a level that achieves a reliable and acceptable level of performance. Equipment that falls below this level will be tagged and renamed to indicate it is not to be replaced. The Director of Information Technology, one instructional coach, and one IT core tech will meet with the Principal and the teacher tech representative at each school to review the current inventory of equipment and develop a building technology plan that melds needs and goals with replacement of aging equipment. See Appendix C for a list of current minimum and preferred specifications and equipment that is on the “To Be Replaced” list.

## Objective 6.2 Achieve 5-year Hardware Replacement Cycle

In conjunction with Objective 6.1, Information Technology will strive to maintain an industry standard five-year hardware replacement cycle for staff and student computers. Driving factors to accomplish this initiative are funding in the form of Technology Building Funds for each school as well as additional funding sources such as a possible Technology Levy, grants, and other options that become available. Currently our goal is to replace approximately 2,500 computers a year, once the plan is fully operational.

## Objective 6.3 Sustainability Model for Grants and Foundation Awards

It is understood that GFPS as a district, individual schools, and its staff members will apply for and receive grants that involve technology components from various sources, such as the GFPS Foundation, school PTAs, and other outside sources. While grants can be an asset, they also present a challenge on how to sustain the technology after the grant ends or the technology reaches end of life. As part of the grant application process, the requestor is expected to develop an equipment sustainability model that is reviewed by a district grant review team in conjunction with the grantor itself. The District does not automatically inherit the burden of sustainability using Technology Budget funds. The sustainability model may vary widely with each grant and can range from full replacement indefinitely to no replacement, which would lead to the technology being discontinued after its usable life.

## Current Assessment:

- Older equipment is replaced pending available funding along the 5-year refresh cycle goal.
- Funding is the primary factor as equipment purchased with ESSER funds are of the same age making a complete refresh unrealistic. In-house support and repair capabilities are key to sustaining current devices.
- Existing budgets for schools are insufficient to replace aged units.

**Accountability:**

- Information Technology, Principals, Technology Coaches

**Measure:**

- All computers on 5-year refresh cycle

**Funding:**

- Devices
  - Technology General Fund
  - Technology Levy
  - Grants
  - Foundation Awards

**Timeline:**

2025-2026	Annual technology plan with each school – needs and replacement Review Grant/Foundation Sustainability Models as needed Replace equipment based on 5-yr schedule and specifications Evaluate running a Technology Levy to sustainability of objectives - Pending Board Authorization
2026-2027	Annual technology plan with each school – needs and replacement Review Grant/Foundation Sustainability Models as needed Replace equipment based on 5-yr schedule and specifications
2027-2028	Annual technology plan with each school – needs and replacement Review Grant/Foundation Sustainability Models as needed Replace equipment based on 5-yr schedule and specifications

# Goal 7. Support Structure to Facilitate Consistent & Uninterrupted Processes and Operations

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## Objective 7.1 IT Support Structure and Processes

IT Support is implemented by a structured response from the three divisions of the Technology Department:

- Field and Core Technicians handle all Help Desk requests submitted by the District staff. These tickets are prioritized by the Lead Technician and scheduled for resolution. Processes such as remote assistance, phone support, and physical visits to the staff who submitted the ticket are used to resolve the issues.
- Data Center staff handle issues that pertain to applications, data retrieval, networking or connectivity issues, and infrastructure configuration problems that affect the District Network.
- Technology Coaches in the elementary and secondary schools assist staff with the use and optimization of the District applications and devices used in the classrooms and the school administration. These coaches also are involved in the annual new staff onboarding process and guest teacher orientation/trainings, teaching district processes and applications.

Ongoing efforts to continually improve the effectiveness and efficiency of IT support include the following actions:

- Regular evaluations of the Incident Management Process
  - Help Desk response and evaluation process keyed on prioritization, time to resolution, and frequency of events. These will be primarily evaluated by Help Desk reports.
  - Data Center response to requests based on completion times and achieving scheduled reports. Upcoming deadlines will be placed on the Data Center calendar by District administration or the Director of Technology. Weekly Data Center meetings will keep these projects on track and on time.
  - Technology coaching requests by staff for instructional practices using applications and hardware used in the classrooms. Common requests will be added to staff professional learning and new staff onboarding as needed.
  - Monthly department meetings, including all three of the divisions, are held to optimize responses each division sees in the schools. This enables all three divisions to collaboratively resolve issues by pooling resources and skill sets.

- Employ a Change Management Process for the Department
  - Evaluate system changes for benefits/risks
  - Prioritize changes for greatest benefits
  - Thoroughly test changes
  - Back out plan if change fails
  - Proper communication of changes
  - Process for emergency changes

## **Objective 7.2 Technology Coaches Support Structure and Processes**

Technology instructional coaches provide timely, tailored support by providing orientation, guidance, and troubleshooting on the navigation of relevant hardware and platforms; collaborating with teachers to design engaging, tech-rich lessons; modeling or co-teaching strategies; and fostering reflective practices for continuous improvement. To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of this support, GFPS emphasizes customized training (aligned with Goal 2), requires training as a condition of use, and encourages the development of technology-focused professional learning opportunities during technology-focused PLCs, PIRs, and cafes. Technology coaches are accessible to staff via email and/or phone.

### **Current Assessment:**

- Staff are not always consistent in their individual use of Help Desk.
- Continued education of staff as to which Technology Division can resolve a problem.
- Help Desk reporting can be used more to evaluate response, resolution, and give insight to Coaches for possible professional learning opportunities.
- Technology Department meetings can provide interdepartmental resources for issues facing each group.
- The time to train teachers is limited and substitutes are not available to fill in.
- Technology is not a priority at PLCs.

### **Accountability:**

- Information Technology, Principals, Staff

### **Measure:**

- Incident and Change Management processes in place
- Help Desk reporting used to evaluate response, resolution, and common requests
- Help Desk ticket system used for 80% of reporting requests
- Flowchart for support resources identification
- Customized training for individuals; Video training
- Technology professional learning conducted in at least 1 PLC annually

### **Funding:**

- Information Technology Field and Core Technicians, Data Center staff, Instructional Coaches
  - Information Technology General Fund
- Technology Levy
- Professional Learning Funds

## Timeline:

2025-2026	Evaluate and make changes by Change Management System Monthly Technology Department meetings during school year Weekly Data Center meeting on projects and timelines Monthly evaluation and reporting of Help Desk ticket response and resolution Monthly meetings with Department Leads and Director
2026-2027	Evaluate and make changes by Change Management System Monthly Technology Department meetings during school year Weekly Data Center meeting on projects and timelines Monthly evaluation and reporting of Help Desk ticket response and resolution Monthly meetings with Department Leads and Director
2027-2028	Evaluate and make changes by Change Management System Monthly Technology Department meetings during school year Weekly Data Center meeting on projects and timelines Monthly evaluation and reporting of Help Desk ticket response and resolution Monthly meetings with Department Leads and Director

# Goal 8. Security/Privacy to Protect Student and Employee Data

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## Objective 8.1 Annual Security/Privacy Staff Awareness Training

It has been chronicled repeatedly that humans are the weakest link in an organization's cybersecurity line of defense. This is why the primary method of attack for a bad actor is exploiting human behavior using social engineering tactics, phishing, and malicious websites as examples. It is very important that staff are aware of these types of campaigns and know how to identify and report them. GFPS will continue to use the KnowBe4 training platform to conduct annual, required security awareness training to help mitigate cybersecurity threats.

## Objective 8.2 Security Assessment and Remediation Process

GFPS employs a Security Specialist whose primary responsibility is monitoring, evaluating and strengthening our Cybersecurity capabilities and defenses. This process includes continual penetration tests from outside of the District to evaluate cyber threat footprints (i.e., exposure to attacks). Any weaknesses found are strengthened or removed to prevent malicious access from that point. In addition to this ongoing threat assessment, modern equipment to prevent access to our users from malicious websites, such as the District firewall and content filtering, is in place and continually updated. Finally, our endpoints are monitored by software that identifies and prevents attacks that somehow evade the other security measures.

While this mesh of preventative measures is proving adequate, the process of securing the network and ensuring the protection of personal information is an ongoing and continuous effort, requiring diligence to evaluate and add additional or different security measures as they become necessary.

## Objective 8.3 Montana Pupil Online Personal Information Protection Act

In 2019, the Montana State Legislature passed HB745 which enacts student online personal information protection. As a Local Education Agency (LEA), schools and online software vendors are obligated to protect personal student information located in the cloud. MTSBA has developed a Montana Data Privacy Agreement which encompasses the requirements of HB745. Staff are required to submit a request for the use of software, apps, and websites before using and if found to house personal student information, will be required to execute a data privacy agreement (DPA) between GFPS and the software vendor. The DPA is a legally binding contract holding the online software vendor responsible for any breach or misuse of student data.

## Objective 8.4 Evaluate Strategies for Password Management

A security protocol requiring all Active Directory (AD) passwords to be reset annually has been implemented District-wide. All student AD passwords are reset at the beginning of every school year, and staff are required to change their AD password 364 days from the last password reset. The Change Password website is available online securely from

anywhere on any internet-accessible device, which allows both staff and students to reset their passwords without IT helpdesk support. In addition to AD passwords, all other GFPS and curriculum platforms requiring passwords for access will be managed with Single-Sign-On starting in the school year 2025-26 (see Objective 3.8).

### **Objective 8.5 Evaluation, Selection, Implementation of Laptop Encryption**

District-wide activation of endpoint encryption must be centrally managed by the Technology Department. Control of this allows the Data Center the ability to access the devices as needed for security and backing up of information. Currently the District laptops are all backed up centrally in case of loss or damage. This process complicates the concept of endpoint encryption as the backup process must access the drives to back them up.

The Technology Department will continue to investigate the possible options to not only continue the backups of endpoints but to also increase security of the information on the endpoints against theft or malicious cyber-attacks.

### **Objective 8.6 Use of Raptor Visitor Management System**

While the Raptor Visitor Management system provides an option for both security and accountability in times of emergency, the cost of the system has been a mitigating factor for all schools to fully implement. With the current funding outlook for the District, the program possibly will be on hold until either additional funding is available to complete it or another application/product is found that can give comparable functionality to the remaining schools.

### **Objective 8.7 Provide Data Retention Techniques for Staff Use**

Currently the District has enabled Google Vault to retain indefinitely all staff Google Drive content. Microsoft OneDrive is available for staff to use regarding Microsoft application content and is also available for indefinite retention, in addition to the in-place backup of staff laptops via the Data Center.

### **Objective 8.8 Develop and Regularly Evaluate and Revise, as Needed, Plans for the Incident Response Plan, Disaster Recovery, and Provide Change Management**

GFPS will continue to develop and modify, as needed, critical management plans. As new technologies, new equipment with new capabilities, and other technological advancements that GFPS incorporates into our network these plans will be modified to reflect the most current best practices.

- District Incident Response Plan
  - Incident Response Team - roles and responsibilities
  - Detection and Analysis
  - Containment
  - Eradication
  - Recovery
  - Communication

- District Technology Change Management Process
  - Evaluate system changes for benefits/risks
  - Prioritize changes for greatest benefits
  - Thoroughly test changes
  - Back out plan if change fails
  - Proper communication of changes
  - Process for emergency changes
- District Disaster Recovery Plan
  - Disaster Recovery Team – roles and responsibilities
  - Scope of plan
  - Identify and assess disaster risks
  - Critical applications and resources
  - Priority for restoration
  - Backup and off-site storage
  - Test DRP

### **Current Assessment:**

- Staff are doing well but need continued phishing testing.
- Regular risks change, and reassessment of critical processes is needed.
- The Cybersecurity Specialist does regular pen testing and evaluation.
- Online applications are being vetted for student data privacy regulations.
- Password reset is available, but the staff need more instruction on use.
- There is no encryption on mobile devices, but they are backed up remotely.
- The Raptor system is in some schools, but not all, and alternative technology needs to be evaluated for schools that do not have this system.
- Cloud-based document storage backup is enabled, but staff need more instruction on use.
- Incident Response and Disaster Recovery plans need to be reevaluated and updated using Change Management.

### **Accountability:**

- District Leadership, Executive Directors, Information Technology, Principals, Staff

### **Support:**

- Information Technology, Technology Coaches, Executive Directors, Principals, Staff

### **Measure:**

- Phishing Tests with notable growth in recognition
- Identified risks and security from regular testing are resolved
- Maintain compliance with Montana HB745
- Staff education in goal objectives evident from Help Desk reporting
- Resolve encryption/remote backup issue
- Cost and functionality of alternative visitor management system for schools found
- Incident Response and Disaster Recovery plan revised and tested

## Funding:

- Information Technology General Fund
- Technology Levy
- E-Rate Program

## Timeline:

2025-2026	Install and configure new firewall – evaluate capabilities and use Change Management to proceed with additional cybersecurity planning Use E-Rate to secure updated content filtering solution Purchase Splunk and Nexuss for pen testing and logging of network attack surface and event logging Evaluate any additional needs for centralized cybersecurity response Evaluate and incorporate additional staff instruction resources for password and online storage access Set timeline for Incident Response and Disaster Recovery plan achievement – evaluate in summer 2026
2026-2027	Evaluate and use Change Management to resolve any identified cybersecurity points of concern Evaluate staff cybersecurity awareness with KnowB4 testing
2027-2028	Evaluate and use Change Management to resolve any identified Cybersecurity points of concern Evaluate staff cybersecurity awareness with KnowB4 testing

# Goal 9. Budget Funding to Support Technology Plan

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## Objective 9.1 Technology Levy Increase

GFPS introduced a Technology Levy in 2003 to cover computer-related expenses. As of the writing of this plan, this levy has not been adjusted for changes in ANB, cost of equipment, development of technology curriculum, or modern technological improvements. The current funding for technology is woefully below the average for AA Districts in the state and inadequate to meet current needs. It is the recommendation that the Budget Committee consider endorsing a revised Technology Levy that provides adequate funding for annual infrastructure and network wiring requirements, new and replacement computer equipment, training, support, and professional development to the full School Board. The School Board must consider that a new levy would replace the existing perpetual levy and sunset after 10 years.

## Objective 9.2 Grants, Donations and Foundation Awards

GFPS will continue to investigate prospects for technology grants and foundation awards. Per Objective 6.3, all applications for technology grants and awards will need to include a sustainability plan.

## Objective 9.3 E-Rate Opportunities and Federal Assistance

While in the past, the FCC and USAC have occasionally considered other funding opportunities to assist qualifying LEAs in special circumstances. As a reference, in July, 2021, the FCC authorized \$7.17 billion for the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) which funded technology tools and services to support remote learning during the Covid emergency period. In addition, the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund provided emergency relief funds to address the impact of Covid. GFPS will evaluate any future opportunities as they become available and determine if any are viable and feasible for the District.

## Current Assessment:

- The current budget is not adequate to meet current needs.

## Accountability:

- School Board Budget Committee, Superintendent, Director of Business Operations, Director of Information Technology, Principals

## Measure:

- Annual revenue stream that supports objectives of the Technology Plan

## Funding:

- Technology levy
- Technology grants, donations, and foundation awards
- Special circumstance grants through federal and local agencies

- Dark Fiber Network Lease
  - E-Rate
  - Information Technology General Fund
- E-Rate Program

**Timeline:**

2025-2026	Work with Principals for PTA and other donations Continue to leverage E-Rate funding where applicable Investigate technology grants and foundation awards Prepare School Board Budget Committee with Technology Levy info Evaluate running a revised Technology Levy - pending Board acceptance
2026-2027	Work with Principals for PTA and other donations Continue to leverage E-Rate funding where applicable Investigate technology grants and foundation awards
2027-2028	Work with Principals for PTA and other donations Continue to leverage E-Rate funding where applicable Investigate technology grants and foundation awards

# Appendix A. Approved Software and Hardware

## Software

[GFPS Web 2.0 Tools](#)

## Hardware

### Computers

CHROMEBOOK 11 3100-IN STOCK
Dell Optiplex 7040-STAFF USE-IN STOCK
Dell Optiplex 7050-Student Use-IN STOCK
DELL OPTIPLEX 7090-NEW-IN STOCK
Dell Latitude 3310 Laptop
Dell Latitude 5420 Laptop 14 inch-NEW-IN STOCK
Dell Latitude E5470 Laptop-IN STOCK

### Computer Carts

EarthWalk VC32.3 for Chromebook 3100/3400 w/univer
EarthWalk VC32 for Chromebk 3180/3189 w/bin
EarthWalk VC32 for Latitude E6440 w/bin
Luxor Charging Cart - 30U

### Computer Monitors

Dell 17in LCD Computer Monitor - IN STOCK
17in Flat Panel Computer Monitor - NO CHARGE
Dell 19in LCD Computer Monitor
19in Flat Panel Computer Monitor - NO CHARGE
Dell 20in LCD Computer Monitor
Dell 22in LCD Computer Monitor
Dell 24in LCD Computer Monitor

## Document Cameras

AVer 8MP 60fps Document Camera
AVer M17-13 13MP 60fps Document Camera
AVer Power Adapter for Document Camera
HoverCam Solo8 Plus Document Camera
AVer F17-8M Flex Arm Document Camera
AVer F50-8M Flex Arm Document Camera
AVer Microscope Adapter for Document Camera
AVer M70W Document Camera
AVer U70+ 13MP USB Powered Doccam

## Printers/Scanners

Canon imageFormula DR-M160II Scanner
HP LaserJet Pro M227fdw
HP LaserJet Pro M404n
HP LaserJet Pro M454dn Color Printer
HP LaserJet Enterprise M607n Printer
HP LaserJet Enterprise M612dn Printer
HP LaserJet Enterprise M652dn Color Printer

## Projectors / Interactive Panels

Promethean ActivPanel V6 70in Display
Promethean ActivPanel Touch Mobile Stand for 70in
Promethean ActivPanel V6 75in 4K Display w/Mount
Epson BrightLink 695WI Projector - NO Mount
Epson BrightLink 725Wi Projector-No Mount
Epson Ultra-Short Throw Wall Mount
Epson PowerLite 118 Desktop Projector
Epson PowerLite 720 3 LCD Projector. NO MOUNT
Epson PowerLite 982W-3LCD PROJECTOR

# Appendix B. CIPA

[CIPA Explained](#)

# Appendix C. Hardware Guidelines

## Minimal Specifications

Hardware Type	Manufacture/Model	Op Sysetem	CPU	RAM	Hard Drive	Wireless Adapter	Battery	Screen Size	Warranty
Desktop	Dell OptiPlex Small Form Factor (Plus 7020)	Windows 11 64-bit	Intel Core i7 processor	16GB	256GB	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 yr
Laptop	DELL LATITUDE 5450	Windows 11 64-bit	Intel Core Ultra 5	16GB	256GB	Intel Wi-Fi 6E	3-cell, 54 Wh	14 inch	1 yr
Chromebook	Dell Chromebook 3110	Chrome OS	Intel Celeron	4GB	64GB	Intel Dual Band Wi-Fi 6	3 Cell 42Whr Longlife Battery	11.6 inch	1 yr

## Preferred Specifications

Prefered Specs									
Hardware Type	Manufacture/Model	Op Sysetem	CPU	RAM	Hard Drive	Wireless Adapter	Battery	Screen Size	Warranty
Desktop	Dell OptiPlex Small Form Factor (Plus 7020)	Windows 11 64-bit	Intel Core i7 processor	32GB	512GB SSD	N/A	N/A	N/A	3 yr
Laptop	Dell Lattitude	Windows 11 64-bit	Intel Core Ultra 7	32GB	256GB SSD	Intel Wi-Fi 6E	3-cell, 54 Wh	14 inch	3 yr
Chromebook	Dell Chromebook 3110	Chrome OS	Intel Celeron	4GB	64GB	Intel Dual Band Wi-Fi 6	3 Cell 42Whr Longlife Battery	11.6 inch	3 yr

## Makes/Models to Be Replaced

Immediate Need	Near Term
80QL HP Compaq Pro 6305 SFF HP Z210 Workstation Latitude 3310 Latitude E5440 Latitude E5450 Latitude E5470 Latitude E5570 Latitude E6420 Latitude E6440 Latitude E6540 Latitude E7440 OptiPlex 3020 OptiPlex 7010 OptiPlex 7020 OptiPlex 7020200532021K/ OptiPlex 780 OptiPlex 790 OptiPlex 9020 OptiPlex 990 HP Chromebook 11A Dell Chromebook 3100 Acer Chromebook Tab 10 Dell Chromebook 3100 2-in-1 Samsung Chromebook 4 Acer Chromebook Tab 10 Dell Chromebook 13 (3380)	Latitude 3380 Latitude 5490 Latitude 5580 OptiPlex 3000 OptiPlex 3060 OptiPlex 3080 OptiPlex 7040 OptiPlex 7050

# Appendix D. Aggregate Timeline

Goal	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
1. Technology Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ongoing objectives</li> <li>Prepare materials and Information for Technology Levy increase</li> <li>Evaluate running a Technology Levy to support budget- pending Board Authorization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ongoing objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ongoing objectives</li> </ul>
2. Technology Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ongoing objectives</li> <li>Prepare materials and Information for Technology Levy increase</li> <li>Evaluate running a Technology Levy to support training budget - Pending Board Authorization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ongoing objectives</li> <li>Evaluate PIR Content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ongoing objectives</li> <li>Evaluate PIR Content</li> </ul>
3. Hardware & Software selection, approval, and use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refresh endpoint devices as able with current funding</li> <li>Implement Single Sign on system</li> <li>Select District Messaging Application from Piloted options</li> <li>Review of Microsoft Applications usage</li> <li>Review Classroom Management Application</li> <li>Evaluate running a Technology Levy to sustainability of objectives - Pending Board Authorization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ongoing objectives</li> <li>Refresh endpoint devices as able with current funding</li> <li>Leverage E-Rate funding for refreshing Network Infrastructure hardware</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ongoing objectives</li> <li>Refresh endpoint devices as able with current funding</li> <li>Evaluate possible OS upgrades and plans to implement</li> <li>Leverage E-Rate funding for refreshing Network Infrastructure hardware</li> </ul>
4. Infrastructure upgrades for performance, reliability, redundancy, security, and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace Firewall using E-Rate Funding</li> <li>Renew Dark Fiber Lease using E-Rate Funding</li> <li>File Annual E-Rate RFP's as needed</li> <li>Evaluate upgrades to Cybersecurity capabilities from the new Firewall and add any needed additional aspects.</li> <li>Complete Video Surveillance upgrades at DOB/Annex and Little Russell</li> <li>Transition from VMWare to alternative Hypervisor Environment</li> <li>Evaluate running a Technology Levy to sustainability of objectives - Pending Board Authorization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor WAN/Internet bandwidth</li> <li>File annual E-Rate RFP</li> <li>Plan on increasing or replacing network switches and access points as needed using E-Rate Funding</li> <li>Cybersecurity evaluation with changes to resolve any deficiencies</li> <li>Evaluate any virtual classroom and office technology needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor WAN/Internet bandwidth</li> <li>File annual E-Rate RFP</li> <li>Plan on increasing or replacing network switches and access points as needed using E-Rate Funding</li> <li>Cybersecurity evaluation with changes to resolve any deficiencies</li> <li>File annual E-Rate RFPs as needed for network refresh</li> </ul>
5. Ubiquitous access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain 1:1 and 2:1 program as able with current funding</li> <li>Annual technology plan with each school – maintain equity</li> <li>Evaluate any AT technology needs</li> <li>Evaluate and Implement GFPS Online Academy Technology guidelines and resources – maintain equity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain 1:1 and 2:1 program as able with current funding</li> <li>Annual technology plan with each school – maintain equity</li> <li>Evaluate Online Academy Technology and resolve any deficiencies – maintain equity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain 1:1 and 2:1 program as able with current funding</li> <li>Annual technology plan with each school – maintain equity</li> <li>Evaluate Online Academy Technology and resolve any deficiencies – maintain equity</li> </ul>
6. Hardware maintenance to enable reliable and sustainable fleet of equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual technology plan with each school – needs and replacement</li> <li>Review Grant/Foundation Sustainability Models as needed</li> <li>Replace equipment based on 5 yr schedule and specifications as able</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual technology plan with each school – needs and replacement</li> <li>Review Grant/Foundation Sustainability Models as needed</li> <li>Replace equipment based on 5 yr schedule and specifications as able</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual technology plan with each school – needs and replacement</li> <li>Review Grant/Foundation Sustainability Models as needed</li> <li>Replace equipment based on 5 yr schedule and specifications as able</li> </ul>
7. Support structure to facilitate consistent and uninterrupted processes and operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate and make changes by Change Management System</li> <li>Monthly Technology Department Meetings during school year</li> <li>Weekly Data Center meeting on projects and timelines</li> <li>Monthly evaluation and reporting of Help Desk Ticket response and resolution</li> <li>Monthly meetings with Data and Technician Lead and Director</li> <li>Work with Principals to incorporate more Technology at PLCs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate and make changes by Change Management System</li> <li>Monthly Technology Department Meetings during school year</li> <li>Weekly Data Center meeting on projects and timelines</li> <li>Monthly evaluation and reporting of Help Desk Ticket response and resolution</li> <li>Monthly meetings with Data and Technician Lead and Director</li> <li>Work with Principals to incorporate more Technology at PLCs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate and make changes by Change Management System</li> <li>Monthly Technology Department Meetings during school year</li> <li>Weekly Data Center meeting on projects and timelines</li> <li>Monthly evaluation and reporting of Help Desk Ticket response and resolution</li> <li>Monthly meetings with Data and Technician Lead and Director</li> <li>Work with Principals to incorporate more Technology at PLCs</li> </ul>
8. Security/Privacy to protect student and employee data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Cybersecurity training for all staff with KnowB4 testing</li> <li>Perform regular internal security assessment and remediate deficiencies</li> <li>Install and configure new Firewall – Evaluate capabilities and use</li> <li>Change Management to proceed with additional Cybersecurity planning</li> <li>Use E-Rate to secure updated Content Filtering solution</li> <li>Purchase Splunk and Nexuss for Pen Testing and Logging of network attack surface and event logging</li> <li>Evaluate and incorporate additional staff instruction resources for Password and online storage access</li> <li>Set timeline for Incident Response and Disaster Recovery plan achievement – Evaluate in Summer 2026</li> <li>Execute Data Privacy Agreements for staff requests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Cybersecurity training for all staff with KnowB4 testing</li> <li>Perform regular internal security assessment and remediate deficiencies</li> <li>Annual evaluation of Disaster Recovery and Incident Response plans</li> <li>Execute Data Privacy Agreements for staff requests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Cybersecurity training for all staff with KnowB4 testing</li> <li>Perform regular internal security assessment and remediate deficiencies</li> <li>Annual evaluation of Disaster Recovery and Incident Response plans</li> <li>Execute Data Privacy Agreements for staff requests</li> </ul>
9. Budget funding to support technology plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare School Board Budget Committee with Technology Levy info</li> <li>Work with Principals for PTA and other donations</li> <li>Investigate technology grants and foundation awards</li> <li>Continue to search for, evaluate and use available grants and donations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Principals for PTA and other donations</li> <li>Investigate technology grants and foundation awards</li> <li>Continue to search for, evaluate and use available grants and donations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Principals for PTA and other donations</li> <li>Investigate technology grants and foundation awards</li> <li>Continue to search for, evaluate and use available grants and donations.</li> </ul>