July 24, 2026

Clarifying Questions

Regarding the Draft K-12 Technology Use Policy, AR, and Dr. Ranelli's 6/24/26 Email:

Based on our five principles and our review of the proposed policy and AR, we have questions for the Board. Our concerns are informed by experts in technology, pediatrics, psychiatry, education, and privacy. We also renew our request to meet with the Board and welcome further conversations as the policy is being adopted.

Evidence and Review

1. The draft policy requires technology that is ineffective, developmentally inappropriate, unsafe, or fails to protect privacy to be discontinued. What objective, independent standards and timelines will enforce this? Why would LMSD renew iReady before completing and publicly releasing an independent review of the concerns raised about it and Curriculum Associates? Will LMSD pause all new and renewed EdTech contracts until the required independent reviews are completed and made public?
2. Per the AR, please describe and detail the "process for reviewing Technology Resources before they are introduced" and explain what the process is for review "throughout their continued implementation." Who provides input and oversees this review, how is that data recorded, stored, and shared? What are the ongoing measurables that will be analyzed? Are the teachers assessing if the EdTech "support teaching and learning"? If not, who is and where is this data recorded, stored, and shared with the public?
3. The draft policy outlines technology should be used only when it clearly improves learning. Is acclimatizing students to devices for state testing a goal that meets the criteria of improving learning? For each proposed use, will LMSD provide independent evidence of an advantage over teacher-led, nondigital instruction, including the grade, subject, purpose, and measured outcome, and discontinue uses that cannot demonstrate one?

Core Instruction

4. What evidence does LMSD have that supports the use of EdTech to deliver core curriculum (math, English/language arts, science, social studies) in K-8 when the policy itself says

technology must not replace direct instruction, books, handwriting, discussion, hands-on learning, or human relationships?

5. The policy promises physical books, handwriting, direct instruction, and other nondigital learning, yet the superintendent previously stated that LMSD lacked the funding and practical ability to return to textbooks. What is the District's current position? Once articulated, how can these commitments be credible, and what specific funding, textbooks, workbooks, novels, paper materials, manipulatives, and classroom resources will be provided in every grade and core subject?
6. Will the District use computer labs to teach essential technology skills (typing, media literacy, coding, AI, robotics, privacy, cybersecurity, safe searching, digital citizenship, and learning about the digital world) and will families have input into the complete digital citizenship curriculum before the policy is adopted?

Grade Levels

7. Elementary (K-5) and Grade 6

- Dr. Ranelli's 6/24/26 email states that K-2 will not use devices for routine instruction. The draft policy does not have a ban or any true restrictions on usage in K-2. His email also did not include details of permitted activities on devices and how it would be a change from the current usage. Please explain.
- Why is any student-facing technology necessary and developmentally appropriate outside of specific IEP-required devices before state testing begins?
- What specific uses are proposed, what independent evidence shows they are developmentally appropriate and better than teacher-led instruction?
- What clear, measurable limits will prevent technology from becoming routine?
- The draft policy uses terms such as "minimal," "infrequent," and "specific educational purposes" to describe usage. How does the district plan to ensure compliance with terms that are unenforceable?
- Grades 3-4 are not supposed to receive individual devices per the proposed policy, yet grades 5-6 are grouped together to receive one-to-one devices. When 5th grade moved to middle school, District leadership said the change was logistical and that 5th grade would remain part of elementary in all substantive respects. Why is 5th grade now treated

differently from grades 3-4, and will the District clearly define device access, required uses, screen time, core curriculum use, supporting evidence, optional take home use, and full nondigital alternatives for grades 3- 6?

8. Grades 7-12

- Why does the draft policy expand device use without clear limits or evidence of need while omitting restrictions applied to grades 5-6? The AR states that for grades 5-6, "devices shall not be used in school buildings in the morning before classes begin, between classes, at lunch, or during I&E." Why is this same language statement missing for grades 7-12?
- Why does the District group children in grades 7-12 together when they are in different developmental stages? What restrictions will be put in place to avoid excessive usage?
- How did the district determine that 40-50% of screen-based instructional time is supportive of educational goals for children in Lower Merion?
- Dr. Ranelli's email on 6/24/26 did not include details of permitted activities on devices and how it would be a change from the current usage. Please explain.
- Before moving forward, will LMSD conduct an independent review to define appropriate uses and screen time and determine where teacher-led, paper-based instruction should be restored?

Screen Time Guidelines

9. The AR provides daily screen time guidelines but allows them to be exceeded without consequence and relies solely on staff self-assessment rather than specific instructional parameters. While we disagree that these are developmentally appropriate guidelines as they reach 40-50% of instructional time, what enforceable limits, independent monitoring, parent reporting, and corrective action will ensure technology use remains appropriate and consistent across classrooms and schools?

10. How were the time guidelines determined and how did you assess their developmental appropriateness? How will teachers ensure compliance with these daily guidelines when they may only have students for a portion of their school day?

Policy and Ongoing Oversight

11. What quantifiable, enforceable protections will be written directly into Board policy, and will LMSD publish one authoritative grade band chart showing device assignments, take home rules, permitted uses, screen limits, and nondigital alternatives?
12. Will LMSD publicly disclose all student technology tools, vendors, contracts, costs, privacy practices, actual screen use, and any contractual usage requirements that could influence teachers' instructional decisions?
13. Why should the same officials who select, purchase, approve, and implement EdTech also review it? Why will families receive updates only once a year?
14. Will LMSD agree to establish an independent standing advisory committee of parents, students, educators, board members, and experts (health, education, privacy, and technology), to conduct quarterly public reviews, report on technology use, applications, contracts, privacy, safety incidents, and policy compliance, provide a public forum, and protect staff and educators who speak honestly from retaliation?

Safety and Discipline

15. If LMSD has an affirmative duty to protect students, will it adopt a zero tolerance, approved-only system that blocks unapproved content, including pornography, violent material, predatory communication, social media, gaming, and open chat rooms, and immediately suspend any resource involved in a verified harmful incident until independently confirmed safe? Will LMSD publish the complete approved list and provide a rapid process for teachers and students to request legitimate educational resources?
16. If the district can remove student access when their use is deemed inappropriate, why are families not able to decline usage of devices before there is a documented issue or concern? If children in the district are issued devices with insufficient content filtering, why does the district not have responsibility for failing to adequately protect the child? How will LMSD distinguish intentional misconduct from accidental exposure, impulsive behavior, peer pressure, addictive design, or failed safeguards, and hold the District accountable when its protections fail?

Data Privacy and Liability

17. The draft states that students should expect no privacy on District technology. Will LMSD disclose all monitoring and data collection, including searches, messages, keystrokes, camera, microphone, and location data, who may access or receive it, how long it is retained, and require separate, informed, revocable parental consent for each application without penalty?

18. The draft AR states that student data privacy rights will be "determined by the End User Licensing Agreement with that service provider." Do any of these Agreements allow non-consensual deletion of data or sharing with third parties? Under FERPA, the district must contractually retain the ability to dictate the vendor's use, maintenance, and disposition of records. While many LMSD EdTech contracts include an addendum that confirms that the district remains the "source and controller" of student data, it appears that not all do Will LMSD remove liability disclaimers, strike the EULA delegation, and guarantee that no agreement requires families to waive statutory privacy rights? How will LMSD maintain adequate oversight and responsibility for student data with vendors who collect, process, or store student information and are not subject to the addendum?

Personal Devices

19. Why does LMSD's "Off and Away" policy apply only through grade 8? Will the District extend it through grade 12 and adopt a bell-to-bell restriction which prohibits usage of devices during classes, passing periods, lunch, activities, and the full school day, with clear and supportive enforcement?

Affirmative Parental Consent

20. Policies 134 and 137 allowed families to request teacher-led, nondigital instruction. Why did the Board repeal these policies prior to passing and implementing a new policy? Will the new policy require explicit, informed, and revocable parental consent while guaranteeing equal curriculum and opportunities for families who do not provide their explicit consent?

Accommodations

21. Pencils Over Pixels supports creating an inclusive learning environment for every child and family in Lower Merion. We support preserving assistive technology for students with IEPs, Section 504 plans, medical needs, and other accommodations and exemptions.