October 5-9, 2026

Good Afternoon,

I hope everyone had a great weekend and you are ready for HOMECOMING WEEK 2026! We have our parade and powder puff game on Wednesday, our homecoming assembly and football game on Friday and the homecoming dance on Saturday. We look forward to an awesome week ahead!

Have a great Sunday evening,

Dr. Holder

Learning Schedule for the Week:

Monday: Blue Block Day

Tuesday: Silver Block Day

Wednesday: Blue Block Day-Late Start-classes begin at 8:20

Thursday: Silver Block Day

Friday: Blue Block Day-Assembly Schedule

Upcoming Testing Information:

PSAT testing will take place this Tuesday in the Aux Gym. Students will report to the Aux Gym by 7:40 am and the test will take place from 8:00 - 11:30 am. Students who are testing need to bring their laptop, fully charged for testing. The PSAT is completed online, so having a fully charged laptop is crucial to testing. If you have any questions, please reach out to Ms. Hayes or Mr. Mailen directly.

PreACT/ACT Room Numbers are posted for students outside of the Counseling Office and are posted in grade level English classrooms. All 9th and 10th graders will take the PreACT and 11th/12th graders, who elected to test, will be taking the ACT. Please review the list to know where you will test on October 13th.

All 9th and 10th Grade Students will be taking the PreACT on Tuesday, October 13th. Students should arrive at school by 7:30 am on the 13th and be in their testing rooms before 7:40 am. The test will begin before 8:00 am and late students will not be allowed to enter testing rooms after the test begins and there is no make-up testing. Room testing assignments are posted outside of the Counseling Office as well as in all English classes so please remind your student to know their testing room ahead of testing day. Students will complete four test sections: English, Math, Reading, and Science. To learn more information about the PreACT, please visit: https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/preact.html

Students need to bring two #2 pencils with good erasers and an approved calculator for the test. Approved calculators include: 4-Function calculators, scientific calculators, and graphing calculators that do not have CAS (computer Algebra systems) built in. Specific information about calculators can be found at: https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-day/calculator-policy.html
**If your student receives read-aloud testing accommodations through a 504 or IEP plan, they will also need to have a fully charged computer to use for the text-to-speech program.

Junior and Senior students who selected to take the ACT, will be testing on Tuesday, October 13th. Students should arrive at school by 7:30 am on the 13th and be in their testing rooms before 7:40 am. The test will begin before 8:00 am and late students will not be allowed to enter testing rooms after the test begins and there is no make-up testing. Room testing assignments are posted outside of the Counseling Office as well as in all English classes so please remind your student to know their testing room ahead of testing day. Students will complete four test sections: English, Math, Reading, and Science. To learn more information about the ACT, please visit: https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act.html
Students need to bring two #2 pencils with good erasers and an approved calculator for the test. Approved calculators include: 4-Function calculators, scientific calculators, and graphing calculators that do not have CAS (computer Algebra systems) built in. Specific information about calculators can be found at: https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-day/calculator-policy.html
**If your student receives read-aloud testing accommodations through a 504 or IEP plan, they will also need to have a fully charged computer to use for the text-to-speech program.

Homecoming 2026 is THIS WEEK:

We look forward to homecoming week each year as it is a time that MV spirit and celebration shines bright! As a teaser, please see the attached document as a look ahead for this exciting week. In addition, please consider the following:

October 10th is the Mill Valley Homecoming Dance, and now is the time to order corsages and boutonnieres! Locally owned florist, Branches & Twigs, has beautiful flowers for sale, and is giving back a percentage of all orders to the Silver Stars Dance Team. The orders will all be delivered to the Mill Valley Teacher Parking Lot (off Monticello) the morning of October 10 (10am-noon) for very easy pickup. Deadline for orders is October 7!

To order: https://branches-twigs-home.myshopify.com/collections/mill-valley

Thanks for supporting this local business and the Silver Stars!

PreACT/ACT: NEXT TUESDAY!

NOTE On October 8 a Google link will be sent to PARENTS to excuse their student AFTER testing OR for the whole day if students are not testing and do not want to participate in the full day study hall.

NOTE FOR OCTOBER 13 TESTING: Due to the high number of staff it requires to administer exams to this many students, students who are not testing are welcome to attend school and we will provide a study hall during testing. Following testing/study hall students will attend their blue 4 and blue 5 classes.

PreACT/ACT Room Numbers are posted for students outside of the Counseling Office. They will also be posted in grade level English classrooms this week. All 9th and 10th graders will take the PreACT and 11th/12th graders, who elected to test, will be taking the ACT. Please review the list to know where you will test on October 13th.

On October 13, all freshmen and sophomores will take the PreACT test. Freshmen and Sophomores DO NOT need to register for this exam.

On October 13, Juniors who have signed up and paid will have the opportunity to take the ACT. The window to sign up for this exam has closed.

On October 13, Seniors who have signed up will have the opportunity to take the ACT. The window to sign up for this exam has closed.

Relay for Life: Thrift for a Cure:

Come shop with us! Relay for Life's annual Thrift for a Cure event will be November 14th from 8am-1pm with all proceeds going to the American Cancer Society. Want to donate gently used clothing or items to the sale? Please box or bag donations and bring them to the front office of Mill Valley during normal school hours throughout the month of October.

Father's Club:

Father's Club Informational Night at the Other Place (Shawnee).

As we kick off the 2026-2027 school year, we are excited to invite you to an informational meeting for the Father's Club at Mill Valley High School.
Whether you're a returning member or looking to get involved for the first time, this meeting is a great opportunity to learn more about our mission, meet fellow program leaders, and hear about our planning, events, and engagement initiatives for the upcoming school year.
Meeting Details:
Date: 10.8.26

Time: 7:00 PM
Location: The Other Place Shawnee
We would love to have you join us and see how dads can continue to make a positive impact in our school community.

Boo Grams:
Please see flyer if interested in sending a Boo Gram to a student on October 30. Funds support the Cheer team.

Picture Retake Day:

Picture retakes will be held on October 22.

Counseling Message:

MV Next Steps - Thursday during Seminar!

There was a great turnout for the first MV Next Steps event!
We will have the second event this Thursday, 10/8, during Seminar, and the final event will be Thursday, 10/22. MV Next Steps is an opportunity for students to visit with representatives to hear about post-secondary options including trades, colleges, military, and local businesses. These events take place during Seminar, and ALL STUDENTS are invited to attend ALL sessions! Please see the attached "MV Next Steps" flyer to see who will be visiting MVHS.

Senior Newsletter - October
The link below is the latest senior newsletter. Please click on the link to learn about scholarship opportunities and post-secondary information.
https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1790968038/usd232org/ep8l6eo4iomk9pgd0f9r/October2026SeniorNewsletter.pdf

Counseling JagAwareness Newsletter - October
Please click on the link below to learn about opportunities for students including leadership opportunities and scholarship information.
https://canva.link/sssh1gx4rcxd78o

ACT Prep Class
Power Prep, Inc. will be hosting an ACT Prep class at K-State Olathe on Friday, October 9th, and Tuesday, November 24th. Please click on the link below to learn more.
http://actprep.info/millvalley

Semester 1 Finals Opt Out: Students may opt out of TWO (2) final exams.

**The official start of the absence count began on September 7!

There are several teachers at MV who will offer students the opportunity to Opt Out of semester finals. Teachers will notify students if their class will participate in this opportunity.

The criteria for eligibility is:

4 or fewer absences for the semester in a class of the opt out

Earning an A in the class of the opt out

Teachers will begin the (4) absence count after Labor Day. Students will be given further information on this process in November.

Congratulations to our Jaguars:

Tennis:

Congrats to our women's tennis team in placing 3rd at the Sunflower League tennis tournament on Friday. Individual winners include:

Zavie Bierl-finished 6th place in singles / 28 players.
Clara Budimlija-finished 8th place in singles
Rylea Schwarz and Zoe Wendel Finished 6th place in doubles / 28 teams.

National Spanish Honor Society:

News about the Spanish National Honor Society Induction Ceremony-We inducted 30 members and had a great time! Photos attached include moments from the ceremony as well as a group photo of new and returning members.

Cross Country:

Our boys and girls cross country teams traveled to Raymore-Peculiar on Saturday to compete in the KC XC Classic. Our teams had a great day!

Our C team girls placed 2nd out of 10 teams. Our medalists were sophomore Kaitlyn Pringle (3rd), senior Adelyn Randall (7th), junior Add Richter (8th), sophomore Addison Gile (11th), freshman Alea Cozad (31st).

Our JV girls dominated the field to win with a perfect score of 15, which is rare to achieve. This is the 2nd perfect score for our JV girls this season. All six girls medaled and placed in the top 7 of the race. We were led by senior Clara Hanks, race champion! She was followed by freshman Kaitlyn Forshee (2nd), freshman Annie Lamberson (3rd), freshman Kale'a Gomes (4th), senior Avery Johnson (5th), junior Leah Schmidtmann (7th).

Our varsity girls were the KC XC Classic champions! All eight girls earned a medal and placed in the top 40. We were led by senior Audrey Howard (2nd). Other medalists were freshman Hailey Hanna (5th), senior Kate Culbertson (12th), junior Lexi Lamberson (25th), freshman Addi Fulps (27th), junior Anna Schmidtmann (29th), freshman Emerson Nilges (37th), senior Taylor Parks (40th).

Our c team boys placed 6th. Our medalists were sophomore Jack Kelly (6th) and junior Makai Carter (12th).

Our JV boys placed 10th. Our medalists were sophomore Clay Unruh (21st) and sophomore Brody Garcia (33rd).

Our varsity boys placed 8th. Our medalists were Graham Anderson (4th) and sophomore Asher Yager (15th).

Thank you,

Gail Holder Ed.D.
Principal, Mill Valley High School
gholder@usd232.org
913.422.4351

HOMECOMING WEEK: WHAT TO KNOW

HOMECOMING WEEK IS COMING UP OCTOBER 5-10TH!

PARADE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7 AT 6:30 PM

POWDER PUFF : FOLLOWING THE PARADE ON THE FOOTBALL FIELD

FOOTBALL GAME: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

CORONATION AT HALFTIME

HOMECOMING DANCE: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10TH 8-10:30

SPIRIT WEEK: OCTOBER 5-9TH

OCT. 5TH- WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE
Concert/Band Shirts

OCT. 6TH- TACKY TOURIST/SAFARI

OCT. 7TH- FOOTBALL VS. FUTBOL
Football/Soccer Jerseys

OCT. 8TH- LION SLEEPS TONIGHT
Pajamas

OCT. 9TH- CLASS COLORS

Freshmen: Camo
Sophomores: Flamingo(pink)
Junior: Black Panther (Black)
Senior: Leopard Print
Staff: MV Spirit

GET REAL WORLD EXPERIENCE!

Not just for CTEC students—
ANYONE CAN INTERN!

Internships available in ALL FIELDS!
Business, healthcare, TRADES, IT, education and more!

USD 232
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

OPEN TO ALL JUNIORS & SENIORS!

SCAN QR CODE TO SET UP MEETING WITH
DR. SCHAFFER
cschaffer@usd232.org

MEETINGS MUST BE SCHEDULED PRIOR TO **OCTOBER 31ST** FOR 2ND SEMESTER AND PRIOR TO SPRING BREAK FOR FALL AND SUMMER

@USD232FutureReadyInternships

MV NEXT STEPS

SAVE THE DATES
October 1
October 8
October 22



TAKE THIS CHANCE TO MEET WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM 2 AND 4 YEAR COLLEGES, AS WELL AS CAREER, TRADE AND MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES TO DISCUSS YOUR NEXT STEPS.

OCTOBER 1st

United States Air Force
United States Army National Guard
United States Army ROTC
Grand Canyon University
Kansas State University
United States Marines
Pittsburg State University
University of Nebraska
Washburn University
US Military Academy West Point
Wichita State University
William Jewell College
University of Missouri

OCTOBER 8th

Baker University
Cleveland University
Donnelly College
Emporia State University
Graceland University
Great Jobs KC
Metropolitan Community College
University of Missouri - KC
University of Oklahoma
United States Air Force National Guard
United States Army
Z Hair Academy

OCTOBER 22nd

CRL
Garmin
Johnson County Community College
Lithko Contracting
MidAmerica Nazarene University
Newkirk Novak Construction
Savannah College of Art & Design
University of Saint Mary
University of Kansas
Bethany College
Kansas City Kansas Community College
Paul Mitchell The School
Park University
University of Kansas Health System

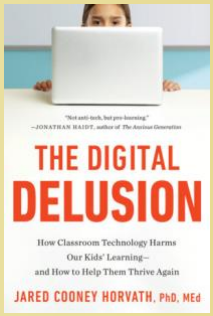
EXPLORE POST-GRAD OPTIONS

DURING SEMINAR

OPEN TO ALL GRADES

IN THE PAC!!

THE MAIN IDEA
learn more, lead better



File: Technology Use in Schools

The Digital Delusion

How Classroom Technology Harms Our Kids' Learning—and How to Help Them Thrive Again

By Dr. Jared Cooney Horvath (Penguin Random House, 2026)

S.O.S. (A Summary of the Summary)

The main ideas of the book:

~ This book argues that the data on classroom technology's impact on learning *does not look good.* Tech in the classroom appears to be harming learning.

~ Educators and families should prepare to discuss classroom technology thoughtfully, and to think critically about what choices will best support learning. The book includes concrete strategies and suggestions to do so.

Why I chose this book:

I know school leaders have tough jobs. I started The Main Idea to help make them just a bit easier. This month, I chose *The Digital Delusion* to share with you because I think it has what you need to prepare yourself for tough conversations about tech. For some of you, those conversations have already arrived and for others they're coming soon. These are conversations every school needs to have.

If the effect of tech on learning is as bad as it looks, then every school will have to take action. Many schools already ban smartphones bell-to-bell (for more on that topic, see my summary of Jonathan Haidt's book, *The Anxious Generation* or this video of him introducing his work here).

AI is also on every educator's mind these days, and, while this book does discuss both AI and smartphones (click here for the book's full table of contents), in the pages that follow, I decided to focus on the author's claim that educational technology *of any kind* is harming learning. Plus, I've included some of Jared Horvath's ideas for what you can do about it. That's what was new to me and what I think school leaders must understand.

The Scoop (In this summary you will learn…)

✓ **What the data show** about the impact of educational technology on learning

✓ How technology interferes with learning in terms of **attention, effort, empathy, and transfer** of skills to new contexts

✓ Ideas for thoughtful conversations and immediate **actions families and educators** can take on classroom tech

✓ Nine ways **schools can take action** on these issues

✓ The Main Idea's suggestions for putting ideas from the book into practice

***Click here for the html version, and my podcast chat with the author.

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I. The Problem with Technology

Ed tech is becoming increasingly controversial. Whether you tend to be enthusiastic, hesitant, or something in between when it comes to classroom technology, the controversy is coming to your school. Here are a few of the **statistics that open Horvath's book:**

As little as 30 minutes on a digital device in the classroom
has a **negative correlation with reading comprehension scores.**

The more often technology is used in a school, **the lower students score in math and science**.
There's a difference of 30 to 50 percentile points between rare users and daily users of classroom tech.

An often-cited statistic asserts that access to digital tools correlates with higher test scores,
BUT **when the data is controlled for wealth**, the correlation becomes negative. **More digital tools → lower test scores.**

"Across all three major international assessments,
greater in-school computer use correlates with lower scores
...equivalent to one or two letter grades."

Using Effect Size to Compare

Anyone who has waded into the data on evidence-based teaching knows that *almost any* teaching method results in learning. The challenge is to sort out which methods result in *the most* learning. To do this, we look at effect size. Here are a few methods to compare in terms of their impact on learning:

Teaching Method	**Effect Size** *(i.e. impact on learning)*
Jigsaw teaching	+1.16
Guided discussion	+0.82
Explicit instruction	+0.64
The widely accepted benchmark for meaningful impact (equivalent to one year's expected learning) →	***+0.40***
Educational technology	+0.29

We can also **use effect size to compare one method or mode directly to another**:

- **Reading from a screen is less effective** than reading from paper (the effect size changes by -0.16).
- **Typing notes on a computer is less effective** than taking notes by hand (the effect size changes by -0.21).

The reasons for these differences are interesting if you want to dig into them. Screen reading turns out to interfere with recall because information in the text has no fixed location. Handwritten notes beat typed ones because typing often allows note-takers to take down verbatim what they speaker says. Handwriting is just slow enough to require thoughtful selection of key points.

I find the reasons fascinating, but whether you do or not, the data Horvath presents are shocking. None of these statistics look good for EdTech, and they call into question some of our default assumptions about the benefits of using technology in schools.

What This Means for School Leaders

Whatever your current feelings about technology in schools, you need to know that this debate is unavoidable. School leaders must be prepared to speak about it with parents, with teachers, and with district leaders.

As a leader, you can no longer assume that everyone will consider more and better technology to be the obvious path forward. Read on to learn more about how and why views are shifting as well as how you can respond.

As you read, consider both your own views as well as how you can communicate thoughtfully with those who see things differently.

And, perhaps most importantly, you'll find suggestions for how school leaders and others can take action on the issues at stake.

1 (*Digital Delusion,* Penguin Random House)

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II. What We Know About Learning

While school leaders might differ in their views on technology, they do share a common devotion to student learning. Educators also share *expertise* in learning. From graduate classes, first-hand experience, and research, we know *a lot* about learning.

Well-Founded Facts about Learning

Attention: To learn, students must filter out extraneous information and focus on the thing they're learning about.

Effort: Like physical strength, cognitive strength is built through hard work and struggle.

Empathy: Students learn best when teachers understand and care about them, in other words, when empathy is present.

Transfer: True learning includes transferring and applying new skills and knowledge *in new contexts.*

Let's take a look at how educational technology interferes with each of these.

Attention

Screens are designed to grab and hold attention, so it does seem logical to put the-thing-to-learn-about on a screen. Unfortunately, students' brains have been **primed to see screens as places to game, scroll, and be entertained**. On classroom devices, students **spend 24-38 minutes out of every hour off task**. Even when *paid* to remain focused, 40% of students still "multitask" (messaging friends, watching unrelated videos, responding to social media notifications, and more).

One of the misconceptions that Horvath calls out is the myth that multimedia enhances learning. Multimedia may be an entertaining attention magnet, but unless it is very well designed, it draws kids' focus to its entertaining features and away from its educational aspects.	**Myth:** *Multimedia enhances learning*

Even at its best, multimedia learning is neutral. **Good teaching + well-designed multimedia gets the same results as good teaching without multimedia.** And if **poorly designed, multimedia has long been shown to undermine learning.**

Effort

Technology is incredibly effective at making tasks faster and easier. For that reason, it's often a good fit for businesses where the goal is productivity. But productivity isn't the goal of education. In schools, the goal is learning, and learning requires effort. Increasing effort and productive struggle leads to more learning, but **technology is mostly good at making things easier.**

Imagine a gym with treadmills that ran on their own and weights that lifted themselves. How would the gym-goers get any stronger? Likewise, we can't expect students to learn more by making the learning process less effortful.

Empathy

Empathy isn't a set of actions or statements that a computer can emulate. Empathy isn't even a feeling. Empathy exists between humans (e.g. teacher and student) when they biologically sync up so they can resonate with one another emotionally. **Empathy supports understanding and fuels motivation.** Empathy is biological. It's **impossible between a person and a machine.**

Myth: *Kids learn best on their own*	Advocates of educational technology sometimes compare self-directed, computer-based learning to the effortless learning of a toddler. The toddler simply absorbs information through exploring their world. It's a relatable and beautiful image. But the brain's mode of processing shifts around age 5.

Older children can learn by exploring to some degree, but they learn more effectively with the guidance of a teacher.

Transfer

We can all agree that education should prepare kids for the future, and on the surface, that looks like a good argument for more in-class technology. Isn't technology the future? *BUT* **digital learning does not transfer well.** Students mainly recall what they learned on a screen *when they're using a screen* and they fail to recall the same knowledge or apply the same skills when the screen is gone.

Learning needs to be transferable to the many contexts of real life. Only a narrow slice of the skills and knowledge taught in school will *only* every be used on screens (computer programming, for example). Everything else is best learned without a screen.

Fortunately, research shows that **skills learned offline transfer *well* to working online**. People born before 1985 or so were educated largely in a pre-internet world, but they can use smartphones, build websites, interact with AI and learn whatever tech they need.

Note: The book also contains sections on smartphones and AI, which I don't have the space to cover here. See the book to learn more.

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III. Ways to Talk and Take Action

To champion learning, we must be prepared to speak thoughtfully about technology, even when someone pushes back. Some educators (sometimes mandated to do so by those in charge) have spent significant time aligning their processes with tech. Some parents feel anxious about technological changes they see in the world and simply want their kids prepared for the future.

They all deserve to be heard, and they deserve thoughtful responses that **advocate for learning above all.**

Common Statements	Questions and Thoughtful Ways to Respond
EdTech has **so much potential** to improve education. It may not be perfect, but it's getting there. **Give it time** and you'll see.	With our students, **we should use proven tools** and methods. Do we want our students to be test subjects or would we rather wait until technology companies have taken the necessary time and can prove that their tools are effective?
Technology is everywhere and it's the way of the future. Our **kids need tech skills to be competitive,** get jobs, and not fall behind.	Technology changes rapidly. **Students who can think and learn will be able to learn any technology** they need in the future. Do we care more about looking up-to-date than we do about making sure our kids are learning?
Today's kids are different. **They've grown up with technology**. Digital games and videos are the best way to reach them.	Today's kids do have different preferences because they've grown up with technology, but **the basic processes of learning haven't changed**. If we grab their attention with screens but they aren't learning, what have we achieved?

So, what can schools do?

Here are a bunch of ideas for ways, both large and small, schools can take thoughtful action in the midst of this controversy.

Perform a technology audit. What technology is being used, when, and for what purpose? Real, local data will lead to more informed conversations.	**Create a tech-use task force.** Form a committee of stakeholders (leaders, teachers, parents, older students) to think about and advise on technology.	**Raise the bar for tech adoption.** Pause new adoptions. Demand proof of effectiveness over time in similar schools. Insist on cost/benefit analysis.
Evaluate through a lens of *learning.* Don't use student-facing tech to optimize adults' workflow. Students should only be using tech that boosts learning.	**Isolate the technology.** Put the computers in a lab or the laptops on a cart. Don't let technology be the default way to do things it's not best for.	**Formalize family opt-outs.** Create a clear process for families to communicate their decision to opt their child out of certain technologies.
Try tech-free days & cap screen time. Collectively decide on appropriate limits. Try tech-free teaching as an experiment so staff can evaluate the impact.	**Permit teacher veto of tech.** If teachers are advocating for student learning, allow them to say no to specific tech. Don't mandate less-effective tools.	**Embrace the longer, slower mode.** Long-form reading, writing notes by hand, and taking time for thinking all have proven benefits for learning.

Click one the links in the chart above for a tool or a more detailed approach to several of the ideas. In the section below, you'll find The Main Idea's suggestions for continued discussion and learning on this topic with various stakeholder groups.

In Practice: THE MAIN IDEA's 3 Suggestions for Using this Book

1. **Invite families and caregivers** to a meeting to discuss "Kids, Technology, and Learning."
   - Ask families how schoolwork + tech is going at home. Then, discuss a few relevant data points from Horvath's book.
   - Talk about what's being done at school and what families can do at home to best support learning.

   *Click here to see a more detailed guide for facilitating this meeting with **families and caregivers**.*

2. **With teachers**, share Part 1 of this BookBit. Give teachers a chance to read it and meet to discuss their takeaways.
   - At the meeting, use a human continuum to compare views on statements like "All notes should be handwritten."
   - Ask teachers to self-audit their classroom tech use and brainstorm alternatives that could be used to try lower-tech teaching.

   *Click here for a more detailed guide to exploring the content with **teachers.***

3. **With the school's leadership team**, take a deeper dive into the data supporting Horvath's arguments and recommended actions.
   - Plan next steps for your school.

   *Click here for a more detailed guide to exploring the content with other **leaders.***

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