

A Letter to Families About Technology

Dear families,

Here at school, we use technology every day, but not always in the ways you might imagine!

It is true that we use modern devices such as laptops and tablets to play learning games that help children practice literacy and mathematics skills, build comfort with using devices, acquire vocabulary associated with computers, and begin developing research skills. But our favorite ways to use technology also help us build and maintain relationships with other people and document our learning.

Sometimes, we will use smartphones to take pictures of things we have created or make videos of what we are doing. We might make audio recordings of stories we are retelling or songs we are singing. We will use technology to connect with friends and family members who are not with us at school every day—including you!

Also, remember that *technology* means more than computers and smartphones. We still enjoy using older devices such as music players and cameras, as well as simpler “unplugged” tools such as hammers and screwdrivers, magnifying glasses, balance scales, and measuring cups and funnels.

When you visit our classroom, look for the many ways we use tools and technology. You can support responsible technology use at home, including—but certainly not limited to—moderating your child’s daily and weekly screen time.

What You Can Do at Home

- Talk with your child about the technology devices we use at school. Ask what she enjoys and if there are any aspects of technology that she finds frustrating and might need extra help with.
- Remember that children do not need real versions of items to use in their play. Just as they are happy using toy vehicles, plastic animals, artificial food, and baby dolls in their play, so, too, are they quite happy to use toy or pretend versions of technology devices.
- Even when working with technology, a child’s social–emotional development and ability to work with other people are essential. As with any toy or game your child uses, technology-based items will best support development and learning when they are open-ended and encourage communication and personal problem-solving.
- An essential aspect of the development of technology skills is the ability to recognize and create patterns. If your child is particularly interested in learning about how technology works, look for ways to support this skill. While modern coding relies on the development of very complex patterns, children begin to develop that expertise by finding and creating simple patterns.