

Dr. Martin Karp, Vice-Chair

**SUBJECT: TEXTBOOKS AND TECHNOLOGY**

**COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION, & TECHNOLOGY**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: SAFE, HEALTHY, AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) strives to be in the forefront of academic innovation. Over the past decade, M-DCPS has expanded student technology access with district-wide wireless access, interactive white board technologies in all classrooms, and the deployment of over 150,000 mobile devices. M-DCPS recognizes technology could be educational, environmentally friendly, and financially beneficial, but the District also has to determine where the line needs to be drawn on the hours students are required to use technology for classwork and homework. Too much technology use has been linked to negative effects on one's health and well-being.

In the past decade, strict guidelines were proposed by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) for screen time limits—no screen time for children under 2 years of age and only 1-2 hours a day of total screen time for 3 to 18 year olds. Then, guidelines were removed, and the advice given to families was to set their own parameters. In November 2016, the (AAP) released policy statements which included the recommendation to balance technology use with other healthy behaviors.

While the District is committed to using technology to prepare students for 21<sup>st</sup> century careers and post-secondary learning, caution should be exercised to ensure that technology is used in ways that are supported by research and that do not limit the types of learning experiences and modalities in use in classrooms. Excessive screen time should be avoided. For this reason, providing both print and digital textbooks to accommodate students' needs and learning styles should be the goal whenever possible.

M-DCPS should use a blended learning model given that some studies are showing reading comprehension is greater when using traditional textbooks as opposed to reading on monitors. Overuse of Wi-Fi and screen time has been linked to obesity, poor posture, shorter attention spans, social isolation, and visual impairment. School Board Member Mari Teri Rojas in agenda item H-8 at the June 21, 2017 School Board Meeting cited side effects of overusing technology such as digital addiction.

**Revised  
H-13**

A common complaint among parents is the battle to pry their children away from electronic devices. Once on the device, it is difficult to monitor if there are split screens open, whether homework is being done, and if a child is viewing the assigned work. Incorporating a blended delivery model using traditional materials and technology will help ensure a balanced approach and reduce some of the aforementioned concerns.

Although M-DCPS recognizes technology is crucial to preparing students for the future of college and careers, the district understands that providing students and teachers with options for teaching and learning through blended environments is also essential.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney's office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
DR. MARTIN KARP:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida,  
direct the Superintendent to:

1. Modify homework guidelines for allowable screen time recommendations;
2. Ensure the use of a blending learning model using print material and technology;
3. Provide information to the Board relative to adopted materials and their formats in terms of print, digital, or both; and
4. Provide a response before the March 2019 School Board meeting.

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