## Can Equipment Go Home?

We encourage it! We find that recreational use of the computer will help your child learn it better. Students who are reluctant readers often read more when doing it for fun and for their own use!

You and your child can explore how software and apps can provide text to speech to assist with reading internet pages, social media, books, lists, etc. Help them discover how to record their thoughts into a presentation by using voice to text.

Of course we ask that you have a routine in place for the careful storage of the equipment and we do require that it is at school EVERY SCHOOL DAY, fully charged and ready to go.
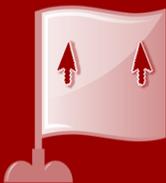
**NOTE:**
**Please ensure that everything on your child's device is for your child! School staff have access to the device. Music or video sharing software, and anything else that can attract viruses will be removed. Only school assigned passwords may be used.**

## Parenting in a Technological World

**Once a student is old enough to access the internet for research, social networking, gaming, etc. Parents need to talk about – and monitor - safety.**

- *Do Your Research.* Find safe and relevant sites and child-friendly search engines for your child to use. Bookmark them for easy access.
- *Make an Agreement.* Create an agreement with your child that outlines which site he or she is allowed to visit, and which areas and activities are off-limits. Involve your child in this activity.
- *Stay Aware.* Know what Web sites your child is visiting. Pay attention to his or her surfing habits. Let your child know that he or she can come to you in case of trouble.
- *Report Suspicious Activity.* If you or your child encounter suspicious or dangerous situations online, report them to your Internet Service Provider and local police.
- *Personal Information Stays Personal.* Talk with your child about keeping personal information private, not giving out any information online and set privacy settings for social media together.

**ZIP IT**
Keep your personal stuff private and think about what you say and do online.

**BLOCK IT**
Block people who send nasty messages and don't open unknown links and attachments.

**FLAG IT**
Flag up with someone you trust if anything upsets you or if someone asks to meet you offline.

*Let Your Light Shine!*

# A Parent's Guide to Assistive Technology

**For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier.**
**For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible.**

– IBM 1991 training manual

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# The Equipment Has Arrived!!

This is an exciting time. The technology is new and students are eager to explore and discover. The first step is to learn the basics. Training will be provided at school and parents are encouraged to attend and learn with their child.

Find out what the first learning tasks need to be on the device. What does your child need to learn in order for the device to help him/her be the best they can be? You and your child will soon discover that while exciting, learning how to read, write, research and create using this new tool will require time and patience. If your child becomes frustrated, take a break and come back to it. If they becomes stuck, let the teacher know and the school staff can help.

**Learning something new takes time and practice!!**

At the beginning, work will be slow. Reduced homework will help the child focus on the computing skills necessary. They will get faster over time. **Resist the temptation to type for your child, or scribe (write out) their work for them. This will prevent them from becoming independent on their device.**

## Why Does My Child have a Device?

The device is an aid to help bypass, work around or compensate for a student's specific learning challenges. Assistive Technology doesn't cure or eliminate learning challenges, but it can help your child become more successful because it allows the student to show what they do know, or to access materials at their level of thinking. For instance, a student who struggles with reading, but has good ability to think and respond to books at their age level can benefit from e-books. The equipment can improve a student's self-reliance and independence. Students can also learn to read and write with their technology at high levels.

## New Ways of Thinking about Teaching and Learning

Teaching has developed new professional understanding about teaching and learning. We are preparing students for a world very different from the world of their parents.
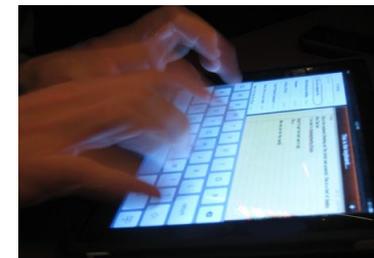


Some new shifts in old assumptions about teaching and learning:

- Students with disabilities fall along a continuum of learner differences rather than constituting a separate category.

- Teacher adjustments for learner differences should occur for all students, not just those with disabilities.

- Curriculum materials should be varied and include digital and online resources, rather than centering on a single textbook.

- Instead of remediating students so that they can learn from a set curriculum, curriculum should be flexible to accommodate learner differences.

- Centre for Applied Special Education (CAST)

## What Happens after High School?

All Colleges, Universities and most work places have technology. Colleges and Universities have entire departments dedicated to helping students with learning disabilities use assistive technology to be successful in their



**Using computers for learning is an expected skill in College, University and the Workplace.**



Please contact your child's school for more information.