

# Technology at The Cottonwood School

## I. Technology Philosophy

### **The Cottonwood School Mission**

To provide a creative learning environment where students develop a sense of place and become stewards of the natural world and active citizens within our community.

### **The Cottonwood School Technology Mission**

The Cottonwood School incorporates technology when appropriate to support and enhance our mission statement, to teach necessary skills for school and career success, and to promote digital citizenship.

### **The Cottonwood School Technology Vision**

The Cottonwood School is a school that 1) understands technology as a valuable and integral set of tools (skills) in the contemporary learning environment and 2) is guided by our mission and core beliefs in the design, implementation and assessment of those tools.

### **The Cottonwood School Philosophy Statement**

One of our main goals as a place-based learning school is to immerse students in the world around them. Because students spend so much time in front of screens (Monke 2010), we feel it is our responsibility to balance the use of technology with hands-on learning.

1. We believe in intentional and authentic use of technology. Technology must be balanced with real world interaction. We value process over content and use technology when hands on options are not available. It is a tool best used for production, collaboration, and communication. It is not used as a reward, but rather serves as a tool to achieve a learning objective.
2. We believe that the internet is one of many sources used by students to collect information. Research conducted on the internet will be balanced with material gathered from other sources such as books, interviews, surveys, fieldwork, etc.
3. We believe that technology is most valuable for collaboration and communication within our community.
4. We believe that students need guidance to be responsible and safe digital citizens.
5. We believe that the use of technology should be focused, limited, and will gradually increase as students mature.
6. We believe that we have a responsibility to teach basic skills around technology in order to prepare students for success in school and life. Technology can offer accommodations for students who have different abilities and/or fewer opportunities to access technology.

## II. The Program

Our technology program is developing. The Cottonwood School acquired 5 classroom sets of chromebooks during the pandemic, now to be used for state testing and some shared classroom work. These computers are used in grades 3-8 for writing, research, publishing, skill practice, community engagement, teaching efficient computer use and understanding, and practicing good digital citizenship. We currently have 12 ipads and access to Chromebooks as needed to be used minimally in our K-2 curriculum.

## III. Personal Electronic Devices

- Students are not allowed to have personal electronic devices (phones, e readers, ipads, laptops, watches, etc.) at school, unless it is being used as adaptive technology as part of an IEP or 504.
- Phones/ipods/watches can not be out at school, during before care and after care, or at any school sponsored activity. Devices must be silenced and put away before coming through the front gates in the morning and not brought out at dismissal until fully exited through the front gates.
- Students can bring in devices for academic work/projects if pre-approved by their teacher **and** the principal. These devices must only be used during the time allocated for the work to be done, and under adult supervision.
- All confiscated phones will be turned into the principal for safe keeping.
  - First offense: Phone can be collected by student at the end of the day
  - Second offense: Phone can be collected by parent/guardian
  - Third offense: Phone will be returned after meeting with teacher, student, & parent/guardian. Phone must be checked in w/ teacher at the start of school.

## IV. Responsible Chromebook Use Agreement

Chromebooks, Google accounts, and internet access are provided to enrich the educational experience of our students through research, creation, collaboration, and communication, and to foster equity. Access is contingent upon adherence to the attached agreement. All students and their parents are required to read and sign this agreement annually.

**Consequences for Violation:** Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's technology resources.

**Supervision and Monitoring:** Teachers and administrators monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with this agreement. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on

the student's computer or school's information networks in order to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, or to protect property. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions. *Anything done on your computer or through your thecottonwoodschool.org account is considered school property.*

## **V. Responsibility and Consequences**

In general, consequences are personalized to the action and addressed as a learning opportunity. Because we acknowledge the different developmental stages in students, consequences for the same action may look different for a different grade level or for different students. Staff will confiscate devices brought from home if they are out and/or not silenced.

## **VI. Tech Expectations and Support**

### **K-2nd Grade**

There will be minimal technology use in these lower grades. However tablets and chromebooks may be used to support learning goals, create digital portfolios or provide skill practice.

### **3 Grade**

Third graders are beginning users. They will be introduced to the Responsible Chromebook Use Agreement.

#### *Expectations and support*

Third grade students will come in with various levels of computer experience. Over the course of the year students will become familiar with using the Chromebooks for keyboarding, research, math practice and state testing. All students will partake in the Handwriting Without Tears keyboarding curriculum. The classroom teacher will support the students in learning about becoming a more efficient computer user and becoming a good digital citizen, such as the etiquette of sharing, personal identity and safety on the web.

### **4th & 5th Grades**

Fourth and Fifth Graders will continue to hone their computer skills. They are familiar with the Responsible Chromebook Use Agreement.

#### *Expectations and Support*

Fourth and Fifth graders will use the Chromebooks to publish written pieces, conduct research, practice math skills, and take state testing. Students will become familiar with using all of the tools in Google Docs. The classroom teachers will continue to support the students in learning about becoming a more efficient computer user and becoming a good digital citizen, such as the etiquette of sharing, personal identity and safety on the web, and digital footprints.

## 6th Grade

Sixth graders are becoming competent users. They are familiar with the Responsible Chromebook Use Agreement.

### *Expectations and Support*

Students have been using the Chromebooks for three years, and are familiar with Google Docs, presentations, keyboarding, and testing. The classroom teacher will continue to support students in becoming good digital citizens, such as the etiquette of sharing, personal identity and safety on the web, and digital footprints.

## 7th Grade / 8th Grade

Seventh and eighth graders are competent users. They are well familiar with the Responsible Chromebook Use Agreement.

### *Expectations and Support*

Seventh and eighth graders should be competent using online office application tools, including managing Apps (email, docs, presentations, and calendars) and sharing settings for collaboration. They should be familiar with digitally manipulating data sets and have familiarity with digital design for layout and basic photo manipulation. The classroom teacher will continue to support students in becoming good digital citizens, such as the etiquette of sharing, personal identity and safety on the web, and digital footprints.

# VII. Responsible Chromebook Use Agreement

## Chromebook Guidelines: Rules and Expectations

2025-2026

In order to use the Google Chromebooks for required class activities, students must be responsible and follow these guidelines at all times.

Remember, the device is the property of The Cottonwood School, not your personal device.

Violation of these guidelines can result in the loss of use of the device.

- Only use the device that is assigned specifically to you; do not let other students use or borrow your device unless directed by the teacher or staff
- Do not place books or other items on top of the device
- Never leave your device unattended
- Shutdown and **sign out completely** when you are finished with your exercise, or class period

- Students should not personalize their devices in any way; this includes decals, screensavers, and downloading any software, application or short cuts that have not been explicitly allowed by the teacher (devices will be periodically checked for unauthorized downloads)
- **Only use the device for school work**
- Follow the teacher's instructions about labeling documents/files prior to sharing or printing
- If you notice that something is wrong with the device, report it to your teacher immediately
- No food or drinks allowed around the devices
- Follow all CSCS policies and school rules pertaining to the use of technology

### **Important Notes:**

- **Do not force** anything into the ports and slots on the side of the Chromebook
- **Do not jerk, drop or slam closed** the cover of the laptop computer
- **Do not** carry your Chromebook by the screen. Carry/hold your Chromebook like a book when closed, or securely by the base when open
- **Do not** put the Chromebook on the floor or on any unstable surface
- **Do not** leave your Chromebook unattended
- **Do not** throw the Chromebook or mistreat it

**If the Chromebook is damaged due to your negligence, you will be responsible for the cost of the repair or replacement of the Chromebook.**

### **Cyberbullying:**

Cyberbullying is bullying which is carried out through an online service such as email, chat room, discussion group or instant messaging; or through mobile phone technologies such as short message services (SMS). It may also include inappropriate use or distribution of images, videos or audios of another person. Any form of cyber bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances. If a student accidentally accesses inappropriate content, they should move on without drawing unnecessary attention, and inform your teacher quietly if needed. Students should not access chat-rooms or social networking sites, and should never give out any personal details over the Internet.

### **No Expectation of Privacy:**

Students have no expectation of confidentiality or privacy with respect to usage of any technology, regardless of whether that use is for school-related or personal purposes, other than as specifically provided by law. The school may, without prior notice or consent, log, supervise, access, view, monitor, and record use of student technology at any time for any reasons.

While working in a digital and collaborative environment, students should always conduct themselves as good citizens by adhering to the following:

#### **1. Respect Yourself.**

I will show respect for myself through my actions. If necessary, I will select online names that are appropriate. I will use caution with the information, images, and other media that I post online. I will carefully consider any personal information about my life, experiences, or relationships I post. I will not be obscene. I will act with integrity.

**2. Protect Yourself.**

I will ensure that the information, images, and materials I post online will not put me at risk. I will not publish my personal details, contact details, or a schedule or location of my activities. I will report any attacks or inappropriate behavior directed at me while online. I will protect passwords, accounts, and resources.

**3. Respect Others.**

I will show respect to others. I will not use electronic mediums to antagonize, bully, harass, or stalk people. I will show respect for other people in my choice of websites: I will not visit sites that are degrading to others, racist, or inappropriate. I will not enter other people's private spaces or areas.

**4. Protect Others.**

I will protect others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications. I will avoid unacceptable materials and conversations.

**5. Respect Intellectual Property.**

I will request permission to use copyrighted or otherwise protected materials. I will suitably cite all use of websites, books, media, etc. I will acknowledge all primary sources. I will validate information. I will use and abide by the fair use rules.

**Log-on Information**

Each student will receive an email-type log-on. This log-on will include (generally) the first initial and last name of the student followed by thecottonwoodschool.org. This will enable each student to access the suite of Google Apps needed for school work (Chrome, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Drawings, etc.). It will not function as an email address.

I understand and agree to the guidelines above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
First/Last Name of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
First/Last Name of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date