



ACS Technology Practices & Policies

At ACS, technology provides a mechanism to create relevant, meaningful content for project based, student centered learning. We will provide equitable access to digital resources and technology to all our students.

Google G Suite for Education is used for teachers and student email and document sharing. ACS connects to the internet over the North Carolina Research in Education Network. This year, all grade levels, Kindergarten - 5th, are using the same site licenses, so that there is consistency across grade levels and this makes it easier for parents to support their students at home, especially if they have students in multiple grade levels. We are also utilizing the resources in Homebase provided by NCDPI to leverage statewide cost savings.

By providing our students with the opportunity to access technology in their classrooms and 1:1 (2nd - 5th), and 1:2 (K & 1st), students will possess the autonomy to achieve the following core fundamental digital skills:

- **CREATE:** Students and Teachers will enhance their creativity by developing digital content and showcasing their research and products created through various technologies.
- **COLLABORATE:** Students will connect with others and develop PLNs (Personal Learning Networks). As a result, problem-solving will become a collaborative endeavor in which students have to effectively work in teams/groups to realize a solution.
- **EXPLORE:** Students will improve their abilities to tackle complex problems through inquiry, utilizing digital resources to enhance their research and ability to gather evidence needed to make informed decisions.
- **SHARE WITH THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY:** Students and Teachers will communicate ideas to both local and global audiences.

In addition to the above skills, we believe that integration of technology into the classroom should be:

- Balanced (best practices)
- Have a clear purpose
- Enhancing the classroom experience
- Open doors to the world
- Provide opportunity for safe exploration and research
- Provide student choice
- Prepare students for the world and cultivate 21st century skills



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- Use technology to support teaching students processes and how to safely use technology to find information
- Enhance self-directed learning
- Differentiate learning opportunities based on student needs and interests

Students will have access to a variety of technology. It is the expectation of the school that all school owned iPads and chromebooks remain at the school. If a student needs a tablet for home use, ACS has Lenovo tablets available for check-out. All students and parents in 5th grade and above must sign and adhere to the ACS Internet and Technology Acceptable Use Policies.

ACS Internet Acceptable Use Policy

ACS provides internet access to support education and research. Access to the Internet is a privilege subject to restrictions set by the Board of Directors. For students and staff, violation of any provisions in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) may result in disciplinary action and/or cancellation of access to the ACS network. This policy applies to all Internet access on ACS property, including Internet access using mobile devices, and including access by staff, students, and visitors to the ACS campus.

Students' internet usage is permitted only in the presence and supervision of a teacher or other designated adult. Although ACS uses resources to protect against exposure to inappropriate material, there is always a risk of students accessing such materials. Although it may still be possible to access inappropriate material, ACS feels the educational benefit provided by the Internet outweighs any possible disadvantages. We encourage parents to talk with their students about sites and material which the parents believe are inappropriate. ACS cannot accept responsibility for enforcing specific parental restrictions that go beyond those imposed by the school.

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law enacted to address concerns about access to the Internet and other information. Under CIPA, schools must certify that they have certain internet safety measures in place. These include measures to block or filter pictures that (a) are obscene, (b) contain child pornography, or (c) when computers with internet access are used by minors, are harmful to minors. ACS monitors online activities of minors and to address (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web, (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications, (c) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online, (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination



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of personal information regarding minors, and (e) restricting minors' access to harmful materials. ACS certifies that it is in compliance with CIPA.

Students are prohibited from using or accessing internet sites containing pornographic, violent or other unacceptable content either at school or at home using school-owned computers/technology/electronic devices. Accessing, producing, posting, displaying or sending offensive messages, music or images, including images of exposed body parts is prohibited. Offensive material includes but is not limited to obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude or sexually suggestive language or images.

Students who bring their own devices to campus are encouraged to take reasonable precautions to ensure the security of those devices. This includes operating system updates and virus scanning.

Safety and Ethical Use

Any internet user must take reasonable precautions to protect him or herself online. Students, staff, and visitors should use the following guidelines:

Email, forums, instant messaging, and other online messaging

- Never share personal information online. This includes, but is not limited to: real full name, postal address, social security number, and passwords. Sharing the information of another individual, especially minors, is unethical, strictly forbidden, and may be unlawful. In the case of students, the privacy of student educational data is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). When in doubt, do not release student data and consult a school administrator for further advice.
- Special care must be taken when sending mass emails. Email addresses themselves are private information, and improper mass emailing can result in inadvertent sharing of addresses. Improper mass emailing can also allow recipients to reply to the mass message and send their own messages to the entire group. This is preventable by using a blind carbon copy (Bcc) feature or a mass emailing service. It is the responsibility of all ACS staff and students to use Bcc or a mass emailing service and to protect private information and data when sending mass emails.

Unauthorized access / hacking and general unlawful activity

- Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to ACS resources, or using ACS resources to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to outside systems is unethical, unlawful, and forbidden. This includes bypassing the internet filter without permission or purposefully gaining access to material that is harmful to minors.



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- Assuming the online identity of another individual for any purpose is unethical and forbidden.
- Use of ACS resources for any unlawful purpose, including, but not limited to, copyright infringement, is unethical and forbidden.

Academic integrity

- Students are expected to follow all Board and school handbook policies regarding academic integrity when using technology.

Harassment and Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying may involve any of these behaviors:

1. Accessing, producing, posting, sending, or displaying material that is offensive in nature on the Internet
2. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others on the Internet
3. Posting personal or private information about other individuals on the Internet
4. Posting information on the internet that could disrupt the school environment, cause damage, or endanger students or staff.
5. Concealing one's identity in any way, including the use of anonymization tools or another individual's credentials/online identity, to participate in any of the behaviors listed above.

The principals will determine whether or not specific incidents of cyberbullying have impacted the School's climate or the welfare of its students and appropriate consequences will be issued. ACS is not responsible for electronic communication that originates off-campus but retains the right to impose discipline, where appropriate, for off-campus communication or conduct that substantially disrupts the educational environment at ACS. Cyber bullying will be handled in accordance with the Student Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy.

ACS Technology Use Policy

Students are offered access to the ACS computer network for creativity, communication, research, and other tasks related to the academic program. All use of computers, furnished or created data, software, and other technology resources as granted by ACS are the property of the school and are intended for school business and educational use. Students are to use the computer network responsibly. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and using the school's computer network and technological resources.



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1. **Privacy:** ACS reserves the right to monitor Internet traffic and to retrieve and review any data composed, sent, received, or stored using its domain, network or Internet connections, including e-mail. Users do not enjoy any expectation of privacy when using any technology or transmissions originating within or around ACS property.
2. **Cyber Bullying:** ACS prohibits cyber-bullying, an act involving the use of information and communication technologies, including but not limited to email, text messages, blogs, instant messages, personal Websites, online social directories and communities (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Wikipedia, YouTube, etc.), video-posting sites, and online personal polling Websites, to support deliberate or repeated hostile behavior, by an individual or group, that is intended to defame, harm, threaten, intimidate, or harass students, staff members, or the school during or outside school hours and on or off school premises. Cyber bullying will be handled in accordance with the Student Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy.
3. **Materials and Language:** Use of or accessing profane, abusive, pornographic, obscene, and/or impolite materials or language is not permitted. Accidental access should be reported to the instructor immediately. Intentional circumvention of web-filtering is prohibited.
4. **Installing/Copying:** Students are not to install or download any hardware, software, shareware, or freeware onto any media or network drives. Software installed by anyone other than the network administrator will be removed. Downloading of non-work related files is permitted only with an instructor's permission. Students may not copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. All copyright laws must be respected. Use of any other organization's network or technology resources via the network requires the instructor's permission and must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.
5. **Access:** Users may not access the computer network without proper authorization. Hacking is expressly prohibited. Users are to use their own username and password when using a computer. Users must log off the computer when they are finished with their work and are not to log on to a computer for someone else or tell others their password. Students are to notify the instructor if someone else is thought to know his/her password.
6. **Data Protection:** Users must not attempt to damage or destroy equipment or files. Though efforts are made by ACS to ensure the safety and integrity of data, the school



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makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for the service it provides. ACS will not be responsible for any damage to data.

7. **Storage:** Users are to delete their files and materials they no longer need.
8. **Printing Resources:** Paper and toner are costly, and excessive use is wasteful. Documents must be proofread rolling before printing. Users are to print only the needed part(s) of documents. Students must obtain permission from an instructor before printing documents.
9. **Passwords:** Students are reminded not to share their password with anyone except a parent or guardian. Students should not use login IDs and passwords belonging to other students or faculty and staff members. Students are taught and reminded to log out of their accounts at the close of each session of use.
10. **Email:** Email correspondence on the ACS system, the laptop, or making use of the student's assigned email account is the property of ACS. Documents and other files created by the students and located on the laptops or the ACS computer system are also property of ACS.

Daily Student Expectations: For Upper Elementary & Middle School Students who are assigned chromebooks are responsible for making sure their computer batteries are completely recharged before classes start for the day. Students will also bring their computer to school every day. Failure to do so may result in a failing grade on assignments that require the use of the computer for that day. Students are only permitted to use computers during class when authorized to do so by a faculty member and only for the purpose stated by the faculty member.

The following consequences will apply if a student violates this policy. Any of the below consequences may be enforced alone or in conjunction with one another by the school against the violating student.

1. Revocation or limitation of computer access privileges
2. Temporary or permanent confiscation of the student computer
3. Disciplinary action as provided for in the student handbook
4. Any other sanctions or remedies provided by law



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ACS Social Media Policy

Purpose: This policy is meant to outline the guidelines for use of social media for all staff, contractors, volunteers and the Board.

At School, we understand that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist you in making responsible decisions about your use of social media, we have established these guidelines for appropriate use of social media.

This policy applies to all persons who work or volunteer for ACS. In addition, ACS expects students, parents and other members of the ACS community to follow the posting guidelines set forth herein.

Guidelines

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity Website, Web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with ACS, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

The same principles and guidelines found in ACS policies and these basic beliefs apply to your activities online. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job or educational performance, the performance of others or otherwise adversely affects students, parents, suppliers, volunteers, people who work on behalf of School or School's legitimate business/education interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Be respectful

Always be fair and courteous to fellow teachers or staff, volunteers, students, parents, suppliers or people who work on behalf of the School. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or by utilizing our Open Door Policy than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage



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students, parents, volunteers, staff, or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law or School policy.

Be honest and accurate

Make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous posts you have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about ACS board members, fellow workers, students, parents, volunteers, suppliers, and people working on behalf of the School.

Post only appropriate and respectful content

- Maintain the confidentiality of School private or confidential information. Such information may include information regarding the development of systems, processes, know-how and technology. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal business/School-related confidential communications. Do not post information about individual students or families and be sure to maintain confidentiality, as is protected and required under state or federal law.
- Do not create a link from your blog, website or other social networking site to a School website without identifying yourself as an employee or volunteer of ACS.
- Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for School. If ACS is a subject of the content you are creating, be clear and open about the fact that you are an employee or volunteer and make it clear that your views do not represent those of ACS, fellow workers, parents, students, suppliers or people working on behalf of ACS. If you do publish a blog or post online related to the work you do or subjects associated with ACS, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of ACS. It is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Alamance Community School."

All technology policies and practices can also be found in the

[☰ 22-23 ACS Parent Student Handbook](#)



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What type of technology is used for each grade level and how many devices are in a classroom?

iPads are used in the Kindergarten & 1st Grade classrooms and there is 1 iPad for every 2 students. We use a 1:1 Chromebooks model for 2nd - 5th Grade.

Why does ACS believe that a 1:1 program for school use in 2nd - 5th Grade is important?

The 1:1 Chromebook Model has been designed to enhance the delivery and individualization of instruction. The advantage of a 1:1 model for upper grades is that students' learning opportunities are increased with their ability to access information from multiple sources. Teachers have the opportunity to deliver instruction in a variety of ways to meet the different learning needs of all students and actively engage students in taking more ownership for learning.

Research shows that a 1:1 computing environment is the most cost effective way to implement technology of all the current models. We believe that we can leverage technology to increase student engagement and provide opportunities for students to create, collaborate, communicate effectively, and practice critical thinking. As our teachers learn to work with technology we see the possibility for more personalized learning opportunities, both to learn at a faster pace and to fill in gaps in learning that are critical for future success.

Why Chromebooks for 2nd - 5th Graders?

Chromebooks represent a new space in technology – the space between tablets (such as iPads) and laptops. The Chromebook has many advantages including:

- Requires little maintenance and reduced technical support compared to desktops and laptop computers
- Web-based, therefore eliminating the need for downloading or installing software and/or updates
- All files and apps are stored in the cloud, so they are available anywhere you have an Internet connection
- Many of the Chrome apps work without a network connection
- Teachers have many tools at their fingertips to create lessons, assignments and make sure students are fully engaged.
- Student work on the Chromebook automatically saves to Google Drive.



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How Can Technology Enhance Learning?

We believe technology provides many opportunities to help our students learn. Integrating technology improves student enthusiasm toward learning, making students actively engaged in their classes and taking ownership in their learning. Brain research has proven that students are now learning differently and need new instructional methods to meet their needs.

Our students will be taught how to be effective 21st Century Learners. This means they will be digitally literate and use the four C's (Creativity, Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking) to be global citizens. Student writing and production will increase dramatically. Students will be able to peer review and edit easily and more constructively. The focus on writing will become less of an "exercise" and become more of a crucial method for sharing information or telling stories. The technology allows students to share their writing with vast and different audiences, if they choose.

What steps are being taken to ensure age-appropriate educational content is the only content being accessed?

ACS uses Google Chrome Management with Safe Search & Restricted Mode in conjunction with a strict firewall which routes all traffic through its software and restricts any content based on

criteria that the school created. We also have on-going random security checks through our firewall to make sure no unwanted content gets through it. Of course, this is an ongoing process. Our firewall has to adapt constantly to potential threats to our network.

Furthermore, this year, we are using third-party technology, Gaggle, to facilitate mitigation of cyberbullying, monitor student internet activity, monitor classroom educational devices, and assist with suicide prevention services. Gaggle is a recognized leader in helping K-12 districts manage student safety on school-provided devices and platforms. Gaggle's mission is to ensure the safety and well-being of students and schools by leveraging people and technology, and has helped thousands of districts avoid tragedies and save lives. During the 2020–21 school year alone, Gaggle was instrumental in helping K-12 districts save the lives of 1,408 students.

They flag concerning content in students' school-issued accounts, including Google suite products, for review and block potentially harmful content. Flagged content is reviewed by a minimum of two tiers of Gaggle safety experts in order to verify the content, understand the context, and determine the level of severity. In severe situations, district-appointed contacts are immediately notified by phone, even after standard business hours. Gaggle alerts the school administration about:

- Self-harm, depression, and suicidal ideation
- Substance abuse



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- Bullying/cyberbullying
- Unhealthy relationships
- Pornographic content
- Threats of violence

What types of technological activities are part of the instructional day at ACS?

Our teachers incorporate many different learning activities throughout the school day including those that require the use of technology. The types of activities vary depending on the grade level as well as the tasks to complete each week. All grade levels, Kindergarten through Fifth Grade, use technology as a workstation during their Literacy and their Math blocks. All grade levels are using IXL ELA and IXL Math at workstations, in addition to PebbleGo/Capstone Connect and Epic.

Our 3rd - 5th graders are learning how to utilize the Google G Suite for Education (docs, sheets, slides, etc) to work on classwork and submit assignments through Google Classroom. In addition to these daily tools, technology is used to bring the world into the classrooms, providing interactive opportunities in classes, connecting students with other students in the world, finding supporting primary sources to complement their research and more! Each teacher can provide a more specific list of technological activities within the classroom.

Are there resources available to support parents as technology becomes more complex?

There are a wide range of supports available to parents as technology becomes more complex. The most easily accessible source of information is his or her own student. Often students are well versed in the various technologies available. A second resource are our teachers and the support personnel, such as our Curriculum Director and Counselor. Our teachers and staff are exposed to different technologies through professional development and they can speak specifically about the technology being used in the classroom.

ACS has dedicated a section of the school website for Tools for families. Content within this section provides parents and caregivers with links to help guides for platforms that the school licenses such as Google Classroom, IXL and more. ACS maintains a Device Buying Guide for caregivers that wish to purchase their own technology for use at home that would be compatible with the software ACS utilizes. Lastly, there are several additional recommended resources linked within this area for parents and caregivers to further enhance and supplement student learning at home.

In addition, we are always looking for good resources to share with our students, staff, and families on internet safety, cell-phone safety, cyberbullying, how to talk with our children about



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the safe use of technology, etc. [Common Sense Media](#) and [Netsmartz](#) are good websites with a lot of resources.

What is the school policy on posting pictures on social media?

With each enrollment period, families check whether or not they would like photos to be shared (yearbook, school website, social media, etc.). We generate a “no-photo” list and work to make sure that those students' photos are not included in these school sponsored materials.

In addition, if you are chaperoning a field trip or visiting our school, we ask that you do not post pictures on your personal social media sites that include pictures of other students. You are welcome to share the pictures you have with the school and we can post them if appropriate. Remember to respect the privacy of others. In the Parent-Student Handbook, it states that:

“Parents, employees and volunteers shall not post any pictures of students on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or any other form of social media or on the internet unless the Principal and/or Managing Director has approved such posting. This applies to all School functions, whether or not conducted on school property, including field trips. ACS reserves the right to post pictures and images of current and former students on its website, official Facebook page or for any other School purpose. Parents who do not wish to allow School to use their child’s picture or image must fill out the Publicity Consent Form and turn it into the front office. If a picture is posted on our Coyote Pack, the School has the right to delete the photo. Nothing in

this policy shall prohibit a parent from taking and posting pictures of their own child, provided no other students are featured in such pictures. However, if other students are in the picture, it is the responsibility of the parent to get permission from the student’s parent or guardian before posting pictures of other students.”