

## SUHSD iPad Parent Update 10-23-12

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### iPads – Toys or Tools?



There is no question that iPads are amazing, fun, and cool but will they add any value to how students learn in the classroom or are they expensive electronic toys that will take the focus off of learning?

There are parents and teachers in both camps with some wondering whether the investment in iPads will pay off. Skeptics wonder whether iPads are anything more than enticements to attract students away from charter schools. Advocates believe that students need devices like these in order to prepare them for the technology-centered world they will join as young adults in search of good jobs.

At a recent gathering of community business leaders I asked the question, "How many of you are in professions or business where technology skills are considered a core competency?" Nearly everyone raised their hand. Ten years ago, about half the room would have done so.

Think about your own relationship to technology. Do you have a cell phone or a smart phone? If you have a smart phone, what do you use it for? Have you considered purchasing a Kindle or Nook for reading? If so, why? How many hours a day (at home or work) do you spend on the Internet, using e-mail, or social networking?

How much of your personal and professional life depends on access to technology, information, and tools that require the use of a personal device (phone, iPad, tablet, laptop, etc.)?

I was talking to a friend of mine who coaches swimming. She was talking about how behind the times she feels because the younger coaches are using iPads to analyze swimmers' performances, provide feedback, and perfect technique.

If you walk into any Sweetwater School (middle or high) you will see principals and assistant principals using iPads to record information about what's happening in classrooms each day.



Turn on the news and you'll see broadcasters using electronic devices for breaking news – gone are the stacks of paper that defined the broadcast journalists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

With more than 6000 iPads in the hands of our District's newest members, there are many

discoveries yet to be made and many questions still to answer around the best way to use, what is arguably, one of the coolest technology toys **and** tools of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (so far).

Students, teachers, and principals are all at the early stages of an iPad learning curve where we're exploring ways to use an engaging, entertaining and sometimes distracting device to serve our goals of preparing every child to be a proficient 21<sup>st</sup> century learner, technology-savvy worker, and respectful digital citizen.

So where are you on this learning curve and **what role can you play** to help us help you child be successful?

1. Send us your questions or concerns. [edtech@sweetwaterschools.org](mailto:edtech@sweetwaterschools.org)
2. Spot check your child's iPad – look for the following:
  - a. **Apps** that don't look school appropriate (violent games or "mature" themed). Please report worrisome findings to your child's school principal or assistant principal.
  - b. **Photos/Video** – Look at the Camera  icon on the iPad to make sure your child does not have pictures/videos on his/her photo roll that are not G-rated or school appropriate.
  - c. **Texting** – your child has  an app called Messages. It's similar to a texting feature on a phone and allows him/her to communicate with other students.
3. Have your child show you how to access textbooks and other school resources on the iPad.
4. If you are concerned about your child's having Internet access at home on the iPad at times when you are not there to supervise, you can disable your home wireless router while you're not home. If you are an advanced user, you can set your home router with permissions that will allow you to determine when your children can use the Internet via a wireless access point.

At school, students are expected to use the iPad for learning. At home, the iPad keeps the learning environment open and available for every student by giving them 24/7 access (with or without Internet access) to their textbooks, writing tools, and productivity applications. With your help and support at home, this powerful tool will be used by your child through middle and high school during and after school. While we know it will be used as a toy on occasion, we hope it will be an essential tool your child uses every day to get the most out of learning.

**Are you planning a move?** Please turn your child's iPad in along with textbooks and library books before you start packing. If your move takes place during a break, **you can always turn your child's iPad in to the District's Information Technology Department.** You can reach them at **619-585-7900**. The address is **455 Moss Street, Chula Vista** (the old auto shop on the Chula Vista Adult School Campus).

## iPad Events



**October 17**

Student iPad Survey

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### Sound Bytes

Looking for a great resource to help you make decisions about how best to guide your child through the complex world of movies, music, books, magazines, TV, and web content? Look no farther – Common Sense Media is a great resource for parents and it's free. All you have to do is subscribe. <http://www.commonsensemedia.org>

### Some facts

77% of 8- to 15-year-olds said they'd rather give up TV than give up the Internet (Pangea Media and YPulse, 2009).

Most parents in the United States estimate that their children spend about two hours a month on the Internet, but in reality, kids and teens are spending upwards of 20 hours a month surfing the Web (Center for Media Research, 2009).

About 41 percent of U.S. teens claim their parents have no idea what they are looking at online (Center for Media Research, 2009).

76% of parents think the Internet helps their kids learn about other cultures and ideas (Common Sense Media and the Joan Ganz Cooney Center, 2008).

### iTunes Store and iTunes Books

Apple might be the largest company in the world and they may have one of the coolest devices but there are some challenges when it comes to Apps, the iTunes Store and iBooks. If you are confused about what your child can and cannot do, this should help.

1. Each iPad has a user profile. That profile is created by the District. For students, the profile is [suhsd.student@sweetwaterschools.org](mailto:suhsd.student@sweetwaterschools.org). The profile has a corresponding password that students do not have access to. This is used whenever the District purchases Apps for students to use. This profile does not allow students to purchase Apps independently – in fact, the iTunes Store is not available to students on this profile.

2. If your child has a personal iTunes account for other devices at home (iPhone, iPod, other iPad, computer, etc.) he/she may think it would be cool to have access to their iTunes music and books on their school iPad. Your child is correct, it would be cool but it's not OK and here's why. When your child goes to copy what's on his/her personal account, he/she will delete the school profile. When the school profile gets deleted, everything we have provided goes away. Your child gets to school and cannot use the iPad until the profile is replaced. This means the iPad has to be turned in so the school technician can reimage the iPad.
3. Let's say your child got an iTunes gift card and he/she wants to use it to buy something for his iPad. Since the iTunes Store is not available under the student profile, music, movies, Apps, and games are not available for purchase. However, there is an iBook App on your child's iPad that will allow your child to use the redemption code on the gift card to buy iBooks.

### **The Loss and Damage Clause**

The cost to replace an iPad that is lost or stolen is \$539.00.

The cost to repair an iPad that has been damaged is \$49.00 (for the first two incidents of damage).

Parents are responsible to pay for loss or repair, similar to what happens when your child loses a text or library book. There are some things you can do to help prevent an unwanted expense –

1. Keep the heavy duty case provided by the District on your child's iPad. It's not beautiful but it's built to protect the iPad.
2. Help your child set boundaries at home so younger or older siblings don't have to share their iPad to another family member.
3. Make sure your child does not take the iPad to events where it could get misplaced or forgotten (ballgames, movies, malls, restaurants, etc.).
4. Feel free to inspect your child's iPad frequently. They might not want to tell you or the school that they have a damaged screen or deleted a profile for fear of being in trouble at school or home.
5. Remind your child that their iPad needs to last a long time.
6. Create an insurance "premium" where a portion of money your child earns at home gets put into an iPad loss or damage account. That way, your child has a financial stake in protecting his device.