

Marengo Community High School District 154

Computer Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions

It is part of our mission statement at Marengo Community High School (MCHS) to make excellence the standard of education, and teaching students how to learn using current technology is a part of providing students with an excellent education and foundation for their future careers. Using technology, students will be taught valuable critical thinking and problem-solving skills as well as needed employability skills in order to be successful after high school. We believe that providing students with the opportunity to learn with current technology is a vital part of their education as it teaches students to be creative through the use of various tools, where students must create rather than memorize and repeat from a text or the Internet. In other words, using the computers is much more than students learning how to use technology: it's learning the thinking skills needed to be successful when they enter into the world that will exist for them after graduation, not the world into which we graduated.

There are six basic goals for the creation of a Digital Learning Environment (DLE):

- To provide each student with a Computer so all students have computer access 24/7.
- To continue to provide students with up-to-date technology to use as a learning tool.
- To create a digital learning environment by using the Computer as an essential tool in the delivery of each student's curriculum and instruction on a daily basis.
- To improve student's awareness and skill development in using web based resources to increase their achievement, critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- To teach 21st century literacy skills and extend each student's learning opportunities.
- To enhance school-home communication through the use of technology.

The previously mentioned goals can be summarized in the four reasons, which are in alignment with the new National Educational Technology Standards (NETS):

1. To enhance student learning.
2. To develop critical thinking.
3. To improve efficiency.
4. To enhance communication.

Computer Expectations

All students are expected to comply with District 154 Acceptable Use Policy regarding computer and network use. The AUP covers student etiquette, obscenities, network use, cyber bullying, and overall personal conduct as it pertains to our District. Students are subject to disciplinary action for inappropriate use of the network and/or the Computer.

General Care/Handling

- Students should always place Computers away from food and drink.
- Care should be exercised when plugging in and removing power cords, cables, and external storage devices.
- Power cables should not be wrapped around the charger when in use.
- Students should carry their Computer in the carrying bag which they were given with the Computer. The Computer should be kept in the bag except when it is going to be used.
- Do not put anything inside the computer storage area of the bag except the computer, or you will risk breaking the screen. Other items should only be stored in the other compartment(s).
- Always handle the computer with two hands.

Temperature Exposure

- Computers should not be exposed to direct sunlight, extreme temperatures, or ultraviolet light for a length of time.
- Do not leave a Computer in the car or outside. Such exposure to extreme heat or cold could result in damage.

Screen Care

- Liquid cleaning solution should not be directly applied to the Computer screen or keyboard.
- The Computer screen can be easily damaged if proper care is not taken. Broken screens are NOT covered by warranty. Screens are particularly sensitive to damage from excessive pressure.
- Do not touch the Computer screen with anything (e.g., your finger, pen, pencil, etc.) other than approved Computer screen cleaners.

- Clean the screen with a soft, dry anti-static cloth or with a screen cleaner designed specifically for LCD type screens only.
- Never leave any object on the keyboard. Pens or pencils left on the keyboard are guaranteed to crack the screen when the lid is closed.

Filtering

- MCHS complies with the Children's Internet Protection Act using a filtering service.

Maintenance and Equipment Problems

- Damage to the Computer must be reported to the Technology Office or Technology Office no later than the next school day after the occurrence.
- In the event the student Computer must be left with the Technology Department for repair, a "loaner" may be checked out to the student. The same rules and procedures that apply to the student-issued Computer, applies to the "loaner" computer.
- In the event that equipment is stolen or vandalized a report should be filed by the student, parent or legal guardian.
- Incidents happening off campus should be reported to the police within 48 hours.
- Incidents happening at school must be reported to the Administration Office immediately.
- A copy of the report should be brought to the school Technology Office.
- Damage, as determined by the MCHS IT Department, to devices will be considered on a per incident basis.

Printing

- Students will be allowed access to school printers/copiers from their Computers, but in the effort to "go green," all will be encouraged to print only when it's environmentally necessary to have a hard copy of a piece of work.
- The printing process may change from time to time. Any printing assistance needed may be received at the Technology Office .
- Non-school related printing is not permissible.

Security

- During the school day, a Computer either needs to be in the direct possession of the student. Unattended/unsecured Computers are in danger of being stolen.
- Each Computer is labeled and is assigned to a labeled carrying case. This is to ensure that students always have their assigned Computer. All labeling should remain on the Computer at all times.
- Computers should never be switched from case to case or from student to student.
- Labels may not be removed, modified or unreadable. Any labels that violate this should be reported to the Technology Office immediately for replacement.
- Students should never share their usernames or passwords at any time.
- To reduce the risk of theft or loss of the Computer, keep it secured where others do not have access to it when it is not with you.
- For example, during athletic events, games, practices and trips, store the Computer in your school locker and arrange to return to school to retrieve it after the activity.
- Computers left in bags, backpacks, or in unattended classrooms or other areas are considered "unattended" and may be confiscated by school personnel as a protection against theft.
- Unattended and unlocked equipment, if stolen – even at school – will be your full financial responsibility.
- Disciplinary action may be taken for leaving a Computer in an unsupervised or unsecured location.
- Avoid use in situations that are conducive to loss or damage.
- For example, never leave Computers in vehicles, in the gym, in a locker room, on playing fields or in other areas where it could be damaged or stolen.
- If it must be left in a vehicle, Computers should be kept out of sight and the vehicle should be locked. Be aware that extreme heat or cold can damage a computer.

Software/Applications

- The software installed by the District must remain on the Computer in usable condition and be easily accessible at all times. Additional software may be added by District 154 for use in a particular class. Students are prohibited from tampering or removing District-installed software.
- Edmodo is used as an online course management system. Students access all their teachers' class WebPages with their Edmodo account. It is the gateway to all classroom information, homework, links to units of study and more.

- Infinite Campus Parent Portal provides student and parent access to their student's grades, attendance, transcript and schedules. Login information may be obtained in Student Services.

Use at School/Home

- Students are required to have their Computer at school every day with a charged battery. If your battery will not hold a charge, report it to the Technology Office.
- If a student leaves the Computer at home, it's the student's responsibility to notify the Technology Office (BEFORE school) for use of a loaner during the school day only. **Students will need to return the loaner Computer to the Technology Office at the end of the day failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.**
- In the event that a student leaves the District during the school term, the Computer and all peripherals must be returned to District 154 prior to withdrawal or pay any remaining fees associated with the DLE program. Any fees paid toward the purchase of the Computer are non-refundable.

Audio

- Sound will be muted at all times at school unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instructional purposes or ear buds are used with the instructor's permission.
- Out of consideration for other learners, personal headphones are required for certain tasks (one set of earbuds will be provided to each student).

Charging

- Charging stations will be provided at school. When students take their Computer home they are to return to school with it fully charged.
- In special circumstances where use of the Computer has caused batteries to become discharged during the school day, students may be able to connect their Computer to a power outlet in class.

Content

- Inappropriate content will not be allowed and is a violation of our school policy.

Use

- Students may not lend or trade their Computers with anyone.
- Illegal use or transfer of copyrighted materials is not allowed.

Responsibility/Liability

- Students' Computers are subject to inspection or search at any time there is cause to believe the student has violated the District 154 Acceptable Use Policy. Computers may not be used for any inappropriate or illegal purpose. As consistent with the Student Handbook, students are subject to disciplinary action for inappropriate use of the network and/or the Computer. When in doubt about acceptable uses, ask.
- The student and parent(s) may be responsible if a Computer is stolen or damaged due to negligence.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can my student use their own computer (device) instead of purchasing the computer?

No, MCHS is not allowing Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) at this time.

I understand my student has been assigned an email address through Google. Is this safe?

Yes. In fact, having a Google Gmail address through a school domain is safer for students than having them sign up for a Gmail account directly from Google. In a Google Apps for Education school domain (which is what MCHS has), student emails are private, so when they sign up for accounts on the internet the information about that user is not tracked in any way. In other words, no information about the user is collected when they are under this email on the internet. This is why students using computers who are asked by teachers to sign up for free accounts are required to use their school Gmail address. An added benefit of students having a free Gmail account through the school is that they automatically have a Google Apps account for cloud computing purposes.

Also, if there are any issues with this email, the school can deal with it directly rather than having to go through Google. The school has control over each student's Gmail email address.

If I don't have the Internet at home, will teachers contact me at night?

Teachers are aware that not all students have internet at home and will not be assigning new work immediately due in the same evening, however teachers may assign work that requires internet access after class. Teachers also can email students updates or assist students in the evening as needed if they do have internet access. The internet will be a valuable resource and is available in several locations in Marengo including the MCHS parking lot in the event your student does need access.

Do I need my child's password to check their computer?

You will need to have the student password to access their computer.

If my computer is broken and needs repairs, who is financially responsible for this?

Technology support will be provided by the district at a reasonable cost to all students. Students should bring their computer to room 1405- Technology Office. A work order will be completed on the computer and a loaner computer issued to the student for the rest of the day. Every effort will be made to have the device repaired by the next morning. The student is responsible for all accidental damage and any hardware failure which is outside the manufacturer's warranty.