Technology NOW Frequently Asked Questions

What is *Technology NOW*?
Technology NOW is a strategic approach to enhancing teaching and learning by getting and using digital devices to:

- Promote the use of modern technology by students and staff
- Enhance curriculum development and delivery
- Increase access to appropriate online resources anytime, anywhere
- Personalize learning experiences
- Develop skilled *Digital Citizens*

Which Devices will FCPS purchase?
During the 2014-15 school year, FCPS will purchase Dell Chromebooks and a small number of tablets for each middle school. While these devices were selected for the 2014-15 school year, elementary school students will likely get different devices in the future to support their diverse learning needs.

How will digital devices be charged?
FCPS will provide charging stations for all FCPS-issued devices.

What is the projected timeline?
All FCPS schools will benefit from the wireless infrastructure currently in place; however, FCPS is focusing on getting technology into middle schools during the 204-15 school year. Budget pending, during the 2015-16 school year, high schools and the upper elementary grades will be the focus. Below is the timeline for the 2014-15 school year:

- Summer of 2014 - Devices ordered.
- Fall of 2014 - Staff trained.
- Winter of 2014 - Devices deployed.

How will FCPS keep students from seeing inappropriate online content or using devices inappropriately?
FCPS uses an internet content filter to provide students with a safe digital learning environment. FCPS also teaches students digital citizenship. In addition, to protect students and staff, policies and regulations have been developed to define responsible use.

Has FCPS established policies to ensure student online safety and privacy?
Yes. FCPS has recently updated its policy and regulations related to the proper use of technology by both students and staff. These policies and regulations can be found here: [Computers: Acceptable Use of Digital Networks and Online Resources](#) and [Electronic Devices - Student Use](#).

How will FCPS prepare students to be responsible digital citizens?
FCPS has always emphasized using online resources responsibly, referring to this as being a good digital citizen. Students will be taught the acceptable use of digital devices in schools. They will also receive direct instruction on: Ettiquette, Rights & Responsibilities, Health and Wellness, Security and Responsible use. Digital citizenship has been especially important since we started the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiative. As part of BYOD, materials have been developed for digital citizenship at each level. Those materials are located [here](#).

Will FCPS teachers be given digital devices?
Yes. Some teachers will receive digital devices during the 2014-15 school year so that they can become familiar with how to use these devices to enhance the educational experience for all students. FCPS will provide teachers training when they receive their device.

How are teachers being prepared to use the new digital devices?
During the Summer of 2014, Technology Resource Teachers (TRTs) and Curriculum Specialists worked with teachers to incorporate digital resources into the FCPS curriculum. During the 2014-15 school year, FCPS will train teachers and administrators how to use digital devices, online resources and teaching practices to promote the development of digital learning environments.

How will FCPS maintain devices as they break or age?
Built in to the cost of each device is a repair/replacement warranty. This warranty will cover normal wear and tear as well as accidental damage to the device for two years from the date of purchase. When devices require service, a school technology specialist or the FCPS Technology Services Department will provide support. Should a device need to be sent away for repairs, schools will have access to a small number of loaner devices. Budget pending, FCPS will set a regular replacement cycle for all devices in the coming years.

What steps is FCPS taking to update technology in schools and ensuring there is a replacement cycle?
During the 2014-15 school year, FCPS is focusing on updating technology in our middle schools. If money is available, FCPS will focus on updating elementary and high school technology in future years. FCPS staff is aware of the need to develop and sustain a replacement cycle for the newly deployed devices.

Will students be allowed to take digital devices home?
FCPS is in the process of considering this as an option. Middle and high school students will need access to online resources anytime, anywhere. If digital devices are loaned to students, students and their families will be responsible for their appropriate use and care.

What if a student loses or damages an FCPS-owned device?
Student responsibility is an important learning component of Technology NOW. Like any other equipment or book borrowed from FCPS, students are responsible for the appropriate care, return and/or restitution of the cost of a digital device if the item is lost or damaged.

Has FCPS investigated how other school systems have brought technology into the classroom?
A number of systems across the country have begun digital conversion projects during the last five years. FCPS has studied several of these systems including districts in neighboring states. FCPS administrators have met with leaders from school systems that have worked through digital conversions and, as a result, have gained valuable information. FCPS has invested time in planning, involving many stakeholders in the conversion about the need for a digital conversion and moving forward with a strategic plan.

What is the difference between Bring Your Own Device and Technology NOW?
While BYOD is a great first step to improve student access to online information and resources, it is just one part of the long-term solution to providing equitable access to the teaching and learning process anytime, anywhere. FCPS' goal is to provide each student with access to digital devices to develop skills in the areas of: creativity and innovation, communication/presentation, problem solving and critical thinking, virtual learning, information management and digital citizenship.

Is FCPS moving toward online textbooks/resources so students will no longer have to carry books in their backpacks?
FCPS is thinking about how to help students learn using "blended formats" -- this means giving students access to materials in several different formats, including traditional printed materials, online resources, and e-textbooks.

How will FCPS monitor the effectiveness of Technology NOW?
The FCPS Research, Development, and Accountability (RDA) team is measuring and evaluating how this initiative impacts the effectiveness of teaching and student achievement.

Does FCPS have a written plan for Technology NOW?
Yes, the plan is located [here](#).