

TECHNOLOGY USE AT PAL-MAC



PURPOSEFUL, DEVELOPMENTAL, AND FUTURE-READY



OVERVIEW

OUR USE OF TECHNOLOGY-BASED TOOLS AT PAL-MAC:

- **Prioritizing Human Connection:** We firmly believe technology should never replace face-to-face interaction, movement, hands-on learning, or play.
- **Preparing for a Digital World:** We recognize our students are stepping into a tech-driven future. Avoiding these tools entirely would leave them unprepared for tomorrow's life and careers.
- **Guided by Educational Experts:** We intentionally limit screen time in the early years, thoughtfully expanding technology use and responsibility to match your child's developmental stage.

TOOLS FOR TEACHERS, NOT SUBSTITUTES FOR TEACHING

Technology is a valuable learning support tool, but a device doesn't make a lesson better. A device should never replace strong teaching, face-to-face collaboration, or active creativity.

Our teachers are professionals. They decide exactly when technology adds meaningful value to a lesson, and when it's time to put the screens away. The question is never if a device can be used, it's whether it is the right tool for the learning taking place.



PEOPLE OVER SCREENS

Too much screen time, particularly for young children, can take the place of experiences that matter most: conversation, play, movement, reading, writing, creativity, hands-on learning, and time with other people.

For that reason, our approach to technology in the early grades is intentional and limited.

STRICT LIMITS

Devices are not available as a free-time choice, a reward, or a substitute for play, conversation, or hands-on learning.



PURPOSEFUL USE

A tool such as Seesaw may allow students to share something they created, explain their thinking, or reflect on their learning. The purpose is the communication and reflection, not the time spent on the device.



ACCESS AND RESPONSIBILITY

Grade Level	Device Access & Guidelines
Primary School	Devices remain at school. Minimal screen time; used strictly for teacher-directed activities.
Intermediate & Middle Schools	Chromebooks remain primarily school-based learning tools. They may go home only when directed by a teacher for a specific instructional purpose and for a limited period.
High School	Students regularly take their district-issued devices between home and school, reflecting academic expectations and increased independence. Limited to learning-based applications and resources.

Note: Although Pal-Mac teachers guide the day-to-day use of technology, New York State Learning Standards expect students to gain technology knowledge, digital literacy, and computer science competencies as well as develop skills to be successful and responsible digital citizens. We ensure our students are equipped to succeed without forcing increased screen time to meet these mandates.



AI AND THE WORLD AHEAD



We are taking the same thoughtful approach with artificial intelligence. Our work is currently focused on helping staff understand AI, including what it can do, where it may be useful, and where concerns involving accuracy, privacy, and student learning must be considered.

Teacher-Directed: We are not providing students with unrestricted access to AI tools. Any student use must be age-appropriate, teacher-directed, and connected to a clear learning purpose.

Supporting, Not Replacing: AI should support learning, not replace student thinking or original work.

Future Readiness: AI and other emerging technologies are already changing colleges, careers, and the world our students will enter. Being careful about technology cannot mean sending students into that world unprepared.

Critical Thinking: As students grow, they need opportunities to understand how these tools work, question what they produce, recognize when information is inaccurate, and know when they're being used inappropriately



THE MAIN IDEA



Being thoughtful about technology does not mean avoiding it. It means limiting the experiences children need when they are young, increasing responsibility as they grow, and making sure they leave Pal-Mac fully ready for college, careers, and life.