

TO: Brad Crozier, Superintendent
FROM: Annette Doyle, Assistant Superintendent
RE: Technology Follow Up Questions
DATE: March 16, 2026



In response to the questions raised by the School Committee following our Technology Integration presentation on January 26, 2026, I submit the following information.

Research on screen time in schools generally **does not recommend strict universal time limits** during the school day. Instead, most health and education organizations emphasize **how technology is used** (active vs. passive) and **maintaining balance** with other forms of learning.

Active Use involves critical thinking and includes activities such as immersive simulations, media production, design work (presentations/recordings), interactive reading/math tools with immediate feedback, coding, and peer collaboration (shared documents/group presentations).

Passive Use includes activities such as filling out digital worksheets or consuming digital content without accompanying reflection, imagination, or participation.

In SPS, technology is used in ways that **support active learning, student engagement, and strong classroom relationships**. Screen use does not replace the core experiences that build community and learning: conversation, collaboration, movement, and hands-on exploration.

Current SPS Practices:

- Students do not use devices during unstructured time (recess, snack, etc).
- Students do not have opportunities for recreational use of technology outside of specific middle school clubs. Games are not allowed at school or home when using a school issued device.
- Personal devices (cell phones, smartwatches, etc) may not be used during school hours.
- Student devices are filtered to prevent access to social media, AI platforms, streaming services, games, etc.; students gain access to Youtube during Term 1 of grade 8.
- Student login to school devices is restricted (blocked) during late night hours.
- Middle school teachers use Blocksi to monitor student technology usage. Family-facing Blocksi may be ready for Fall 2026; currently being tested with a few Curtis families.
- Personal devices cannot be connected to Chromebooks.

We believe technology works best when it:

- Supports Active Teaching and Learning
- Allows students to collaborate and discuss ideas
- Is integrated into structured routines and transitions
- Leads to student thinking, creating, or explaining
- Is balanced with movement, talk, and hands-on learning

To provide a sense of how many minutes students are on a Chromebook, our technology department gathered the following information as a snapshot between February 1 - March 5, 2026 (not including February vacation week):

Approximate range of device usage from the elementary grade level carts (sample from the past month):

Grade Level	Approximate Range Per School Day
preK	0
K & 1	Up to 20 minutes
2 & 3	Up to 30 minutes
4	Up to 40 minutes
5	Up to 50 minutes

Approximate range of device usage in the middle school 1:1 program (sample from the past month):

6, 7 & 8	Up to 90 minutes during the school day
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To note more specifically how technology is used in our classrooms, please see the following examples:

1. In elementary science, teachers use technology for video content for the anchor phenomena if a live demonstration is not possible; however, the majority of work is hands-on, non-technology-based learning.
2. In OpenSciEd at the middle school, students use resources for data collection, digital simulations, and video content. This is guided by the teacher and balanced with the majority of time dedicated to student discussions, written work (paper/pencil), and hands-on laboratories.
3. In elementary math, there is very little technology use other than Math Fact Lab in grades 2-5; Math Fact Lab sessions are 13 minutes or less and happen up to 3 times per week.
4. In middle school math, technology use varies by course level, unit, and lesson, but all classes have students doing paper/pencil tasks daily or almost daily. Students primarily use Amplify and IXL. Technology provides opportunities for immediate feedback, offers opportunities to manipulate formulas and graphs, and provides interactive representations.
5. In elementary ELA and social studies, students use real books and engage in paper/pencil tasks daily. There is regular use of technology for research and creating digital artifacts (documents, presentations, etc.), as well as keyboarding work in Typing Club 2-3 times per week for 10 minutes.
6. In middle school ELA, students use Google Suite for final draft writing assignments. In social studies, they use the online Atlas and web resources for research for approximately 3 sessions per unit. They use the online textbook for a few class sessions per unit for animated resources, but teachers commonly print pages from the textbook to use the hard copies in class.
7. Across the district, social-emotional learning (SEL) is intentionally designed to be relationship-centered and primarily discussion-based. The emphasis is on community-building and involves interactive activities without technology other than the grade 7-8 self-reflection which is done via Aperture, an online platform.