Cook County School System
Adel, Georgia

On-Going Technology Plan

January 2017

Superintendent
Dr. Jeff Shealey

I. Vision for Technology Use

Compose an overall mission and/or vision which describes the steps the LEA is taking to ensure all students/teachers have increased access to technology. Include a list of specific vision statements for system educational improvement over a three year period.

The mission of the Cook County School System is to provide all students with an exemplary education in a safe and positive environment. In order to support this mission and core beliefs of the district strategic plan, the mission of the technology department is to provide quality programs and activities along with support and services for the purposes of improving student learning and enhancing instructional and administrative effectiveness. By using technologies and digital resources as teaching and learning tools and integrating them into the instructional curriculum, the quality of student learning activities will be expanded and enhanced to make them more effective. Students will be prepared for the future through the instructional use of interactive computer-based technologies and Internet resources.

Vision and Access

The vision of the Cook County School System is to stimulate learning and creativity that will prepare our students for success and lifelong learning. To support this vision, as well as key strategies in the district strategic plan, the vision of the Cook County School System for technology use includes implementing the following:

- Make the use of technology second nature to students at all levels with curriculum integration strategies and 21st Century equipment and resources to achieve system-wide goals for student performance and enhance essential skills necessary for college preparedness and/or the job market.

- Continue to upgrade, maintain, and support the wired and wireless network infrastructure and end-user hardware/software to assure access for administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

- Streamline data collection by providing access to data repositories for all employees and provide extraction and analysis training to improve student achievement and learning.

- Provide effective and efficient resources to support community awareness by utilizing technology as a medium to create an interactive partnership between the Cook County School System, parents, community agencies, and business/industry partners.

- Provide educators with consistent ongoing professional development opportunities to prepare them and increase their ability to integrate and use technology effectively to improve teaching and learning.

Access, training, and support are vital to successful technology integration and thus the vision for Cook County includes all three. Each classroom is equipped with computers, interactive whiteboards, and projectors which allow for choices regarding lesson presentation and acquiring desired student responses. Teachers are able to differentiate instruction and allow students to create projects using varied methods through the use of technology. The students work in groups collaborating on projects, completing parts of a whole, and producing high quality work through the use of the modern technology and instruction provided to them.

Courses are available online utilizing both Georgia Virtual Schools and Odysseyware, as well as internal courses to provide a variety of learning opportunities for a diverse set of students. The teachers are involved as mentors and guides and will participate in ongoing training so that emerging technologies are introduced into the classrooms and used by the students. With the increase in electronic assessment results, software programs and online resources, administrators and stakeholders can make data-driven decisions regarding student learning. This learning should be exciting, authentic, and connected to the real world through technology. The Cook County School System believes that the skillful use of technology supports the development of life-long learning skills such as flexibility, critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. All students need the skills to use a wide variety of technological tools in order to be successful citizens in the 21st century.

II. Current Reality
Identify your data sources. What data does your technology inventory survey tell you? Compose a narrative analyzing the gap in access to technology across the district. Address the following groups—instructional, administrative, parent/community, system readiness/system support—personnel/resources.

Because the classroom is the focal point for teaching and learning, the availability of state-of-the-art equipment, resources, and support are essential for technology integration. With the transition from teacher-directed learning to project-based, individualized learning, the need for technology in the classroom has increased. The need for a 1:1 student computer ratio is imperative. According to Marc Prensky, the author of Teaching Digital Natives, Partnering for Real Learning, "digital natives" learn in new and different ways, so educators need new approaches to make learning both real and relevant for today's students (Prensky, 2010).

Cook County Schools utilize the following sources for the collection of technology/planning data:

- Annual System Technology Budget
- Department Budgets
- School-based Leadership Committee Request
- System-wide and School Technology Surveys
- Technology Conferences
- Professional Development Training Records

Access to Technology/Data Sources

According to the 2015-2016 Georgia Department of Education Annual District Technology Inventory Survey, students per instructional computers is 2.18. This is the system-wide average; however, the number varies from school to school. Currently, this averages from 1.19 students per computer at one school to 5.45 at another school. Each classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard and projector.
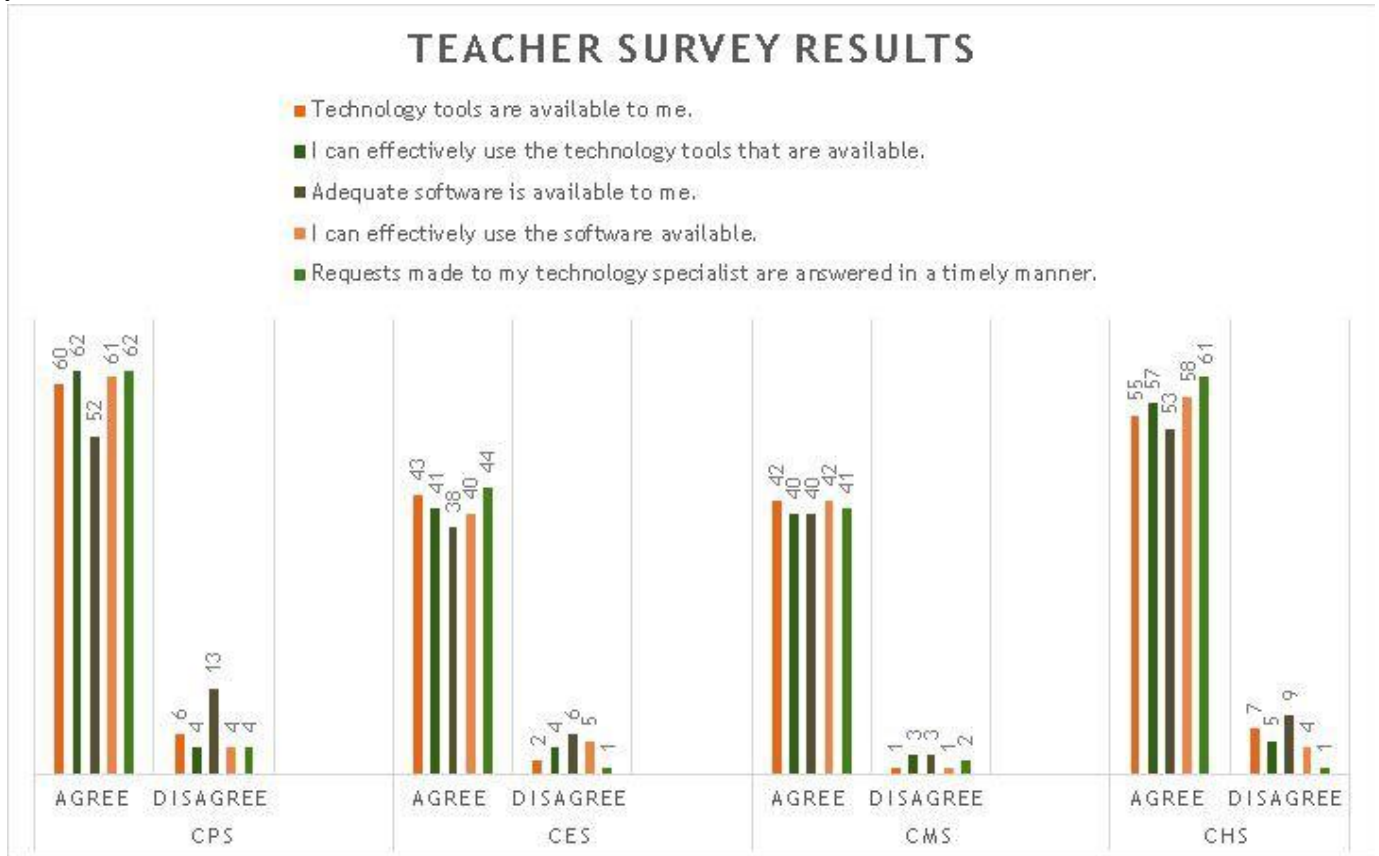
Every computer in the Cook County Schools has access to the internet. All schools as well as the district office are connected to the wide-area network. Microsoft Office is the production software used by all Cook County Schools. G Suite, previously Google Apps for Education, will continue to be implemented in the classrooms to encourage supportive communities with students. All desktop computers are operating on Windows 7. Over 1,000 Chromebooks have been purchased among the 4 schools and will continue to be purchased until a 1:1 pairing of student to computer ratio is met. Instructional software for all schools is approved by the system leadership/technology committee. These recommendations are based upon the academic needs
of the students and the school improvement goals. All instructional software is used to instruct, enhance, and/or remediate students, thereby increasing student achievement.

Classworks, a curriculum management system which allows teachers to customize learning paths and document students' progress, is the primary web-based application.   Other web-based applications available to remediate, enhance, and improve student learning include Renaissance Place (Accelerated Reading, Math in a Flash, Star Reading, and Star Math), Easytech by Learning.com, BrainPop and Study Island. CTAE has licenses for Adobe CS5 Web Premium
and other various programs to support objectives of the classes taught. Odysseyware and A+Plus are the two applications used for alternative school and credit recovery.

Students at Cook Primary School (CPS) and Cook Elementary School (CES) attend two computers labs weekly in addition to having access to another lab and computers in the media center. Cook Middle School (CMS) and Cook High School (CMS) have 4 computer labs at each location that are available for student use. Students in grades 9-12 in vocational labs, alternative school, and the credit recovery program interact with the computer daily. With the completion of the wireless upgrade project in Spring 2017, all mobile devices can be seamlessly integrated into the daily instruction.

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Instructional Uses of Technology

The table below represents information gathered from a local survey during the 2015-2016 school year.

TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

- Technology tools are available to me.
- I can effectively use the technology tools that are available.
- Adequate software is available to me.
- I can effectively use the software available.
- Requests made to my technology specialist are answered in a timely manner.

CPS — AGREE: 60, 62, 52, 61, 62; DISAGREE: 6, 4, 13, 4, 4

CES — AGREE: 43, 41, 38, 40, 44; DISAGREE: 2, 4, 6, 5, 1

CMS — AGREE: 42, 40, 40, 42, 41; DISAGREE: 1, 3, 3, 1, 2

CHS — AGREE: 55, 57, 53, 58, 61; DISAGREE: 7, 5, 9, 4, 1

The survey information above shows the majority of teachers are comfortable using various software, hardware, and other technology tools. Based on administrative observation, teacher skills are adequate in the above areas and integration in daily activities has increased. This data is used to determine professional development priorities for each school. Professional development is based on the needs and the input of each faculty and/or staff. Training is supported by the district through the use of professional release time during the school year. For
summer professional development, teachers are often given stipends and/or professional learning units in recognition of the time spent in gaining new technology skills. The technology department works with the administrators, teachers, and professional learning coordinator to
re-deliver professional learning as determined by system and school teaching and learning goals.
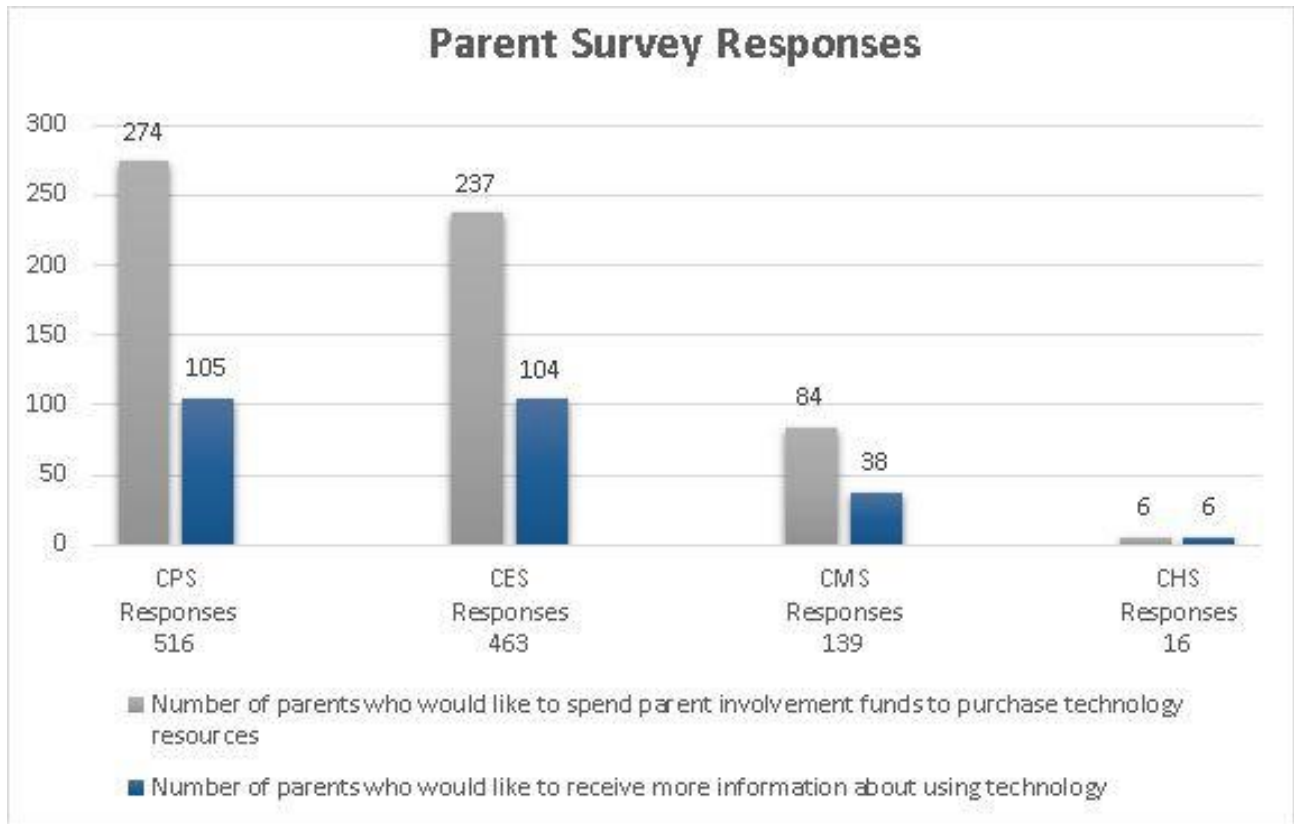
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Administrative Uses of Technology

Technology is widely used on a daily basis in all schools and in the district office. Communication within and among the schools and the district office is done via e-mail. Sharing and collaboration between administrators, teachers, and students are available through G Suite. To facilitate this procedure, user groups have been established. Schools and the district office electronically transfer all state mandated reports. Administrators use an iPad or chromebook to perform classroom teacher evaluations in the TKES platform.

Georgia's Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) is a web-based application that provides administrators and teachers with one-click access to clear, intuitive reports on student and school performance. It provides class comparisons, school-wide, and district-wide performance from subject area to concept level including state standards.

Communication with parents is facilitated with e-mail, school/teacher web pages via SchoolInSites, individual school's Facebook page, and the Alert Solutions Communication System. Cook County Schools use PowerSchool, a web-based program, for the student information system. Grades, attendance, and discipline are recorded in the computer by teachers in grades K-12 and can be accessed by parents through PowerSchool Parent Portal.

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Parent/Community Uses of Technology

Parent Survey Responses

In our latest local parent survey, there were two technology related questions. According to the above responses an average of fifty percent of the parents who responded would like for additional funds to be spent on technology for the students in the schools. Leadership minutes, as well as school council minutes, verify that parents see the importance of technology in schools. Due to budget cuts there has been discussion of finding additional funds to help the schools make technology resource purchases. The above graph also shows that an average of twenty-six percent of the parents who responded would like to receive more information about using technology. The parent coordinators at each school schedule Lunch and Learn sessions as well as Family Nights throughout the school year. The technology team will be involved with these parent activities in order to be available for technology questions.

The Cook County School System utilizes e-mail, websites, an automated phone system, and newsletters to promote better communication between schools, staff, parents and community members. Student demographic information and grade book files connect to the PowerSchool Parent Portal. Using a personal login, parents and guardians can access the information on their own children. Due to the increased number of ESOL and migrant students, Cook County School System has taken measures to accommodate parents with limited English skills by providing documents in Spanish as well as English. An automated phone calling system allows schools and district administrators to relay school event notices and emergency information in English and in Spanish.

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Gap Analysis

Cook County's technology vision includes administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community stakeholders having access to and using technology daily. While the school system has managed to maintain a working network, there is much work to be accomplished to support a 1:1 environment. A yearly assessment of the infrastructure should be made to determine necessary needs and updates.

Cook County has been committed to ensuring that all classrooms meet the technology requirements of a 21st Century classroom. However, much of the equipment in the classroom which includes projectors and interactive whiteboards is nearing end of its life. Computer hardware has been updated to Windows 7 but a plan needs to be devised to continually refresh this hardware. Software/Online programs should be revisited annually to determine if they are having a positive effect on student learning. Also, special education students are in need of more adaptive devices.

Based on 2015-2016 test data, minority students, educationally disadvantaged students, and special needs students continue to score below non-minority students in all grade levels. With the purchase and implementation of Study Island, Classworks, and GaDOE GOFAR, it is anticipated that the gap will narrow.

To better meet the needs of the students, teacher/staff technology skills need to be enhanced. One way to accomplish this goal is to hire a full-time technology trainer. This would also help to make better use of the county's professional learning lab. With the enhancement of these skills, teachers will become more competent and confident in integrating technology in learning activities.

Cook High School is the only school presently on a VOIP system. Telecommunication systems at the other three schools are currently PBX systems. These systems are outdated and not as effective as they could be. It is the plan of the technology department to update all of the schools to a VOIP system by year 2021.

III. Communication and Marketing

Describe strategies to share system progress, disseminate evaluation results, encourage broad stakeholder involvement, and market the role technology can have in helping students achieve in innovative ways. How are we sharing what we are doing? How can we show that the way we are sharing is meeting our needs? How are we encouraging more people to be actively involved with the system?

The Cook County School System Technology Plan will be shared with all categories of stakeholders in the following ways:

1. The Technology Plan will be posted on the district's web site
2. A summary article will be written and presented to the local newspaper
3. Copies will be distributed to all School Improvement Leadership Team members
4. Copies will be provided to all schools for discussion with staff members
5. Copies will be provided to each school library to be available on request
6. Technology staff will discuss portions of the Technology Plan at faculty meetings at the beginning of each school year

Integration/Coordination with Long-Range Planning Initiatives

The system technology committee consists of the technology staff who are members of each school's Leadership Team. All proposed initiatives are brought before the Leadership Teams such as hardware specifications, software implementation, and technology related upgrades or purchases.

IV. Professional Development
Describe how the local educational agency will provide professional development and ensure that specific funds like E-Rate and other sources are spent on scientifically and/or evidence based practices in relation to the purchase of technology and technology tools.

Cook County Schools' professional development programs are clearly outlined and support the overall system and school performance goals. Funding for professional learning is provided by local, state, and federal allocations. Professional learning in the school system is directly linked to established instructional practices to support student achievement. Each school has established a professional learning community to further enhance and support the school performance goals. Teachers new to the system are provided a technology overview. The training involves processes, programs, and procedures to support the instructional setting. System and school level staffs are provided the opportunity to participate in technology related professional learning through workshops taught by the technology coordinator.

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Appendices

The Superintendent shall, with respect to any computers belonging to the Cook County School System and having access to the Internet:

1. insure that a qualifying "technology protection measure," as that term is defined in section 1730(b)(1) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000, is installed and in continuous operation; and
2. institute, maintain, and enforce procedures or guidelines which provide for monitoring the online activities of all users and the use of the chosen technology protection measure to prevent access to visual depictions that are (i) obscene, (ii) child pornography, or (iii) "harmful to minors," as that term is defined in section 1721© of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000; and
3. institute, maintain, and enforce procedures or guidelines designed to provide for students age-appropriate instruction regarding safe and appropriate online behavior, including interacting with others on social networking sites and in chat rooms; behaviors that may constitute cyberbullying; and how to respond when subjected to cyberbullying.

The Superintendent shall, with respect to access to the Internet by or through computers, networks or other devices belonging to the Cook County School System, institute, maintain and enforce procedures or guidelines which:

1. provide for monitoring the online activities of all users to limit, to the extent practicable, access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and the World Wide Web;
2. are designed to promote the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
3. are designed to prevent unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unauthorized activities by minors online;
4. are designed to prevent the unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and
5. are designed to restrict minors' access to materials "harmful to minors," as that term is defined in section 1721(c) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000.

The Superintendent shall provide the following guidelines to ensure acceptable Internet use:

1. An Internet Acceptable Use Agreement will be issued that states the privileges and responsibilities associated with using the Internet and provides guidelines for its use. The agreement shall have places for parent, student, and/or employee signatures of acceptance.
2. Faculty members shall provide orientation on the acceptable use agreement, the proper use of the network, and network etiquette.
3. The signature on the agreement is legally binding and indicates that the party who signed has read the terms and conditions carefully and understands its significance.

Original Adopted Date: 10/15/2007   Last Revised:
6/11/2012

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INTRANET/INTERNET APPROPRIATE USE AGREEMENT

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PARENTS

Due to the nature of the intranet/internet, it is neither practical nor possible for the Board of Education, school administration or staff to enforce compliance with user rules at all times. Accordingly, parents and students must recognize that students will be required to make independent decisions and use good judgment in their use of the intranet/internet. Therefore, parents must participate in the decision whether to allow their children access to the Internet and must communicate their own expectations to their children regarding its use.

As a parent/guardian of this student, I have read the Intranet/Internet Acceptable Use policy and this Internet Appropriate Use Agreement.

I understand that the intranet/internet access is designed for educational purposes and that the school unit will attempt to discourage access to objectional material and communications that are intended to exploit, harass or abuse users. However, I recognize it is impossible for the School District to restrict access to all objectionable material, and I will not hold the school unit responsible for materials acquired or contacts made on the network.

I understand that a variety of inappropriate and offensive materials are available over the Internet and that it may be possible for my child to access these materials if he/she chooses to behave irresponsibly. I also understand that it is possible for undesirable or ill-intended individuals to communicate with my child over the Internet, that there is no practical means for the school to prevent this from happening, and that my child must take responsibility to avoid such communications if they are initiated. While I authorized the staff to monitor any
communications to or from my child on the Internet, I recognize that it is not possible for the school to monitor all such communications. I have determined that the benefits of my child having access to the Internet outweigh potential risks.

I understand that any conduct by my child that is in conflict with these responsibilities is inappropriate, and such behavior may result in the termination of access and possible disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution.

I have reviewed these responsibilities with my child, and I hereby grant permission to the school unit to provide Internet network access.

I agree to compensate the school unit for any expenses or costs it incurs as a result of my child's violation of the Intranet/Internet Acceptable Use Policy or administrative procedure.

Parent/Guardian Name(s)   _____
(please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature(s)_____

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Cook County School District Technology Permission Form

The Cook County School District (CCSD) believes in educating the 21st century student by allowing them to access technology through different means. The CCSD encourages and supports appropriate and responsible use of technology and will take reasonable measures to ensure that students are protected and that the technology aligns with educational objectives. A copy of the Cook Technology Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy can be viewed and/or obtained at all schools and at www.cook.k12.ga.us.

Permission to Publish

- ❏ I DO give CCSD the right to use my child's name, photograph, and student work for publication to acknowledge achievements and accomplishments in the newspaper, the yearbook, on our school website/social media pages, and on appropriate educational sites.
- ❏ I DO NOT give CCSD the right to use my child's name, photograph, and student work for publication to acknowledge achievements and accomplishments in the newspaper, the yearbook, on our school website/social media pages, and on appropriate educational sites.

Permission to Use the Computer Network

- ❏ I DO give permission for my child to use the CCSD network in all of the following ways: Internet services, student email, Google Apps for Education, and all other educational apps.
- ❏ I DO NOT give permission for my child to use the CCSD network in all of the following ways: Internet services, student email, Google Apps for Education, and all other educational apps.

Permission to Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT)

- ❏ I DO give permission for my child to bring his/her own portable, wireless device to school.
- ❏ I DO NOT give permission for my child to bring his/her own portable, wireless device to school.

All permission given will remain in effect unless changed explicitly by a parent/guardian.

Student's Name (print clearly)_____

Student's Signature _____ Parent/Guardian's

Name (print clearly)_____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____

Date _____

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Cook County Schools' Technology Protection Measure

       To ensure compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000, Cook County Schools will always deploy a content filter. At present Open DNS and Palo Alto Networks are the filtering mechanisms that are in place. Also to reduce security breaches, Cook County Schools deploys a firewall. The network administrator is continually monitoring both systems and is constantly researching new emerging technologies.

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Cook County Schools' Interoperability and Redeployment Procedure

Before technologies (hardware or software) are purchased in the Cook County Schools, a request will be made by the principal or assigned designee to the technology coordinator. The technology coordinator will present these requests to the technology committee and superintendent. The following criteria will be used to determine if the request will be approved.

- Needs assessment
- Funding source
- Compatibility
- Impact on Student Achievement

Computer repair request are made using e-mails sent to local schools' technicians. Technicians assess status of hardware for redeployment. When equipment is determined to be interoperable and economically unfeasible to repair, usable parts are retained and kept in stock to replace like parts in other computers. Remaining unusable hardware is transported to a disposal storage site and then sold to be recycled.

Cook County Schools