

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Roundtable Meetings

SEPTEMBER 2026 SUMMARY

ABOUT:

The Kirkwood School District hosted its first Community Connections Roundtable Meeting on Intentional Technology to help guide future district processes, guidelines and procedures. Getting input from parents, teachers, and community members will directly inform the implementation and refinement of the district's Six Commitments for Intentional Use of Technology. There were 36 participants who joined for the roundtable discussion.

OVERVIEW:

Feedback from the Community Connections Roundtable on Intentional Technology centered on finding a healthy balance with digital tools, establishing district-wide consistency, and maintaining strong communication between home and school.

KEY THEMES:

Developmental Appropriateness and Early Grade Usage

Many participants agreed that screen time should be limited for younger students, with some pushing for a "no-screen" rule from kindergarten through third grade, except for students who need them for accessibility or special education plans (IEPs).

Participants emphasized protecting tactile learning, handwriting, book reading, and face-to-face social interaction. Concerns were raised that early screen access impairs fine motor development and attention span.

District-Wide Standards & Eliminating Inconsistency

Participants discussed variance in device usage from school to school and classroom to classroom, leading to confusion for families on what to expect in the classroom when it comes to technology usage.



Attendees called for standardized district guidelines on technology use with some advocating for daily screen-time caps. Discussion also led to questions about the District's process for approved app lists and rules on when devices are permitted.

Participants advocated for keeping devices off desks when not actively required for a lesson, keeping elementary devices at school rather than sending them home, and enforcing downtime (e.g., middle school iPads off from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.)

Ending Passive Tech Usage

Objections were raised to using iPads as "digital pacifiers," rewards for early task completion, or indoor recess entertainment.

Attendees urged restrictions on non-curricular apps, social media, YouTube, and unvetted educational games.



Demystifying Classroom Tech

Parents and guardians expressed feeling disconnected from how technology is used during the school day.

Participants valued digital tools that showcase student work directly to families—such as portfolios, screen recordings, audio retellings, and student presentations.

Families want clear documentation on active apps, the educational rationale behind them, and actionable guidance to align screen expectations at home.

Creation, Accessibility & AI Guardrails

In alignment with District commitments, tech should be used for active creation—such as speech-to-text, video explanations, coding, and visual math modeling.

Technology was praised as an essential tool for equity, providing scaffolding, speech-to-text for IEP students, and personalized differentiation without singling out individual learners.

Participants called for explicit K–12 digital citizenship instruction and clear district guardrails surrounding Generative AI, ensuring students build critical thinking before offloading cognition to automated tools.

OUR SIX COMMITMENTS FOR INTENTIONAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY

1 Purpose First	We use technology when it helps students learn, create, communicate, or show understanding. If it doesn't, we keep it stored.
2 Create More Than You Consume	We use technology to create, design, explain, investigate, collaborate, and solve problems through active engagement.
3 Make Learning Visible	We use technology to show thinking, creativity, and understanding. Technology should make learning more visible, not simply make assignments digital.
4 Balance Matters	Technology is one learning tool among many. We balance digital tools with reading, writing, collaborating, movement, and hands-on learning.
5 Accessible for All	We use technology to support every learner and their individual learning needs.
6 Digital Well-Being	We empower students to use technology safely and responsibly. We protect our personal information, make healthy choices, and think about how our actions affect others.