

Section: Instructional Goals and Objectives	Knox County Board of Education Policy		
	Descriptor Term: Use of Digital Devices in Grades K-5	Descriptor Code:	Issued:
		I-223	8/26
		Reviewed:	Revised:

Knox County Schools recognizes the importance of technology as an instructional tool and as a workforce reality students must be prepared to navigate upon graduation. When used intentionally, technology can support instruction, expand access to learning resources, personalize support, strengthen communication, and help students develop the digital literacy skills necessary for future success.

At the same time, the benefit of high-quality, teacher-led instruction cannot be replaced by a device, particularly in an early learning environment.

The purpose of this policy is, therefore, to establish expectations for technology use in kindergarten through fifth grade that are age-appropriate, instructionally meaningful, safe, and balanced with non-electronic learning experiences.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy:

- “Digital device” means electronic hardware used for instructional purposes that can access, process, store, or transmit data.
- “Instructional day” refers to the time between the designated start and end time of a given school day.

INSTRUCTIONAL USE¹

In grades K-5, schools should prioritize in-person, teacher-led instruction and the use of non-electronic instructional materials as the primary mode of instruction. Any use of a digital device during the instructional day should be limited to instructional purposes that provide a clear educational benefit.

Additionally, any electronic assessments or instructional tools used by students in grades K-5 must be developmentally appropriate and aligned to state academic standards.

Permissible uses include, but are not limited to:

1. Targeted instructional support, intervention, or remediation;
2. Accommodations or services required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or the Americans with Disabilities Act;
3. Fulfillment of a parent/guardian-approved behavioral intervention plan, or S-Team plan;

4. Administration of a universal screener adopted by the State Board of Education, a Tennessee universal screener, dyslexia screenings, state-adopted benchmark assessments, or other assessments required by state or federal law;
5. Teacher preparation, lesson planning, or professional use;
6. Virtual school, homebound instruction, or remote instructional days.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL USE

Student use of digital devices for non-instructional purposes—such as recess, incentives, or rewards—is strictly prohibited, unless prescribed in an IEP, 504, behavior improvement plan, or S-Team plan.

COMMUNICATION

Parents/guardians will receive communication regarding the type of digital devices used by K-5 students and the instructional purposes for such devices from their student's school.

Legal Reference:

1. T.C.A. § 49-6-322.