BALANCED BY DESIGN

Guiding Principles for Thoughtful Technology Integration

New Providence School District • 2026/2027

New Providence Board of Education

Rooted in Purpose. Growing Together.

Curriculum, Instruction, & Technology

Annual Board Committee Sub Goals
School Year: 2025/2026

SMART Goal 1 (Aligned to Strategic Goal 1)

Strategic Goal #1
Goal-Integrate technology in a balanced way to enhance teaching, support student-driven learning, and foster student agency while preparing for the future.

Balanced Classroom Technology Integration by Grade Band
By January 2026, develop and present to the Board a set of technology integration guidelines by K-3, 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12 grade bands, created in collaboration with teachers and instructional technology staff, to optimize the balance between digital tools and face-to-face learning. Using classroom audits, establish baseline iPad usage and a planned reduction to achieve age-appropriate, optimized technology use, with full implementation in the Fall 2026.

- **Specific:** Focuses on grade-banded guidelines and instructional balance.
- **Measurable:** Guidelines developed, presented, and implemented by Fall 2026 with reduced iPad use, reflecting optimization, and age-appropriate technology integration.
- **Achievable:** Uses internal collaboration and phased rollout.
- **Relevant:** Supports balanced tech integration and instructional effectiveness.
- **Time-bound:** Completed by January 2026 with full implementation in Fall 2026.

Our Technology Journey

2012

1:1 Personalized Learning in Grades 9-12.

Focused on college and career readiness.

2012-2020

Expanded access in Grades K-8 via shared iPad carts.

Gradual integration of digital tools in classrooms.

Post-2020

Full 1:1 environment in Grades K-12.

Ensured learning continuity and equitable access.

Why Now?

Technology Has Evolved

Educational technology has transformed dramatically, tools available today are fundamentally different from what existed a decade ago.

Strategic District Goal

The Board established a 5-year strategic goal to integrate technology in a purposeful, balanced way across all grade levels.

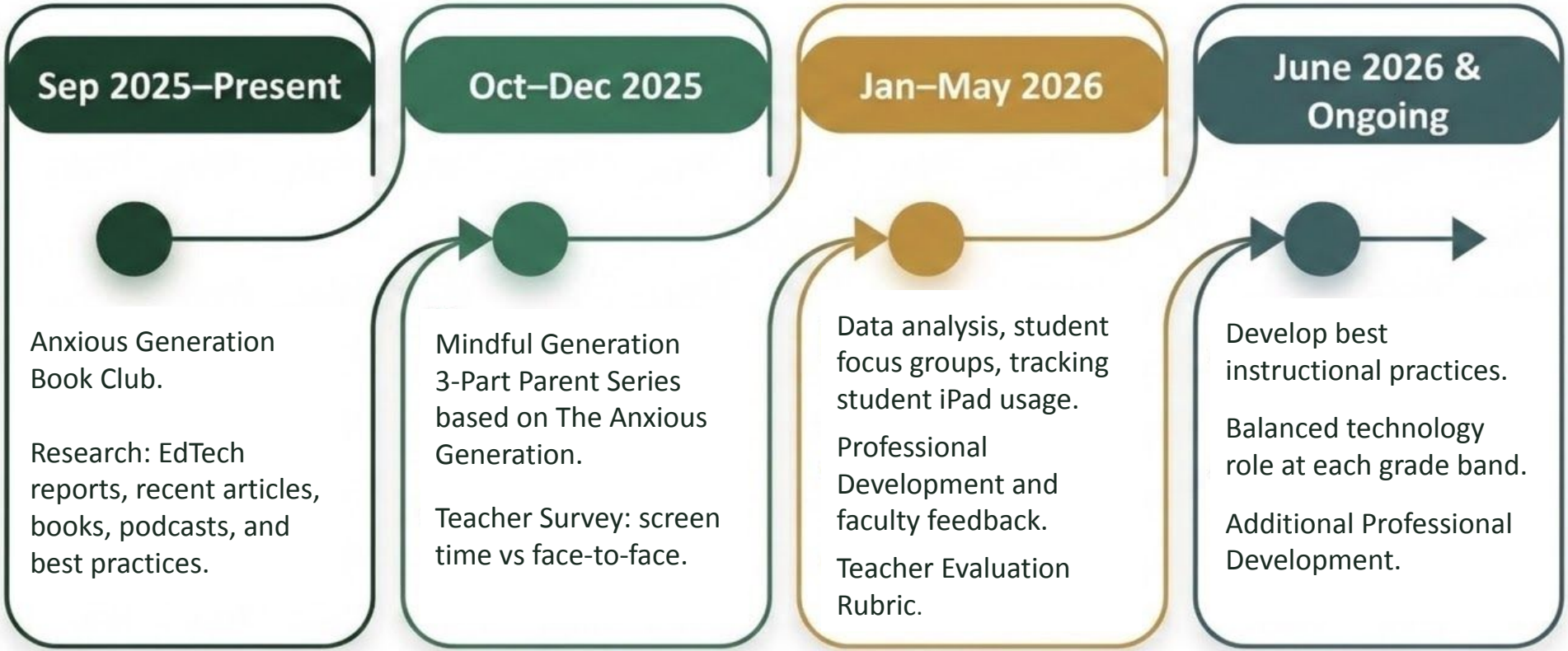
Growing Research Base

A growing body of evidence examines technology's impact on student learning, attention, literacy development, and overall wellness.

Annual Board Goal

Developmentally aligned guidelines for all grade bands, ensuring the right balance between digital tools and face-to-face instruction.

Our Process


Sep 2025–Present
Anxious Generation Book Club.
Research: EdTech reports, recent articles, books, podcasts, and best practices.
Oct–Dec 2025
Mindful Generation 3-Part Parent Series based on The Anxious Generation.
Teacher Survey: screen time vs face-to-face.
Jan–May 2026
Data analysis, student focus groups, tracking student iPad usage.
Professional Development and faculty feedback.
Teacher Evaluation Rubric.
June 2026 & Ongoing
Develop best instructional practices.
Balanced technology role at each grade band.
Additional Professional Development.

Core Beliefs

Human Interaction First

We believe human connection is the most important factor in student outcomes. We keep face-to-face learning central to every classroom.

Technology with Purpose

We select digital tools intentionally to deepen inquiry and creative problem-solving, never out of habit or convenience.

Balance Supports Wellness

We maintain a mix of interactive minds-on and digital experiences to protect student mental health and optimize cognitive development.

Foundational Skills First

We keep reading, writing, and core skills as our priority. We use technology to support these skills, not replace them.

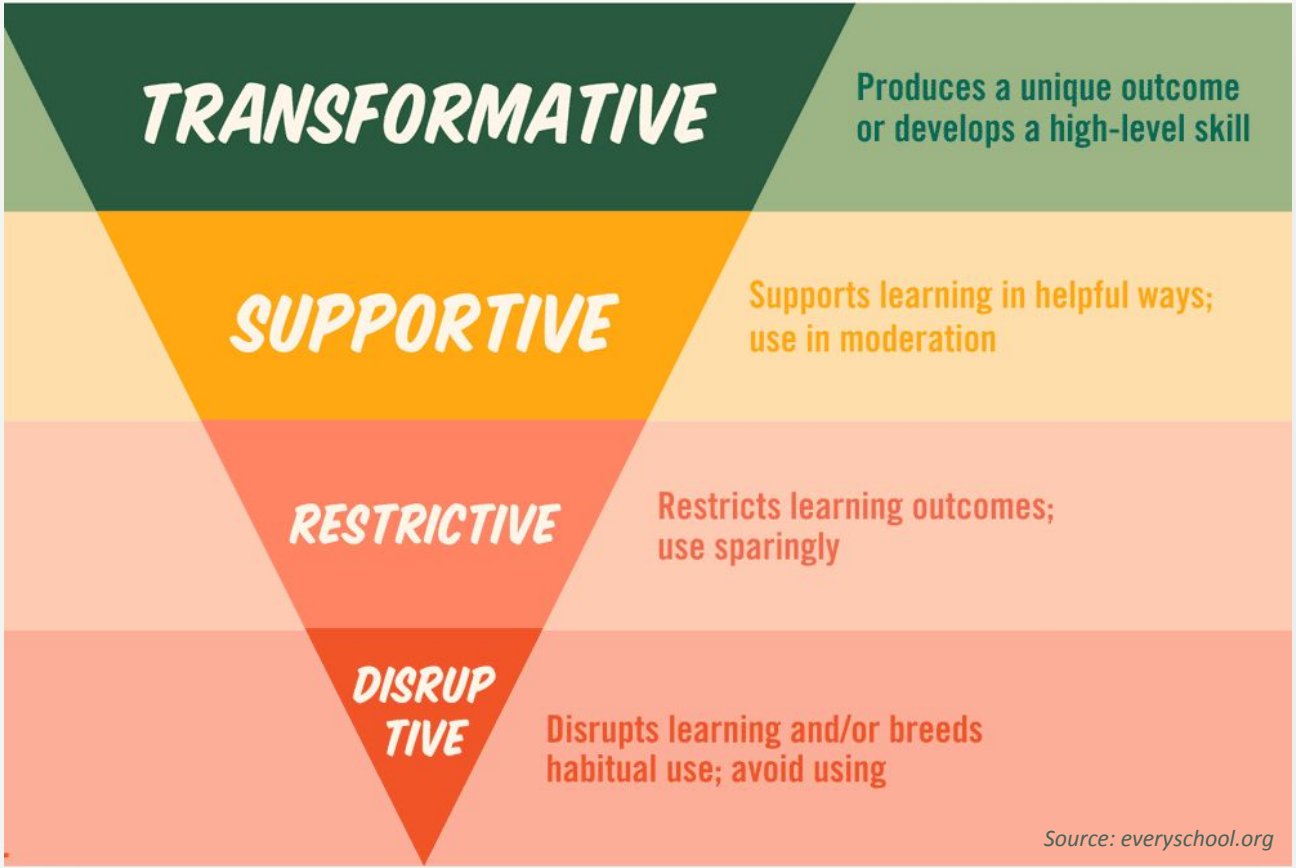
Teacher-Led Decisions

We empower our educators to choose the best resources for each lesson. Best pedagogy, not the device, dictates the student experience.

Transformative Potential

We leverage technology to let students create and collaborate in ways that would otherwise be impossible.

Our Lens: Technology Use Framework



Supportive/Transformative Technology Uses

- STEM apps to develop software, automate sensors, and simulate flight.
- Visualization tools for complex graphs and 3D diagrams.
- Industry software: CAD, 3D printing, vector graphics.
- Pocket Lab and Vernier sensors for real-world data collection.
- Gizmos and PhET simulations for concepts beyond pen and paper.
- Student creation: movies, vlogs, podcasts, infographics.
- Robotics & Coding: Tinkercad, VEX, Dash, micro:bits.
- RAZ-Kids: listening comprehension for diverse learners.
- Text-to-Speech for accessibility and complex content.
- Adaptive platforms with immediate feedback.
- Chatbots for conversations with historical figures.
- Immersive language programs for speaking practice.

Immediate Changes by Grade Level

Kindergarten	No iPads. Teacher-led SmartBoard instruction.
Grades 1-3	Classroom-based iPad carts. iPads remain in carts when not used. iPads remain at school. No Google Classroom Grades 1-2.
Grades 4-6	1:1 iPads in classroom carts. iPads remain in carts when not used. iPads remain at school.
Grades 7-8	1:1 iPads, carts in each room for charging and storage when not used. iPads permitted to go home.
Grades 9-12	Full 1:1 iPad Program with intentional balanced use. iPads remain away when not used.
All Grades	iPad use for supportive and transformative tasks/learning. Adaptive technology interventions as necessary - targeted and time-bound. GR 1-8: Allowlist of websites, controlled YouTube access.

Immediate Changes: Screen-Free Moments & Healthy Habits

Lunch & Recess (K-6)

No iPads during lunch or recess.
No movies.
Social, play-based activities emphasized.

Snack Time (K-6)

No iPads during snack.
Social interaction emphasized.
Optional SmartBoard SEL/Brain Break at teacher's discretion.

Lunch (Grades 7-8)

No iPads at lunch.
Physical binders for subject-specific organization.

Overnight Power- Down

Grades 7-8 auto-power down from 12AM-6AM.
Supports healthy sleep habits and time management.

iReady Modifications – MyPath Grades 1-8

Math	**Grades 1-3:** 20-30 minutes per week during the school day. Reduction of up to 15 minutes per week. No MyPath homework.
	Grades 4-6: 1-2 lessons, not to exceed 30 minutes/week during the school day. Reduction of up to 15 minutes per week. No MyPath homework.
	Grades 7-8: No MyPath.
Reading	**Grades 1-6:** No MyPath. Reduction of 30-45 minutes per week.

Kindergarten

Developmental Focus: Oral Language, Motor Development, Play & Socialization

Device Policy: No iPads. Teacher-led SmartBoard instruction only. No Google Classroom.

Guiding Principle: Technology serves only to aid teacher-led instruction.

Reading	Print-based texts only. No independent device reading.
Writing	Drawing, dictation, phonetic writing.
Math	Student discourse, hands-on manipulatives, print-based materials.
Science/SS/ Specials/Health	Interactive minds-on learning and print-based texts.
Assessment	Paper-based reading and literacy assessments. End-of-year paper math assessment.

Grades 1–3

Developmental Focus: Building Strong Academic Foundations & Student Agency

Device Policy: Classroom-based iPad carts. iPads remain at school and are not taken home.

Guiding Principle: Foundational skills developed through face-to-face interaction. Technology supports instructional practices.

Reading

Print-based texts.
Classroom print libraries.
Technology: Adaptive intervention only (targeted and time-bound).

Writing

Drafting by hand.
Gradual keyboarding introduction.
Digital publishing in Grades 2-3.
Google Classroom may be used.

Math

Hands-on manipulatives & print materials.
Technology: Adaptive intervention only. (targeted and time-bound).

Science/SS/Specials/Health

Print-based.
Limited whole-group SmartBoard.
iPad for supportive/transformative learning only.

Assessment

Summative: paper-based.
Formative: digital or paper.
Diagnostic: iReady.
Test Prep May Occur Digitally.

iReady MyPath

Math: Reduced to 20-30 min/week - in school only.
Reading MyPath: eliminated.

Grades 4–6

Developmental Focus: Promoting Student Agency & Solidifying Core Concepts

Device Policy: 1:1 iPad Program. iPads stay at school and are not taken home.

Guiding Principle: Technology is used intentionally to transform and support learning. Print over digital.

Reading

Print-based texts. Digital textbooks may be used for accessibility (5-6).
Technology: Adaptive intervention only (targeted and time-bound).

Writing

Handwritten planning required.
Digital drafting and keyboarding practice allowed.
No predictive tools.

Math

Discourse, concrete modeling, print materials.
Technology: Adaptive intervention (targeted and time-bound).

Science/SS/Specials/Health

Print-first.
Handwritten notes required Gr. 4-5.
Notability optional Gr. 6.
Simulations for research and synthesis.

Assessment

Summative: paper-based.
Formative: digital or paper.
Diagnostic: iReady.
Test Prep May Occur Digitally.

iReady MyPath

Math: 1-2 lessons, not to exceed 30 minutes per week during the school day.
Reading MyPath: eliminated.

Core Pillars: Grades 7–8

Paper-First for Deep Thinking

Use paper-based activities and pen-to-paper engagement activities and note-taking to enhance learning and promote retention.

Collaborative Dialogue as Essential Learning

Prioritize in-person discussion and peer feedback to challenge assumptions and build shared understanding before digital or independent work.

Organization / Executive Functioning

Students will use subject-specific physical binders for materials and notes.
Teachers will use Google Classroom as a central hub for workflow.

Technology for Transformation and Creativity

Content production: Ex: G-Suite, iMovie, Canva)
Mastery feedback: Ex: DeltaMath, iReady, Edulastic
Simulations for abstract concepts: Ex:PhET, Desmos, VEX

Grades 7–8: ELA & Math

Developmental Focus: Executive Function, Independence & Increased Academic Rigor

Device Policy: 1:1 iPads stored in carts/lockers. Taken home for transformative or supportive homework.

Guiding Principle: Prioritize soft skill development and independence. Technology supports inquiry, analysis, and collaboration.

ELA

Core Instruction

- Analog first: physical novels and texts.
- Tactile annotation: highlighters and notebooks.
- Collaborative chart-paper brainstorming.
- Read at home and in class, write in class model.

Technology Integration:

- Technology as a transformative assessment tool.
- Media Literacy skills built through high-engagement projects demonstrating enduring understandings. Ex iMovie, Canva, podcasts.

Math

Core Instruction:

- Foundational paper-based note-taking and worked examples.
- Teacher-led direct instruction.
- Collaborative and student-led problem solving.

Technology Integration:

- Notability for flexible digital note-taking.
- Instant formative feedback platforms.
- Google Forms for Do Nows and Exit Tickets.

Grades 7–8: STEM & Science

Developmental Focus: Executive Function, Independence & Increased Academic Rigor

Device Policy: 1:1 iPads stored in carts/lockers. Taken home for transformative or supportive homework.

Guiding Principle: Prioritize soft skill development independence. Technology supports inquiry, analysis, and collaboration.

STEM

Core Instruction:

- Design Challenges - Problem-Solving, lab notebooks.
- Engineering design process.
- Hands-on iteration.
- Building physical and virtual prototypes.

Technology Integration:

- Coding.
- Industry software - CAD, 3D printing, vector graphics.

Science

Core Instruction:

- Discovery-based interactive minds-on exploration.
- Phenomenon-based learning.
- Tactile learning and problem solving.
- Scientific writing and journaling by hand.

Technology Integration:

- Simulations.
- Visualization of complex concepts.
- Advanced data collection and analysis.

Grades 7–8: Social Studies & World Languages

Developmental Focus: Executive Function, Independence & Increased Academic Rigor

Device Policy: 1:1 iPads stored in carts/lockers. Taken home for transformative or supportive homework.

Guiding Principle: Prioritize soft skill development independence. Technology supports inquiry, analysis, and collaboration.

Social Studies

Core Instruction:
- Primary source paper-based inquiry.
- Writing and note-taking by hand.
- Collaboration and group work.
- Socratic seminars to generate and discuss ideas.

Technology Integration:
- Research.
- Content Production.
- Virtual model simulations.

World Language

Core Instruction:
- Authentic face-to-face communication.
- Structural foundations of grammar and vocabulary.

Physical practice and repetition:
- Cultural exploration and global citizenship.

Technology Integration:
- Immersive practice.
- Audio recordings.
- Vocabulary reinforcement.

Grades 7–8: PE & MPA/VPA Electives

Developmental Focus: Executive Function, Independence & Increased Academic Rigor

Device Policy: 1:1 iPads stored in carts/lockers. Taken home for transformative or supportive homework.

Guiding Principle: Prioritize soft skill development to promote independence, using technology to support inquiry, analysis, and collaboration.

	Core Instruction	Technology Integration
Physical Education/ Health	Paper-based text analysis and handwritten notes. Face-to-face learning and collaboration. Paper assessments when appropriate.	Mobile SmartBoard. Interactive instructional platform in Health class. Digital Research and content creation - videos, PSAs etc.
Music/ Performing Arts	Paper-based reflection and analysis of music. Decoding scores/scripts. Emphasis on face-to-face interaction.	Performance recording and analysis. GarageBand.
Visual/ Practical Arts	Appropriate transformative technology use. Paper-based checklists/reference material. Printed images/rubrics. Paper assessments when appropriate.	Adobe Suite. Digital Art Programs. Painting with Pixels.

Grades 9–12: Core Pillars

Development of Independent Learners

From Kindergarten through Grade 8, students are progressively prepared to understand how they learn best. By high school, students are expected to apply these skills with increasing independence and self-management.

Student Agency and Ownership

In our rigorous college/career preparatory environment, students are empowered to take ownership of their learning, make responsible choices in the use of technology, and engage actively in complex academic tasks.

Preparation for College and Future Success

The 1:1 iPad program supports the development of organization, research, communication, and problem-solving skills necessary for success in higher education, career, and an evolving global society.

Grades 9–12: ELA & Math

Developmental Focus: Human interaction, deep thinking, and authentic engagement — technology remains a powerful tool.

Device Policy: 1:1 iPads program with intentional balanced use.

Guiding Principle: Designing Learning for Career and College Readiness

	Digitally-Driven Learning Practices	Balanced Instructional Use
ELA	Digital novels and articles as primary texts. Annotation completed in apps. Essays drafted and revised entirely on device. Online collaboration replacing live dialogue (Google Docs, Google Questions).	Physical novels and printed texts as core reading. Handwritten annotation and seminar discussion. Drafting ideas on paper before digital or paper publishing. Technology used for transformative projects (podcasts, multimedia analysis).
Math	Notes and examples primarily delivered digitally. Problem solving completed in adaptive platforms. Quick digital submission supplementing written reasoning. Screen-based practice as default.	Foundational note-taking and worked examples on paper or Notability. Teacher-led modeling and collaborative board work. Written mathematical reasoning emphasized. Technology used for instant feedback and graphics.

Grades 9–12: Science & STEM

Developmental Focus: Human interaction, deep thinking, and authentic engagement — technology remains a powerful tool.

Device Policy: 1:1 iPads program with intentional balanced use.

Guiding Principle: Designing Learning for the Future

	Digitally-Driven Learning Practices	Balanced Instructional Use
Science	Simulations frequently replacing physical experimentation. Digital labs and data recording. Research conducted through online sources. Technology constructed graphical representations.	Interactive minds-on labs and real world experimentation prioritized. Paper lab notebooks and hand designed data tables. Technology used for simulations and data analysis. Blended research model (print + digital). Instant feedback from digital platforms.
STEM	Digital resources and instructions. Balancing plugged and unplugged lessons. Planning in a digital space.	Increased use of unplugged lessons when appropriate. Emphasize non-digital team-planning techniques. Maintain active & focused efforts when the lesson requires screen time. Technology for simulations and complex data analysis.

Grades 9–12: Social Studies & World Languages

Developmental Focus: Human interaction, deep thinking, and authentic engagement — technology remains a powerful tool.

Device Policy: 1:1 iPads program with intentional balanced use.

Guiding Principle: Designing Learning for the Future

	Digitally-Driven Learning Practices	Balanced Instructional Use
Social Studies	Digital textbooks and note-taking as default. Online primary source analysis. Digital presentations. Digital assessments.	Print-first document analysis. Emphasis on handwritten notes. Face-to-face debates and collaborative inquiry. Increase in paper assessments.
World Languages	Digital textbooks. Utilize interactive language tools: Nearpod, Padlet, iMovie, Google Slides, Blooket, Plickers. General use of Duolingo, Google Audio Folders, Flangoo, and Sora.	Packet printouts of text for reading analysis. Paper-based documents for language acquisition. Personalized use of Duolingo, Google Audio Folders, Flangoo, and Sora. Character Chatbot Spanish interviews.

Grades 9–12: MPA/VPA & Physical Education

Developmental Focus: Human interaction, deep thinking, and authentic engagement — technology remains a powerful tool.

Device Policy: 1:1 iPads program with intentional balanced use.

Guiding Principle: Designing Learning for the Future

	Digitally-Driven Learning Practices	Balanced Instructional Use
Visual/ Practical Arts	Digital texts, digital images and resources available through Google Classroom. Digital assessments.	Paper-based checklists/references. Printed images/rubrics. Paper assessments. Industry software - CAD and 3D printing.
Music/ Performing Arts	Digital reflection activities after performances. Digital form for student responses with teacher-designed questions. Dialogue/discussion through technology.	Paper-based reflection and analysis of music. Personalized options in response to a music recording or performance. Emphasis on face-to-face interaction and learning.
Physical Education/ Health	Digital textbooks and note-taking. Online research and analysis. Digital assessments.	Paper-based text analysis and handwritten notes. More emphasis on face-to-face learning and collaboration. Paper assessments.

Considerations

Budgetary Implications

Textbooks, chart paper, manipulatives.
Toner, ink, and copy machine maintenance.

Scheduling & Storage

Scheduling and storage challenges especially for “traveling teachers” with class sets of textbooks.

Digital Exam Preparation

Preparing students for online NJSLA, NJGPA, AP and other post-secondary digital exams.

Instant Grading & Feedback

Digital platforms provide instant grading and feedback that can drive instruction and support student growth.

Accessibility Features

Digital tools offer accessibility features (text-to-speech, font adjustments, read alouds, translation) unavailable on paper.

Logistics

Grades 7-8 12:00AM - 6:00AM shutdown
Grades 7-8 classroom iPad protocols

Next Steps

Professional Development

Targeted PD on balanced instructional design.
High-impact face-to-face instructional strategies.
Purposeful technology integration.
Coaching and collaborative planning.

Student Transition

Explicit instruction in organization and note-taking.
Gradual adjustment to increased paper-based learning.
Reinforcement of independence and learning agency.
Opportunities for student voice and feedback.

Understanding the Impact

Ongoing review of student learning experiences.
Classroom visits focused on instructional balance.
Reflection on assessment trends and instructional responsiveness.
Feedback from students, staff, and families.

Continuous Improvement

Mid-year and end-of-year implementation review.
Refinement of grade-band practices as needed.
Alignment with Strategic Plan priorities.
Sustained communication with staff and community.

Thank You

Board Questions & Discussion