

Future Focused. Student Centered.



HOKE COUNTY SCHOOLS

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY **HANDBOOK**

2026/27

Future Focused. Student Centered.



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Table of Contents

Device Guidelines	3
General Terms	4
Issuance and Return of Device	5
Parent/Guardian Permission and Condition of Device Issuance	6
Care, Maintenance, and Inspections	6
Loss or Damage	7
Repair and Replacement Costs	7
Vandalism and Intentional Damage	8
Theft	9
Proper Device Care Guidelines	9
General Guidelines	10
General Device Care	11
Carrying the Device	11
Taking Care of the Screen	11
Maintaining the Battery	12
Daily Logistics	12
Device Chargers	12
Software Guidelines	13
Web Tools in Hoke County Schools	13
Use of Email Account	13
Publication of Student Work	14
Instructional Technology Practices	15
Use of Personal Devices by Students and Teachers	15
Internet Filtering and Access	16
Increased Access to Electronic Books and Digital Resources	17
Instructional Use of Cell Phones	17
Generative AI in Hoke County Schools: Student Edition	19
Disclaimer	21

Device Guidelines

Reference Policy Code: [3225/4312/7320 Technology Responsible Use](#)

General Terms

By signing the **Hoke County Schools Technology Honor Code**, the student and the student's parent/guardian agree to follow the terms and conditions below whenever a technology device ("the Device") issued by Hoke County Schools ("HCS") is in the student's possession or under the student's control.

- **Using an HCS-issued device is a privilege, not a right.** The Device remains the property of Hoke County Schools at all times. Neither the student nor the student's parent/guardian gains any ownership or contractual rights to the Device by signing this agreement or through any other communication with HCS.
- **Participation in an approved device take-home program is voluntary.** If authorized by HCS and the student's parent/guardian, the student may transport the Device between school and home. Students who do not participate in the take-home program will use an HCS-issued device at school as a **Day User**. Parents/guardians of Day Users are responsible for providing access to a personal device at home when needed. To opt in to the device take-home program, contact the school's Library Media Coordinator.
- **The Device is intended for approved educational use.** Students must follow the rules, policies, and guidelines in this handbook, as well as any additional requirements established by HCS. These expectations apply on and off campus and during and outside of instructional time.
- **HCS may recall the Device or place additional restrictions on its use at any time.** If directed by an HCS teacher or administrator to return or surrender the Device, the student or parent/guardian must do so immediately.
- **Students may not share or loan the Device to another person.**
- Students must use the Device in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws, HCS Board policies, and district procedures, both on and off campus.

- Students may not use the Device, or allow it to be used, for illegal, harmful, or unauthorized activities. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Fraud, threats, or defamation
 - Plagiarism or copyright, patent, or trademark infringement
 - Illegal downloading or theft of intellectual property
 - Gambling
 - Accessing, viewing, or transmitting pornographic or violent content
 - Unauthorized access to data, accounts, networks, computers, or websites
 - Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or abusive communication
 - Hacking or other malicious internet activity
 - Unauthorized advertising or commercial activity
 - Any other unlawful activity
- Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for becoming familiar with and following all Board policies that apply to the use of district technology. These policies are available in this handbook and on the Hoke County Schools website at www.hcs.k12.nc.us.
- Students may not use the Device to access networks, websites, applications, communication platforms, or other online resources that have not been approved by HCS.
- **Attempting to bypass district content filtering or other security controls is prohibited.** This includes the use of anonymous proxies or similar tools. Violations may result in the loss or restriction of device privileges.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for supervising the student's off-campus internet use and for helping ensure that the Device is used safely, responsibly, and in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and rules.
- If a student accidentally gains access to confidential information about another student or HCS employee, including coursework or grade information, the student must immediately report the incident to the school principal or the Director of Technology. The student must not copy, share, distribute, or otherwise use the information.
- HCS may change the terms or conditions governing possession or use of the Device or establish additional restrictions when necessary.
- Violations of these terms, related Board policies, or district procedures may result in device privileges being restricted, suspended, or revoked.

Issuance and Return of Device

- After the student and parent/guardian sign the **HCS Technology Honor Code**, the Device may be issued to the student. The signed agreement remains valid for the duration of the student's enrollment in Hoke County Schools.
- Devices will be collected annually on or before the last day of the school year. Unless HCS ends the student's device privileges earlier, the student's authorization to use the Device ends on the final day of the school year.
- Because Technology Department staff must inspect, maintain, and prepare devices for the next school year, late-return fees may be assessed when devices are not returned by the required deadline.
- If the Device is not returned by the last day of the school year, or by another return date established by HCS, the student and parent/guardian will be assessed:
 - **\$1.00 per day** for the first 30 days the Device is overdue.
 - **\$5.00 per day** for the following 30 days until the Device is returned.
- If the Device is not returned within 60 days, the student and parent/guardian will be assessed the **full replacement cost of the Device**. HCS may also pursue available legal remedies to recover the Device or its replacement cost.

Parent/Guardian Permission and Condition of Device Issuance

Students enrolled in Hoke County Schools may be issued a Device after the following condition is met:

- The student and parent/guardian must sign the **HCS Technology Honor Code**.

Care, Maintenance, and Inspections

- Students and parents/guardians are expected to follow the **Proper Device Care Guidelines** and any additional instructions provided by HCS. Proper care

expectations apply both at school and, when take-home use is authorized, at home.

- Students may not install or allow anyone else to install hardware, software, drivers, applications, or other programs on the Device without prior approval from the Director of Technology or designee. Students may not remove, disable, uninstall, or attempt to bypass hardware, software, filters, security tools, or other programs installed by HCS.
- HCS officials may inspect the Device at any time, with or without prior notice. Inspections may occur in person or remotely through district systems and may be conducted for maintenance, security, or to review whether the Device is being used in accordance with district rules and policies.
- Students and parents/guardians should have no expectation of privacy regarding data or information stored on an HCS-issued Device. If an inspection reveals evidence of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct or applicable law, that information may be used in disciplinary proceedings and may be shared with law enforcement when appropriate.

Loss or Damage

HCS-issued devices are valuable district property provided to support student learning. Students are responsible for taking reasonable steps to protect the Device while it is in their possession or under their control.

- Students must keep the Device safe and secure at all times.
- Students should not leave the Device unattended unless it is properly secured at school or, when take-home use is authorized, at home.
- Lost or damaged devices must be reported to an HCS teacher or administrator as soon as possible and no later than two school days after the loss or damage is discovered.
- HCS may investigate reports of lost devices and may refer incidents to law enforcement when appropriate.

Repair and Replacement Costs

Because HCS-issued devices represent a significant investment, students and parents/guardians may be responsible for a portion of the cost when a Device is damaged, lost, or stolen.

If a Device is damaged while assigned to a student, the following repair charges may apply:

- **First incident within one calendar year:** Repair is covered by HCS.
- **Second incident within one calendar year:** Actual repair cost or \$100, whichever is less.
- **Third incident within one calendar year:** Actual repair cost or \$200, whichever is less.
- **Additional incidents within one calendar year:** Actual repair cost or the replacement cost of the Device, whichever is less.

Students and parents/guardians will not be charged for repairs or replacement when the Device is defective and the issue is covered by the manufacturer's warranty.

For purposes of this handbook, **repair cost** means the actual amount HCS must pay to return the Device to the condition it was in when originally issued, using a qualified repair technician selected by HCS.

At the discretion of HCS, a student may not receive a replacement Device for home use until outstanding repair or replacement charges have been paid.

HCS may also decline to issue a replacement Device when it determines that the risk of additional loss or damage is unacceptable. This does not remove responsibility for any outstanding charges related to previously issued district equipment.

Failure to pay outstanding fees, including technology fees, may affect a student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities. Seniors may also be restricted from participating in graduation ceremonies until all outstanding fees are paid.

Vandalism and Intentional Damage

- If a Device or its case is intentionally vandalized or damaged while assigned to a student, the student and parent/guardian may be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement based on the type and severity of the damage.
- If school administrators determine that a student intentionally caused or helped cause damage to a Device, the student and parent/guardian may be responsible for the actual cost of repair or replacement, whichever is less.

Theft

- If a Device is stolen, the student and parent/guardian must report the theft to law enforcement within two school days. Incidents that occur on school property should also be reported to the appropriate school administrator.
- A copy of the police report should be provided to the school principal as soon as possible.
- HCS-issued devices can be identified and tracked through district inventory records. Theft, attempted theft, or the unauthorized sale of district-owned equipment may be referred to law enforcement.
- Filing a false police report is against the law. HCS may provide identifying information, including model, asset, and serial numbers, to law enforcement agencies and local businesses that assist in recovering stolen property.

If a Device is lost or stolen while assigned to a student, the following replacement fees may apply:

- **First incident within one calendar year:** \$100
- **Second incident within one calendar year:** \$200
- **Third and subsequent incidents within one calendar year:** Actual replacement cost of the Device

For purposes of this handbook, **replacement cost** means the actual cost to HCS to replace the Device at the time replacement is required.

Proper Device Care Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to help students properly care for and use HCS-issued Devices. They do not include every possible rule or situation and may be updated as needed.

Students are expected to use good judgment and take reasonable steps to protect their Devices both at school and, when take-home use is authorized, away from school. Failure to follow these guidelines or other applicable district rules may result in disciplinary action, loss of take-home privileges, and/or financial responsibility for damage or loss.

General Guidelines

- Treat your assigned Device carefully. Although it belongs to Hoke County Schools, you are responsible for protecting it while it is assigned to you.
- Report problems with your Device or online access to a teacher, Library Media Coordinator, or through the student work-ticket system when available.
- Use a protective case when one is provided or otherwise recommended by your school.
- Do not use the Device for illegal activity or in violation of HCS policies or procedures.
- Be aware that activity on district devices and networks may be monitored in accordance with district policy.
- Do not use the Device to create, access, receive, or transmit content that is inappropriate in a school setting.
- Do not loan your Device or its accessories to another person.
- Do not share your passwords or attempt to obtain another person's password.
- Do not download or install programs, applications, files, or games unless specifically authorized by HCS.
- Do not remove, disable, uninstall, or attempt to bypass hardware, software, security tools, filters, drivers, or other programs installed by HCS.
- Do not tamper with hardware or software, change network settings, bypass internet filters, or attempt to gain unauthorized access to any account, network, computer, file, or program.

- Students and parents/guardians should not attempt to repair or service the Device. All repairs and maintenance must be completed through authorized HCS personnel.

General Device Care

- Do not decorate, write on, scratch, or otherwise deface the Device.
- Do not remove or damage manufacturer or HCS labels, asset tags, or other identifying markings.
- Do not open or disassemble the Device housing.
- Keep food and drinks away from the Device.
- Keep the Device away from sinks, bathtubs, pools, and other sources of water.
- Keep pets away from the Device when possible.
- Avoid using or storing the Device in locations where it could easily be dropped, stepped on, or knocked over.
- Do not leave the Device on the floor, near the edge of a desk or table, or in chairs, couches, or other sitting areas.
- Do not leave the Device in direct sunlight or in locations exposed to extreme temperatures.
- Do not leave the Device unattended in a public location or vehicle.
- When traveling, keep the Device with you rather than placing it in checked luggage.

Carrying the Device

- Protective cases are not currently issued with HCS Chromebook devices. Students may purchase and use a personally owned protective case if desired.
- Close the lid before moving the Device.
- For extended periods when the Device will not be used, shut it down completely before closing the lid to help preserve battery life.

Taking Care of the Screen

- Use extra care with the screen, which can be damaged by pressure or impact.
- Do not carry or lift the Device by the screen.
- Do not place books or other heavy objects on top of the Device.
- Clean the screen only with a soft, lint-free or anti-static cloth designed for electronic screens or camera lenses.
- Do not use glass cleaner, household cleaning sprays, soap, or other liquids directly on the screen.

Maintaining the Battery

- Bring the Device to school fully charged each day.
- Charge the Device overnight when needed.
- Use the charger and charging equipment provided or approved for the Device.

Daily Logistics

- During the school day, keep the Device with you or secured in an approved location, such as your locker.
- You remain responsible for the Device during after-school activities.
- If the Device must be left unattended, secure it in a classroom, locker, or other approved location.
- Found or unattended HCS Devices should be turned in to the Media Center or main office.

Device Chargers

Students are assigned a charger for use with their HCS-issued Device. Each charger has a unique asset tag that identifies the charger assigned to that student.

Students are responsible for returning the same charger, with the matching asset tag, when devices and accessories are collected. Missing chargers are assessed a replacement fee of **\$41.00**.

- Returning a charger that was assigned to another student does not count as returning your assigned charger.
- Students who have lost a charger and have not paid the replacement fee may not receive another charger.
- HCS will only accept chargers with an intact asset tag that can be matched to district inventory records.
- Students who take Devices home should charge them at home and leave chargers there whenever possible. This reduces the chance of chargers being lost or exchanged at school.
- Students should not lend chargers to other students or share chargers in the classroom.

Software Guidelines

Web Tools in Hoke County Schools

Many of the digital tools students use for learning are web-based, sometimes described as working “in the cloud.” These tools can help students create meaningful products such as multimedia presentations, videos, 3D models, music, and other digital projects.

Web-based tools may also allow students to collaborate with classmates and teachers in real time, reflect on their learning, and create or share instructional content.

Online tools used by Hoke County Schools are selected for educational purposes and are reviewed by HCS staff for instructional value and appropriate use. Students may also use other web-based tools when directed by a teacher and when those tools have been approved for use.

Use of Email Account

All Hoke County Schools students are provided with a district-managed **Google Workspace for Education account**. This account is created and managed within the HCS domain and is intended for educational use.

Student accounts include an HCS email address that may be used for school-related purposes, such as communicating with teachers, accessing approved digital resources, and creating accounts for approved instructional tools.

HCS may monitor student email activity using automated filtering and other district security tools. Messages containing inappropriate or concerning content may be flagged for review. Misuse of district email may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and applicable district policies.

Students are permitted to use their HCS email accounts to communicate within the district for educational purposes. By signing the **HCS Technology Honor Code**, the student and parent/guardian also authorize the student to use the district email account to communicate with approved recipients outside the HCS domain when necessary for educational purposes.

Publication of Student Work

Publishing work online can give students an authentic audience and provide meaningful opportunities to share what they have created with family, classmates, and others.

Some district-approved digital tools allow student work to be published or shared online. Because student safety and privacy are priorities, the following guidelines apply whenever student work is published through Hoke County Schools:

- Published content must support educational purposes and may not violate district rules, policies, or regulations.
- Student work must comply with applicable copyright and fair use requirements.
- Students must keep usernames, passwords, and other account credentials private.
- When student information is included in published work, it should be limited to:

- First name and last initial
 - Photos or videos that do not include additional personally identifiable information, such as a full name, home address, phone number, or other private information
- Student work created as part of HCS instruction or curriculum using district technology or other district resources remains subject to HCS policies regarding ownership and use.

A parent/guardian signature on the **Technology Use Form** authorizes the student to publish digital work online in accordance with the guidelines above.

Instructional Technology Practices

Technology continues to shape how students learn, communicate, create, and prepare for life beyond school. As digital tools and platforms continue to evolve, Hoke County Schools must also continue to review and adapt instructional practices to ensure students and teachers have meaningful access to appropriate technology resources.

The following guidelines are designed to support the effective and responsible integration of technology across classrooms, devices, and instructional settings.

Use of Personal Devices by Students and Teachers

Students and teachers may use personally owned technology devices, such as laptops, tablets, and mobile phones, when appropriate for instructional purposes.

Hoke County Schools provides wireless internet access in all schools. The **HCS Guest** wireless network is available in designated common areas, such as cafeterias and media centers, for approved use of personal devices. Guest access information is provided internally to staff through the appropriate school technology contact.

Personal devices are used at the owner's own risk. Hoke County Schools is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage to personally owned devices. The Technology

Department does not provide technical support, troubleshooting, or repair services for personal devices.

Students who choose to use a personal device for school-related purposes must also comply with HCS monitoring requirements. Student activity will be monitored through **GoGuardian**, which requires use of the Chrome browser and the student's district-issued account.

Failure to comply with these monitoring requirements may result in the loss of permission to use a personal device on HCS networks.

Internet Filtering and Access

Hoke County Schools uses internet filtering to comply with the **Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)** and to help provide a safe online environment for students. Some categories of online content are required to be blocked, while other websites may occasionally be blocked even when they have legitimate educational value.

HCS regularly reviews and adjusts filtering settings to support appropriate access to online resources for teaching and learning. Content such as pornography and other inappropriate material is blocked through the district's internet filtering system.

Teachers are responsible for actively monitoring student technology use during instruction. Staff should also be aware that students using personal mobile devices may access the internet through a cellular connection rather than the HCS network. Cellular connections are not controlled or filtered by Hoke County Schools, so additional supervision may be necessary when mobile devices are used in the classroom.

If a teacher or staff member finds an educational website that appears to be blocked unnecessarily, the site may be submitted to **the HCS Technology Department** for review. Inappropriate websites that are accessible despite district filtering should also be reported to the same address.

Internet filtering systems cannot identify every inappropriate website immediately, so staff should continue to use professional judgment and supervision when students are working online.

Increased Access to Electronic Books and Digital Resources

The availability of electronic books and digital resources continues to grow daily. It is important that our teachers and students have access to current information and resources to use in the classroom.

Hoke County Schools will continue to develop an online repository of digital resources that is current and updated on a regular basis. In addition, we will create an online library of electronic books for students and teachers to use and can be accessed from the classroom and from home.

Instructional Use of Cell Phones

In accordance with [state law](#) and [Hoke County Schools policy](#), students may not use or display cell phones during instructional time unless use is specifically permitted by the classroom teacher for instructional purposes or is necessary in an emergency.

School Rules for Smartphones and Personal Electronic Devices

Hoke County Schools recognizes that smartphones and other personal electronic devices are common tools in students' daily lives. Students may possess these devices on school property as long as their possession or use does not interfere with instruction, disrupt the school environment, or violate Board of Education policy.

Students must follow the directions of school personnel regarding the possession and use of smartphones and other personal electronic devices. If a student uses or displays a device in a way that interferes with instruction, disrupts the orderly operation of the school, or otherwise violates the Student Code of Conduct or Board policy, the following consequences will apply:

- **First violation in a semester:** The device will be confiscated and may be picked up by a parent/guardian at the end of the school day.
- **Second violation in a semester:** The device will be confiscated and may be picked up by a parent/guardian at the end of the current grading period.
- **Third or subsequent violation in a semester:** The device will be confiscated and may be picked up by a parent/guardian at the end of the current semester.

Students and parents/guardians should also be aware of the following:

- If a student is directed to surrender a device, the student is expected to do so immediately and without disruption or disrespect. Failure to comply may result in additional disciplinary consequences under the Student Code of Conduct.
- Unauthorized device use may result in consequences beyond confiscation when the conduct also involves disruption, disrespect, bullying, harassment, academic integrity violations, or other violations of the Student Code of Conduct.
- When a device is confiscated, school personnel will take reasonable steps to safeguard it until it is retrieved. However, the student and parent/guardian remain responsible for the risk of loss or damage.
- Students and parents/guardians should have no expectation of privacy regarding a device that has been confiscated under this rule or the contents of that device, as permitted by Board policy and applicable law.

If there is any conflict between these rules and Board of Education policy, Board policy will control.

Generative AI in Hoke County Schools:

Student Edition

Revised April 2025

What is Generative AI?

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) refers to tools like ChatGPT, DALL-E, and Google Gemini that can create text, images, music, and more. These tools are powerful helpers — but they must be used safely, responsibly, and ethically at school. In Hoke County Schools (HCS), GenAI is meant to support your learning — not do your work for you. We want you to think creatively, critically, and independently, even while using new technologies.

Using GenAI the Right Way

Here's what you should always do when using Generative AI:

- ✓ Be Transparent — Tell your teacher when and how you used AI to help with an assignment. You might include a note, a citation, or keep a record of the prompts you used.
- ✓ Verify the Information — AI is smart—but not perfect! Double-check facts, details, and information you get from AI tools before using them in your work.
- ✓ Create Your Own Work — Use AI to support your ideas, not replace them. Your final work should reflect your thinking, your creativity, and your understanding.
- ✓ Stay Safe and Protect Your Privacy — Never enter personal information—like your full name, address, or school ID—into any AI tool. Protect your privacy, just like you would online.

AI Use Levels in Schoolwork

Your teacher will tell you how much AI you're allowed to use for each assignment or maybe in the syllabus of the course. Look for these levels or something similar:

- AI-Free: No AI tools can be used.
- AI-Assisted: You can use AI to help brainstorm or plan, but not for final work.
- AI-Enhanced: Some final content can be AI-supported, but it must be checked, edited, and cited.

- AI-Empowered: You can use AI creatively with strong human oversight.

If you're not sure what's allowed, ask your teacher before you start!

Examples

✓ Good AI Use	✗ Not Okay AI Use
Using AI to brainstorm ideas for a project	Copying an entire AI-generated essay and turning it in
Asking AI for help rewording your sentences	Letting AI write the whole thing for you
Checking facts AI gave you with real sources	Believing everything AI says without checking
Giving credit when AI helped you	Pretending AI work is all your own

Stay Smart About AI

You are responsible for any AI you use.

Check your work for mistakes, bias, or made-up information.

Be honest about AI help you received.

Ask for help if you're ever unsure how to use AI correctly.

Final Reminder

Generative AI is an amazing tool but your ideas, your effort, and your learning matter most.

When you use AI responsibly, you're preparing for a future where creativity, critical thinking, and ethical technology use will be important in school, work, and life!

Disclaimer

Hoke County Schools reserves the right to make necessary changes, updates, or corrections to this handbook at any time.

This handbook is based on and intended to support the implementation of **Board Policies 3210, 3220, 3225, 4318, and 4319**. If any part of this handbook conflicts with an applicable Board of Education policy, the Board policy will control.