Teacher Guidelines for Instructional Technology Selection and Student Safety

Two types of technology can be implemented at a school: those that are system-wide and those that are specific to your classroom.

A system that affects a greater community (entire grade levels, schools, parent and guardian communications, etc...) must go through the proper administrative channels, and typically require more time and research by administrators or committees. Examples include: Student Information Systems (Skyward), Student Grade and Report Card Systems (Standards Score), Online Learning Environments/Content Management Systems (Blackboard).

Tools specific to your classroom & your curriculum (e.g., iPad Apps, online video delivery service (YouTube), online student resources, and informational resources, etc...) should be researched and selected by individual teachers. This document outlines considerations and resources for classroom technology selection.

Tool Selection

When choosing a text for your students, you make decisions that consider safety and content- and age-appropriateness. The same considerations should be taken into account when making a choice regarding instructional, digital, and online technologies for your classroom. These tools can and should be researched, selected, and confirmed safe for student use by you, the classroom teacher, prior to using with students.

Tools should be selected to address specific curricular needs. The SETT form can be informally used to guide you in your evaluation and selection of technologies. You may need/want to test the tool along the way. Be sure you are considering what technologies students may have available at home, if you would expect them to continue work on a particular tool from home.

Once you think you have the most appropriate tool, test the tool personally both in a ‘student’ and ‘teacher’ roles. If applicable, check to see if the tool provides teacher resources and/or online support communities, and look for implementation ‘lessons-learned’ from other teachers. If you find the tool and resources fill your need, investigate student safety as outlined below.
Student Safety

Digital citizenship should be modeled by teachers and understood by students. The Technology Acceptable Use Policy from the Metcalf Student Handbook is in place to protect and guide you in integrating technology into your curriculum. Help your students to review this policy and assist them in following the policy.

Cyber-security must be taken into consideration when choosing any tool that exposes your students to a technology or an online environment.

1. Be sure you understand the age requirements of the tool or environment you are exploring. The majority of students attending Metcalf are children (under the age of 13) and may NOT legally accept binding contracts. This explicitly prevents you from legally using a great number of online resources with students.

2. Terms of Service (TOS) and Acceptable Use Policies must always be read and adhered to when exposing children to digital tools and environments. Read these... Always.

3. If you feel that the curricular need justifies questioning the TOS of the tool, you must consult administration and gain approval prior to use of the tool with students.

4. Student safety is our priority. Internet safety should be taught and re-enforced in context.
   - If students will be interacting with others online, or posting information, they should be reminded to avoid posting personal information or self-identifying pictures.
   - Students should only share username and password combinations with trusted adults.
   - Students should ALWAYS LOG OUT of resources prior to shutting down computers or leaving a computer workstation.
   - Other cyber-security information and teaching tools can be found in the resources below:
     - http://www.coppa.org/
     - http://staysafeonline.org/teach-online-safety/
     - http://www.netsmartz.org/Educators