

Purpose:

To ensure the health, safety, and educational well-being of students through effective implementation of digital devices in schools, this policy addresses device usage, screen time, ergonomic practices, content safety, and teacher training in accordance with Texas Education Code 38.0231. The recommendations in this document are based on research from the Texas Education Agency, in consultation with the Health and Human Services Commission.

1. Device Purpose

Instructional Use: Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD provides 1:1 access to digital devices as means to elevate and enhance teaching and learning. By integrating devices into the classroom, students have access to personalized content, the ability to collaborate with peers, opportunities to drive their own learning, foster digital literacy, and ultimately experience a level of depth that would not be possible without the use of technology.

2. Device Use by Age and Developmental Level

- a. **Instructional Use:** Integration of digital devices looks different for varying age groups and developmental stages. Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD follows the recommendation of American Academy of Pediatrics and World Health Organization for ages 2-5 (PreK) that up to one hour per day is adequate for meeting the needs of our youngest learners. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Health Organization does not yet have guidelines for total screen time in the classroom for ages 5-18; Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD recognizes not all screen time experiences are equal and our students learn best in environments where screen time focuses on creation, productivity, and collaboration and less on consumptive use.
- b. **Balance of Activities:** Digital device use should be balanced with hands-on learning, face-to-face interactions, and outdoor activities. Partnerships with families will ensure students maintain a healthy screen time balance both in and out of school.

3. Breaks & Physical Positioning Guidelines

- a. **Breaks:** Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD recommends following the guidelines set by the American Academy of Ophthalmology, which suggests looking away from screens every 20 minutes. This simple practice helps reduce eye strain and maintain mental focus, promoting better eye health and overall well-being for students and staff. Additionally, Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD emphasizes the importance of regular physical breaks. Standing up or moving around every 45 minutes supports both physical and mental well-being, helping to refresh the body and mind.
- b. **Posture Guidelines:** The objective of appropriate physical positioning is to enhance the comfort, safety, and quality of the instructional surroundings during the learning process. Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD recommends the following practices for students to maintain proper posture when using digital devices: keeping an upright torso with relaxed shoulders, positioning elbows close to the body with forearms parallel to the ground, and ensuring the screen is at arm's length, with eyesight aligned to the top portion of the screen. These guidelines for educators and parents are important to

DATE ISSUED: 10/2024

REVISED: 07/10/2025

CQC(EXHIBIT)

consider in face-to-face as well as virtual learning environments when using digital devices.

4. Digital Device Use for Homework

- a. **Homework:** There will be times when students need to complete homework using a district-issued device. It's important to note that the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) compliant filter remains active on the device, regardless of the network used. Be mindful of the screen time recommendations mentioned earlier. Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD recommends using and charging the device in a common area for better supervision and parental involvement. Additionally, parents should help students manage homework by monitoring assignment dates and due dates to avoid last-minute work. This helps ensure a balanced approach to homework completion and screen time.
- b. **Night Time Limits:** According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, it recommends no screen time for one hour prior to going to bed for the night.

5. Safe Content and Internet Usage

- a. **Content Filtering:** All school-issued devices have content filters to block access to inappropriate material. These security measures meet and exceed the requirements of Children's Internet Protection Act and follow the district issued device regardless of the network they are connected to.
- b. **Digital Citizenship & Parent Involvement:** Students will engage in an annual digital citizenship curriculum which includes lessons on Digital Identity & Reputation, Rights & Obligations of Intellectual Property, Ethics of Online Behavior (professional and personal), and Digital Privacy & Security. Parents are encouraged to engage with their students by continuing these experiences at home using the resources found in the family connections hub developed by Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD Instructional Technology.

6. Teacher Training and Support

- a. **Ongoing Professional Development:** Teachers will receive training to stay updated on digital learning tools and classroom strategies for effectively integrating technology. These trainings take place as part of required Technology proficiency level 1 and 2, optional professional learning, and Annual Required Training.
- b. **Support:** Teachers will have access to support by an instructional technologist that is extensively trained on best practices for integrating digital devices into the learning environment. This includes but is not limited to classroom management, teacher mobility, student engagement, relevant tools, and appropriate limitations.