FAQ'S

Does the District offer an insurance program?

Yes. Parents/guardians must make a choice between two options: the Technology Security Deposit (TSD) or the Technology Repair or Replacement Program (TRRP).

TSD: Cost is $25, refundable with the return of an iPad and accessories in good condition. All repair costs are the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

TRRP: Cost is $25, nonrefundable. The first out-of-warranty repair will be covered by the district, the cost of the second repair will be shared by the district and the parent or guardian. Accessories (case, cables, charger) are not covered.

May I bring my own iPad to school?

If you are in the pilot group, you will be asked to use a school-issued iPad due to App licensing. In addition, instructional materials may be loaded on the devices for classroom learning. As we look to future expansion, we will explore opportunities for student/family owned devices to be used, but for the pilot we will only use school-issued devices so we can manage the apps/licensing, settings and configurations within our network.

If you are not in the pilot group, you are welcome to bring laptops, iPads, or other personal electronic devices for educational use only. You may wish to consider some of the Apps being used in the pilot. Use of personal devices at school must:

- Adhere to District Technology Policies
- Be used for educational purposes only
- Not create a distraction or disruption to the learning environment

Deer River teachers have the discretion of allowing or not allowing the use of electronic devices during instructional time. Please respect and follow your teacher's instructions.

Can I use my iPad in all my classes?
Deer River teachers have the discretion of allowing or not allowing the use of electronic devices during instructional time. Please respect and follow each of your teacher's instructions. If teachers permit use of electronic devices, users must adhere to District Technology Policies, be for educational purposes only, and must not be a distraction or disruption to the learning environment.

In some instances, non-pilot classes may ask students in the pilot to partner with students not in the pilot for collaborative learning. Students with school-issued iPads should do so willingly so the iPads can benefit more students.

Do I need a wireless keyboard?
We suggest holding off on buying an external keyboard or writing stylus. From our experience, after a few days of using an iPad, students become faster typists. Some staff actually returned an external keyboard or stylus they had purchased due to lack of use, but everyone is different. Once you get a feel for how much typing you will do on your iPad, then you can probably better decide what works best for your needs.

How do I access and store my documents?
Students will receive a Deer River Google Apps school account and use Google Drive (educational version) for cloud storage. Other applications, such as DropBox and Schoology may be utilized by individual teachers.

Will the wireless network handle all of these devices?
The ISD 317 wireless network was upgraded over the past two years to increase speed and capacity. All students may access the ISD 317 wireless network to use portable computing devices. The wireless network has the same filters the ISD 317 student computer network has and all District Acceptable Use policies apply to use of the wireless network.

How can I suggest new Apps for the school iPads?
Students and teachers enrolled in the iPad pilot are also participants in an active blog. We encourage students and teachers to share suggestions for enhancing the educational use of the iPad. Please contribute to the conversation by making constructive suggestions on the ISD 317 iPad blog.

What is the cost to families for the iPad pilot?

The students enrolled in the iPad pilot program are asked to pay $25.00 per year as either a deposit or insurance. See "Does the District offer an insurance plan?" above for more information. This covers the cost of maintenance, applications, and upgrades, and in the case of the insurance program, some repairs. Students at Deer River High School will be charged an additional $5.00 refundable fee to cover the cost of locks for student lockers. Students are required to use school issued locks. The refund will be returned when the iPad, its accessories, and the lock have been returned to the school in working order.

Why is ISD 317 choosing to use iPads instead of MacBook Computers?

Deer River teachers focus on formative assessments to assess student learning throughout a lesson. Research is clear that when teachers use frequent formative assessments, they are better able to gauge student learning, reteach material if needed, or move on if everyone understands. The iPad tools combined with traditional classroom learning activities allow teachers to more efficiently administer and grade formative assessments, allowing more timely intervention if a student doesn't understand a concept.

Deer River students take the iPad home, just as they would take their textbooks home. The iPad stores their text, homework, teachers notes and all the papers they would normally keep in a folder, all together in one spot. Students can be more organized, and have homework handy anywhere, anytime. When students are reading a novel, students can read and take notes directly on the iPad, which also has a built in dictionary and notes summary. When students are ready to study, simply review the notes on the iPad or email them to yourself for a printed copy.

Is technology an enhancer or distractor?

Technology as a potential distraction is a reality for today's youth. Deer River staff has had many discussions about the need to teach students to use technology responsibly. We want to do that teaching when they are in high school, so they are not graduating with bad habits, but instead know how to handle the distractions when they are on their own.

We believe that creating multimedia presentations to express ideas is a critical 21st Century skill. If a parent does not want their child to access certain sites at home, we encourage the use of home filtering software that could block them at no cost.

In order to build capacity in the use of a new technology, people need to be able to use the tools for both tasks and leisure. There are games on the iPad, such as solitaire, that are free and age appropriate. We believe that there's value to teaching students that there is a time to be on task, and there's a time for relaxation. We want them to learn these important self-discipline skills while under the supervision of parents and teachers, not when their job is on the line as an adult.

It is also important to note that the games available on the iPad are also available on the web, and could be easily accessed by a student on any desktop. It's not really fair to say that because of the iPad, students now have access to games. If students use the Internet or a cell phone, they already had access to games.

Teachers are using a number of strategies to make sure students are engaged and on task while they are in class, but like any other class we need to continue to monitor. We have seen students doodle in electronic ink, just as we see them doodling on paper. But, we see fewer distractions when students have the technology in hand with an engaging lesson than when they are taking notes on a lecture.

Can students create adequate products on an iPad?

Producing content on an iPad takes some practice, while consumption of information is fairly easy. Therefore, students may be more comfortable writing papers or completing homework on a desktop or on paper while they are still practicing writing, typing and note-taking on the iPad. Teachers can work with a variety of formats, but often prefer electronic submissions.

A student is welcome to log into the course management system, download, print and write-out the assignment to hand in the next day. If they want a digital footprint of the assignment, the student could even scan the assignment and email it to the teacher or upload it to the CMS. Electronic submissions protect the student and the teacher from "lost" assignments.

The iPad provides an added convenience of being able to complete an assignment anywhere and at any time if the student so chooses. If the student wants to work on homework in the car, they can do so. If math is not comfortable on the iPad, math can be done at home on a desktop or paper, and perhaps reading the English novel can be done on the iPad when not at home. The iPad is intended to provide more access, but may not be the only tool students use.

Is cheating a problem with the iPad?

Deer River teachers, like all high school teachers, are concerned about cheating and regularly talk about strategies to prevent cheating, in all classes. Academic integrity is a top priority at ISD 317.

If students choose to cheat, they're short-changing themselves because then the teacher doesn't know what students need additional help learning. Like an athlete who slacks off in practice yet still wants to play the game, if the skills needed haven't been developed, the athlete will end up on the bench and learn to take practice more seriously.

How can parents still monitor a student's online behavior, when the iPad can be used anywhere at home?

The best way to monitor a student's online or electronic behavior at home is the same as the best way at school: monitor what they are doing. As parents, it is our responsibility to keep track of what they are doing and how much they are doing it. New technologies like the iPad and the smartphones many of our students carry create new parenting challenges that our parents didn't need to deal with, and our job is to protect our children.

One way to do that is to make your child use their internet connected device in a visible part of your home. Letting your child use their device in their room with a closed door is asking for trouble. Another strategy is to set limits on the use of the device at home. For example, tell your student that they are limited to 30 minutes of non-school use per night. A third strategy if you are having a hard time is to have your child drop off their iPad or other device with you when they get home and then get it from you when they are going to work on their school work.

Filtering software is not built into the iPad. While many potential dangers are filtered and blocked on the school's wireless network so students can't access them, children often have complete, unrestricted access to inappropriate sites at home. Experts strongly suggest installing software to filter and block inappropriate content on your home network. Some possible filters to consider include OpenDNS (free version available), SafeEyes, and NetNanny. Some of these products offer additional protection features such as cell phone filtering, text message and photo screening tools, and digital footprint/reputation monitoring.

Whether your children are participating in the iPad pilot or not, all parents should have a filter on their home network.ed to such sites. These tools allow parents to control any wireless device, whether it is a laptop, a smartphone with a web browser, an iPod touch, and more. Without any filtering software at home, a user can get to any site on any device, including a desktop computer or even their phone.

What if students are experiencing technical issues?

Overall, technical issues in the iPad pilot have been minimal compared to other significant technology implementations. However, when technical issues arise, teachers understand and students are not penalized. Still, there is nothing that prohibits the student from downloading homework assignments in school or at home and printing it out on paper. Teachers do not prohibit students from completing assignments on paper.

Media Center staff and classroom teachers are happy to meet individually with students to help troubleshoot technical issues. Occasionally, a student may need to drop off the iPad in exchange for a loaner during the day, but since all work is saved to the cloud, there should be no disruption to accessing work.

An important life-skill for students is to learn to save and back-up work (on a desktop or other device). Using the cloud storage, iPad students specifically back up their work on the iPad into Google Drive. Students have received instruction on this process and teachers remind students the importance of doing so frequently.

How will inappropriate use of the iPad be handled?

All misuse of a device will be handled consistently with the issue.

Example:
If a student is harassing a student via social media during school hours, he or she will have consequences consistent with harassment.

If a student adds, deletes, or alters the apps or security profiles, he or she may have consequences aligned with vandalism. If a device is accidentally altered, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the media center immediately.

Can my student leave the device at school?

Although all students have been issued a lock and are expected to use it, it is not recommended that students leave the device in a locker overnight. In the event that students cannot bring the device home, he or she should ensure their locker is securely locked, their locker is not shared, and combinations have not been shared. ISD 317 is not responsible for lost or stolen devices.