ENGAGED LEARNING INITIATIVE

ELI

<u>Frequently Asked Questions</u>

The Lowndes County School District is committed to challenging all students to attain their greatest potential. The Lowndes County School District Board of Trustees has elected to implement a 1:1 Digital Learning Initiative. We are calling it an ENGAGED Learning Initiative or ELI. Every student and teacher will be assigned a new digital device that will be used to enhance student learning while preparing them to be digitally literate. We firmly believe the ELI will provide our students learning experiences that will carry them well into the future with confidence.

To assist you and your family through this implementation, we have created a list of frequently asked questions and answers regarding the launch of ELI.

1. **What is a 1:1 program?**

A 1:1 program represents the most comprehensive technology integration program available for instructional purposes. It requires that every student and teacher involved in the program have direct access to a personal computing device at all times.

2. **What is the overall reason(s) for implementing a 1:1 laptop initiative?**

The Lowndes County School District 1:1 ELI guarantees opportunities to elevate success through safe, relevant, innovative and engaging experiences which promote excellence for all. The purpose of this initiative is to equip students for excellence by providing the best in technology, the best learning environment, and the best opportunity to compete in the 21st century global society. Our mission is to challenge all students to reach their greatest potential!

3. **Is there any research to support the implementation of a 1:1 technology program?**

There is a growing body of evidence which documents positive gains collected from 1:1, technology-rich learning environments. Conclusions drawn from available research include favorable outcomes for students, staff, and the community. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Increased academic test scores
- Increased student engagement
- Improvement in student and staff attendance
- Reductions in student behavior problems
- Increased parental interest in school activities
- Improved student and staff morale
- Improved teaching strategies toward problem-based learning

4. **Can I opt out of participating in the 1:1 program?**

No. All students will be engaged in instruction, which integrates this new technology.

5. **My child has lost or damaged their computer charger. What do we do?**

Your child will need to replace the charger with a new one purchased through your school's office. Please contact your school's principal.

6. **My child can't download software?**

This is correct. Students do not have administrator privileges on these devices. Students are able to add music files and pictures, but cannot download software, games, or application packages - including print drivers. If your child needs an application for a school assignment, the child's teacher will provide a written email to our support staff of what exactly is needed and for what purpose. Our technicians will be able to assist them.

7. **How do I print? Can my child's computer be connected to a home printer? If so, what steps do I need to take to get my child connected to our home printer?**

We are encouraging students and teachers to print as little as possible. Once the school learning management system (LMS) is in place students will be able to drop assignments and other work to their teacher without needing to print it out. For students who need a printer set up at home, they need to make an appointment with the school technician through the school's office and make sure to have the make/model of their home printer with them to ensure the correct driver are configured.

8. **What type of technology will my child receive?**

Every student will have access to a new digital device. Each K – 2nd grade homeroom will be equipped with a mobile cart of mini tablets. Each 3rd – 4th grade homeroom will be equipped with a mobile cart of tablets with keyboards. Every 5th – 12th grade student will be issued a laptop. The students in grades 6-12 will be allowed to take their devices home daily. Fifth grade students will not be able to take their devices off campus.

9. **How much will it cost? What does the cost cover? What are the options for payment?**

Students will incur an annual ELI fee of $25.This $25 fee is per child and at all grade levels. The cost covers backpacks (for grades 5-12), protective cases (for all devices), insurance for non-warranty repairs, and other soft costs associated with ELI. For students in grades 6–12, this fee must be paid in cash, check, or through credit/debit card payment at the laptop deployment sessions prior to each student being assigned his/her laptop. This can be prepaid through our LCSD homepage. Please bring payment confirmation/receipt to the laptop deployment.

For students in grades K–5, this fee must be paid at registration, open house or online through our LCSD homepage. Please present payment confirmation/receipt to your child's homeroom teacher at open house. The devices will be issued by homeroom teachers shortly after the first week of school. K-4 will receive tablets. This will give the teachers time to educate your child on appropriate use and handling of the device. The cost covers ruggedized protective cases and insurance for non-warranty repairs to those tablets. Fifth graders will receive laptops. The cost covers backpacks, protective cases, and insurance for non-warranty repairs to those laptops.

10. **If I have financial hardships, do I have to pay the technology fee?**

Procedures will be in place for parents/guardians with demonstrated financial hardships. Parents/guardian should contact school administrators for complete details to see if you qualify for a fee waiver.

11. **Is the book bag my child's to keep?**

 No. The book bag/backpack is the property of the LCSD and it will be issued to your child each year. The book bag/backpack has a lifetime warranty but this does not apply if the bag is stolen or lost and the parent/guardian would then be responsible for its' cost as you would any other LCSD property. It was selected purposely to fit and protect the device. These are your child's to use throughout the year and normal wear is expected. Your child may hang key chains or other items from the book bag/backpack but they are not allowed write or mark on the bag (page 31-Student Handbook).

12. What happens if I damage or lose the device?

The district has opted to self-insure the MacBooks due to the cost of the insurance and the turn-around time for the repair to happen. If the device suffers non-warrantied damage (liquid spills, cracked screen, etc.), you will be responsible for the applicable damage fee ($50 for the first occurrence, $100 for the second occurrence, $150 for the third occurrence). The iPads are covered by Apple Care and the payment is included in your $25 technology fee. Each device is covered by a protection plan for warrantied damages. During the repair period, your child will be issued a spare device. If the device is stolen, a police report must be submitted or the student will be responsible for full replacement costs. If the device is lost, the student is responsible for the full replacement cost.

13. How will you manage the devices?

The Lowndes County School District will utilize a Mobile Device Management (MDM) program installed on each device. The MDM suite allows us to register each device on our server, where we can control the settings of the device, apply rules, and remotely lock/wipe devices and send out software updates. Through this software and other features built-in to the computer, the computer's activities can be monitored.

14. Is it restricted solely for school purposes?

Students are encouraged to integrate their laptop into their everyday lives for homework, research, and studying purposes. As long as the student-generated content is appropriate and does not violate any policies written in the handbook, students may store pictures, and use the Internet for related activities.

15. During the school day, will social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter will be blocked by our web filter?

Yes. Any websites deemed unproductive to student learning will be blocked using our filter. After school hours, holidays and weekends students will be able to use social networking. However the content will still be subject to periodic discovery. District and school monitoring and filtering does not negate parental or guardian supervision of the device usage.

16. Is a credit card required to download and install software?

No credit card is required. The Lowndes County School District will setup a method for each teacher to install the apps needed for instruction. The school will purchase all required apps or applications for students and place on their tablet or laptop through our MDM suite. Students will NOT be allowed to download apps on their tablet or to install software on their laptop.

17. Will my child use the device in every course?

The device will be issued to students to use as a resource for instruction. The Lowndes County School District is implementing a professional development program with all teachers on the effective integration of technology in the classroom. We expect that how these devices are used in the classroom will vary based on grade level and subject area. The expectation is that the first year of implementation teachers will be given the opportunity to provide all students with the quality education expected by our community while learning new ways to integrate technology. Some classes may use these devices as a tool for interactive presentations, data gathering and analysis, creative writing, and in-class processing of content.

18. My child participates in an after-school club, activity, or sport. Who is responsible for the safe-keeping of the laptop?

The student will need to communicate with the adult in charge to help with securing a safe, locked place to store his or her laptop.

19. When will the students receive their device? Will there be any training?

Students in grades 5–12 will receive their laptops during a roll out event that will happen during the summer or early fall. Each student and at least one verified parent/guardian will be required to attend. Technical support will be provided to assist students with logging into their laptop. Additional directions for the roll out event will be provided on the Lowndes County School District website and through AIM's call center.

20. What vendors and equipment are you using?
After careful research and planning, our district selected products and vendors based on the technical and instructional needs of our students, staff and schools. In each case, we followed the State of Mississippi's Procurement Guidelines.

21. How do I get the information for my child's school email address?
Students in grades 5-12 will receive their email address at the roll out event. Students in grades k-4 will not need an email address for instructional purposes.

22. Will students take their devices home with them?
Students in grades 6-12 will be allowed to take the District-issued learning devices home with them; doing so will allow our students to learn anywhere, anytime. Students in grades k-5 will not be allowed to take their devices off campus.

23. If my child does not bring their device to school, can assignments be assessed etc. via another computer?
If a student leaves their device at home there will not be a loaner/replacement that they can use for that day.

24. If my child leaves his device at school, can he access the LMS via our home computer? Can school work be completed from a device other than the assigned laptop?
Using the LMS and all other coursework can be accessed from home computers. The student is responsible for completing their course work as if they had the device with them, even if they do fail to bring the device home from school.

25. What are the school's disciplinary consequences for inappropriate use?
Disciplinary action for inappropriate use of District-issued learning devices will be based on the Lowndes County School District's Code of Conduct.

26. How do any disciplinary consequences extend beyond the school day and off-campus?
The District-issued learning devices are property of the Lowndes County School District and are school devices that can be searched at any time. The same consequences that happen within the school day can occur for violations that occur outside of school day hours and off-campus.

27. How will schoolwork be affected if my child loses the privilege to use the device?
The privilege to take the computer home is just that — a privilege. A student's privilege to use the District-issued learning device can be revoked, but is held as a last option. If use of the device is revoked, teachers will provide alternative assignments. If a student becomes assigned to the Alternative School, the student loses the privilege of using the district-issued learning device until the student returns to his or her home school.

28. How can my child access "blocked" websites for school projects/homework?
If my child needs to access a website for homework or a project, but the website is "blocked" by the school's software, how can my child gain access to the "blocked" website? Are there any methods for parental controls to access this type of information out of school? For example, the student needs to access a Youtube video for a video project or a website for a science poster. No, there is no mechanism that will allow parents to adjust the content filter

policy assigned to the student laptops. Students experiencing these issues should communicate the trouble with their teacher. Then the teacher will submit a request to release the blocked page.

29. Will the school provide a case and/or accessories for the device?
Yes. The Lowndes County School District will provide backpacks and cases for each student's personal learning device.

30. How and where should devices be stored/cared for at home?
The proper care guidelines will be distributed prior to and during the roll out event. The proper care guidelines should be followed by students, parents, and families for each District-issued learning device.

31. What is my family's responsibility for loss or breakage in school, out of school, or both?
Each District-issued learning device comes with a warranty. The warranty covers device failure and manufacturing defects. Students will be responsible for all loss or damage resulting from negligence, an accident and or damages not covered by warranty regardless of where the incident occurs.

32. What is my family's responsibility in monitoring what my child does on the device at home?
Families are encouraged to monitor their children's educational activities, which includes computer usage. If there are individual concerns about a student's access to computer programs or applications, please contact your child's school principal to discuss these concerns.

33. Is there an acceptable use policy? Where can I find it?
Yes. The Lowndes County School District has an Acceptable Use Policy for the 1:1 Engaged Learning Initiative. The Acceptable Use Policy can be found on our website at www.lowndes.k12.ms.us under ELI.

34. Will the device need to be connected to the Internet to complete homework assignments?
Internet access at home is not a requirement, although we do encourage it. Students will be responsible for downloading needed coursework and school-related content before they leave school for the day.

35. Is the school district using a content filter for Internet browsing?
Yes. The Lowndes County School District currently uses a Children Internet Protection Act (CIPA) compliant web filter for Internet content.

36. Is there a way I can have similar filtering options at home?
The web-browser on each student's District-issued learning device will direct all Internet activity back to the school's content filtering software. This includes after school hours, weekends and holidays.

37. Can my child and I configure or personalize the device in any way?
If this is a learning need you have for your child, please contact your school's office personnel for a form to complete.

38. Who else can use my child's device?
The district-issued device is solely for the student's use.

39. How will students learn to use the device and apps?
We will provide training to all students receiving the laptops during the roll out event with continued student training throughout the school year.

40. Can we purchase or install apps ourselves on the device? No.

41. How can I access or view my child's digital work?

Parents will be able to log into the LMS using their child's log in information.

42. How can I support the school with the 1:1 Engaged Learning Initiative?

We encourage parents to take an active role in the 1:1 Engaged Learning Initiative and your child's future education. Visit our ELI section on the web page to become familiar with topics that are great conversations to have with your child. Become involved in what they are learning at school using the new devices and become a digital citizen with them as they learn; we want our parents to have the 21st century skills that our students are gaining as well! Ask your child's school principal questions if you have them about the ELI and let us know how the school district can support your child, you, and your family during this new initiative. We are here to help in any way that we can because we know this is an exciting educational tool that will help advance our students to become the best that they can be in the workforce or in college once they graduate from the LCSD.

43. If I have children enrolled in the middle and high school, must I attend orientation sessions at each one?

No. Parents/guardians must attend only one roll out session if they have more than one student enrolled as middle or high school students.

44. How are you going to teach children ethical use of these devices?

The Lowndes County School District prides itself in the history of teaching safe and ethical practices in the classroom, especially with electronic devices. Our teachers and administration will continue to teach our students the best practices related to Internet safety, copyright, cyber-bullying, etc. as we move forward with the ELI.

45. Will students be able to keep the devices during school breaks?

Yes. Students will use the District-issued learning devices throughout the school year but not during the summer break. The devices will be collected by school district officials at the end of the school year.

46. Does my child have to use the device?

Yes, educational resources and content will be delivered to students via the device. This makes the device a necessity for our students to learn. The ELI will "connect" students with their peers, teachers and the digital world in which they will learn. The device allows them to have a personalized learning experience that will equip them with 21st century skills, which in the end will prepare them for college or the workforce upon graduation.

47. What happens if my device is stolen?

If your device is stolen, we have a program that will lock it down and it will not work. All pawn shops will be provided with information on what the screen looks like on a "locked out" device so they can't be pawned.

If you have an additional question that was not listed, please email Dr. Robin Ballard, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction at Robin.Ballard@lowndes.k12.ms.us or 662-244-5020.