

Early Learning Alliance Network Required Student Device Survey

The Alliance distributed the 2017 survey on student required devices for grades Kindergarten through fourth grade to elementary teachers and administrators in one Hamilton County school district.

The survey was conducted in response to three data points within the Early Learning Alliance Network. Data points were recurring themes in community conversations with teachers, parents, families, early childhood educators, etc. These themes were selected due to their direct relevance with 1:1 programs involving students in grades K-4. These data points include:

- Teachers want to be able to help families understand the vision for teaching and learning before they get to K-12. They also want to share their voice on the roll out of required student devices and how to better support K-4 students and families before they even arrive at elementary school.
- Families want to know what they need to do about required devices (purchase, cases, rent, etc.) well before Kindergarten registration or open houses.
- Preschool directors are asking if they need to provide training on devices before students arrive in Kindergarten.

The resulting survey was sent to all elementary (K-4) teachers and elementary building level administrators in one county school district. There were a total of 379 emails that were successfully delivered. Of those that were invited to participate in the survey, 77 responded (placing our response rate for this survey at approximately 20%). Of those respondents, 28% were kindergarten teachers, 16% first grade teachers, 20% second grade teachers, 19% 3rd grade teachers, 8% fourth grade teachers, and 1% reported themselves as Library-Media specialists for elementary.

91% of respondents were individual teachers, with 9% reporting themselves as administrators.

While participation in the survey was not at the level that the Early Learning Alliance Network had hoped, we do feel that the data and perspective that was shared was thoughtful and helpful to our organization mission and goals.

The survey was designed to answer three key questions around student required devices. The following provides an overview of survey responses within those guiding questions.

1. What do preschools need to communicate to parents/families about the one to one required student devices program and/or district visions for teaching and learning?
2. What resources can our organization leverage to provide learning opportunities around 21st century digital learning to teachers of children ages 0-8 in our community?
3. What resources can our organization leverage to provide learning opportunities around 21st century digital learning to parents/families of children ages 0-8 in our community?

What can preschools do to help communicate to parents/families about the one to one required student devices program and/or district visions for teaching and learning?

One of the most striking findings of the survey was that **93% of respondents view the required student device as an asset** to their students. While there were consistently positive comments around the devices and student use, there was some disconnect related to addressing the district vision for teaching and learning.

Rate your comfort level in describing the district vision for teaching and learning to parents/families.



Rate your comfort level in implementing the district's vision for teaching and learning in your current role.



Rate your students (overall) on their ability to achieve the vision for teaching and learning in your district?



Rate the district on their ability to support you in achieving the goals of the district vision for teaching and learning?



The high incidence of lower ratings for understanding, communicating, and support at the district level are of concern (even with the limited response data). Data suggests that responding teachers and administrators believe in their students and rely on school supports. However, ongoing leadership and support from the district level could prove positive to the overall readiness, capacity, and impact of the student required devices (through effective teaching and learning practices) at the classroom level.

Learning organizations that have 1:1 programs in place may want to consider the Essential Conditions for Leveraging Technology for Learning that are updated and published (based on current research) from the International Society for Technology in Education. These Essential Conditions may provide a good framework for improving communication, equity, understanding, and continuous support at the district level.

Note that while "systems level" support from any school district can be viewed as approaching innovation with a "one size fits all" approach, best practice (from both national research and policy perspectives) suggests that even the best school-based leaders cannot address the systematic needs of 1:1 required student device initiatives. Systems-level needs must be met with a focus on data, change management, importance of teaching and learning, and strategies for cost effective curriculum and planning.

Specific to communication, it is essential that the preschool community be kept abreast of changing and evolving visions for teaching and learning. It is important that the district, schools, and classrooms within the district highlight examples, share success, and build a common language around learning and goals for students. If those tools and messaging can be leveraged by preschools there may be great benefit to the overall readiness of parents to support school district visions for teaching and learning, and be informed as parents of K-4 students.

With over 60% of respondents rating parents/families in their ability to understand and support the district's vision for teaching and learning at a 3 (out of 5 stars) or below, there is a clear need for school districts to engage, support, and publicly communicate consistent goals, visions, and progress direct to families.

Data demonstrate that early communication with parents about device rental, management, protection, etc. needs to occur well before the school year begins. Communication should include resources for parents/families and preschools that can help to share the message of readiness and shape understanding and use of devices by our youngest learners.

For more information on open-ended responses regarding parent/family understanding see Appendix B.

What resources can the Early Learning Alliance Network leverage to provide learning opportunities around 21st century digital learning to teachers of children ages 0-8 in our community?

Overall, respondents showed a high degree of technical prowess with the required student devices, with 80% reporting that they did not need additional technical support to use the device in the classroom (20% reporting that they did in fact need technical support). However there was a more significant degree of difference in those individuals who need more pedagogical support to use the required student device in their classroom (63% reported that they do need additional pedagogical support, with roughly 37% reporting that they did not).

The most frequent uses of the student required devices (as reported by respondents) included documenting student learning (87%), reading articles or researching (69%), and taking pictures or capturing video (67%). The least reported use of the required student device was playing games (24%).

The majority of respondents rated their comfort level in using the required student devices for purposeful reasons in their classroom (73% ranking themselves at 4-5 stars). However, there was no correlation with regard to the need for technical support in the comfort level in using the devices for purposeful reasons. However, there was a statistically significant difference in the respondents who reported needing additional pedagogical support and their overall reported comfort level in purposeful use.

When provided options for additional training, 65% of respondents reported needing additional support in instructional strategies for using required student devices in meaningful ways. While 53% needed additional support in utilizing electronic resources through book fees. Professional offerings that respondents felt would be most positively received by their peers include:

1. How deeper learning (inquiry, authentic learning, etc.) supports long-term academic success (56%)
2. Instructional planning that supports STEM (52%)
3. Assessment that is aligned with the vision for teaching and learning (45%)

Additional comments spoke highly of building level supports from technology specialists, but a lacking support of pedagogical expectations and understanding what the vision for teaching and learning is and what the goals for learning are (apart from traditional academic achievement). The open ended responses painted a picture of support, but concern over how prepared teachers are to really use the digital tools, resources, and devices themselves to engage students in deep, authentic and purposeful learning at the elementary level. Specific to electronic resources 70% reporting be able to make use of the electronic resources that are purchased through book fees.

One area that respondents appeared passionate about was the roll out/distribution of the iPads. While 73% reported the roll out was positive, the themes that emerged from the open ended questions included timelines for distribution, time commitments from teachers regarding set-up,

leadership at the district level, and consistency in approaches for student accounts and device management (see Appendix A for the full comments regarding distribution).

What resources can our organization leverage to provide learning opportunities around 21st century digital learning to parents/families of children ages 0-8 in our community?

Results from the survey demonstrated that there is an emerging split between parent understanding and awareness about the required student device prior to school. Analysis of open ended comments throughout the survey suggested that the understanding and awareness is school specific and there is no model, designated approach, timeline, or check-list for communicating with parents.

One important comment around parent education was the need for parents to understand “how this type of teaching will help kids with test scores.”

The Early Learning Alliance Network will work with their internal team to create materials to support successful transition of Kindergarten students through transition packets and other resources. However, for new families school districts may want to find a way to best communicate with those families regarding the specifics of decision making and use of devices.

Suggested parent education topics included (1) How deeper learning (inquiry, authentic learning, etc.) supports long-term academic success: 65%, (2) Digital devices at home for productive use of technology (60%), (3) Parent/Family inquiry night (55%), (4) Parent Family STEM night (53%).

While one respondent noted that their school offers all of those options for parent education, others communicated a great need to think about these offerings at the district level so that events and parent education are provided equitably across schools.

Overall, 92% advocated for school-based events (with online resources being the second most requested option by 45% of respondents). The Early Learning Alliance Network suggests that any online resources be created at the district level to assist with messaging and consistency across district schools, this will help in achieving an equitable parent/family access to materials and ensure that preschools support the correct message for all schools in our community.

Did you feel that the majority of parents/families understand the device requirement prior to the beginning of school?	70% (Yes)	30% (No)
Did you feel that the majority of parents/families understand the timeline for making a decision about renting or providing their own required student device?	60% (Yes)	40% (No)

Thinking about cases that are provided for the required student device, are there any specifications that you would like parents/families to consider?	61% (Yes)	39% (No)
Do you feel prepared to provide parents/families with examples of how you will be using the required student device in the classroom to support deeper learning?	93% (Yes)	7% (No)
Are you able to address parent/family questions about the electronic resources that are purchased through book fees?	51% (Yes)	49% (No)

The Early Learning Alliance Network is a not for profit organization that is fueled by a shared passion for purposeful, transparent, and high quality early learning experiences for all children in Hamilton County, Indiana ages birth through age eight. We are composed of educators, leaders, advocates, parents, and professionals who see a need to collaboratively facilitate our community efforts to ignite high quality early learning.

- We provide a mechanism to stay informed about early learning and get information on local resources.
- We collect and share data to empower the community to make decisions, be proactive, and respond purposefully to the needs of all early learners.
- We provide professional development, family/parent education, and convene our community in efforts to accelerate achievement of our mission.

Appendix A: Open ended response related to roll-out and distribution.

- Perhaps finding a way for parents to complete the online paperwork before school starts or at our back to school functions. Having devices available so that they can complete it would be helpful.
- 1. Make sure every student has an ipad 2. Allow time to set up student ipad's 3. Make sure ALL student login information is correct! 4. Provide support for teacher's who need help setting up iPads
- The devices were not provided until several weeks after school began. There was little communication and teachers had to field several questions from parents when it was not our choice to delay providing the devices.
- Not allow some kids to take it home and not others. I feel like they should all stay in the classroom and not go back and forth.
- If all of our families had their paperwork completed before school began.
- It's so different between schools and it's just unorganized. There needs to be someone in charge of just this initiative across the district.
- Have more devices at the beginning because we know we will need/use them. We cannot use them if they are not in the hands of students right away. It is very difficult to teach using the student devices when half the class does not have one yet.
- I think the only thing that could be better is having technology come the first day of school so it isn't an added thing but a required component of their learning from day one. (even if the device isn't used until a later date) I also think it is important that teachers are made aware and given time to be trained on any book fee material that is provided. This would help with the use of the materials and resources that we have.
- Time! I spent an entire weekend setting up iPads for my students to use. And I am still not certain that I set them up with important safeguards.
- Devices should be set up before being distributed. All K-2 rented iPads should stay at school. Should not be an option to take home.
- Very unorganized, know what's going on with cords/bricks, better communication to parents about updating paperwork through Skyward for rental (I'm a parent too & this was confusing even for me)
- Have the devices before school start or during the first week.
- A night where parents who rent iPads can set up iPads instead of sending them home and asking for them back the next week.
- As a kindergarten teacher, I would love for all my classes iPads to be rented, teacher managed. I do at times struggle to have parents install apps, charge iPads, etc.
- Where do I begin? Two of my students could not use their rented iPad for at least two weeks because their information was entered incorrectly in Destiny so we could not set

up their iPad. I'm certainly not an expert on Destiny, but it seems like this should have been an easy data entry fix. Two other students' parents waited until after school had started to fill in the rental form, so those students were without iPads as well. There should be an ABUNDANCE of loaners for teachers to use in the interim. These were major inconveniences as these students missed out on all the procedures I was introducing. As I commented earlier, teachers who have to set up rented iPads need time to set these up. It is impossible to set up these iPads, install apps, adjust settings, log onto wifi with student credentials, etc. on top of the beginning of the year commitments. Finally, this entire process would be SO MUCH EASIER if there was not a combination of students who rent and have the option of keeping at school or taking home or students who own their iPad. It should be all of one or all of the other..either everyone provides one from home or everyone rents one from school. I would prefer everyone rents one from school. Then, as the teacher, I could have complete control over installing, updating, etc. apps (on the same apple ID). And yes, I would still need time to set these up. In the long run it would be worth it because if I find a great app I want to try, I don't have to fill out the parent form to inform them of the app and ask them to download it etc.

- That is a tough question. Our corporation constantly reviews and tries new ways to make it run smoothly. The hardest part was having previous used devices properly "wiped" from the previous year. Other than this, the handout in our classroom/bldg went smoothly.
- Parents were the issue, not students. They were thrilled.
- They should have been distributed in the library with tech support. One teacher with 25 students was too much!
- Everyone understand the same expectations for how the devices should be used, protocols for downloading apps, passwords, etc.
- Parents need to be more aware of the timeline so that ALL students receive their iPads at one time. Also, collect the brick/cords. It is ridiculous to think that parents would keep them all summer. I had so many students still missing cords 2 months in.
- Let us know what the district has purchases and how to access it as teachers and how our students are supposed to access it
- iPads could have been ready to go on the first day. They should have all been wiped in the summer and bricks/cords should have been supplied together.
- nothing--both staff and parents were well informed and assisted. We have tech nights at the beginning of the year to assist in any capacity.
- Better organized. It was a disaster getting them to students/ loading apps, etc.
- Easier access to resources - too many logins and passwords Less options for parents - either keep all ipads at school or sent all home; too difficult to track A better system for bricks and cords
- Cord and brick issues
- We did not receive all chargers on time. So, having that would be better.
- Roll-out at the beginning rather than late September.



- I thought it was much smoother this year having them passed out in STEM class. Our tech teacher was there also so that helped with troubleshooting.
- Hand them out BEFORE school begins.
- iTunes needs some help, we are all doing it differently and we need to help these kids keep their own account static over time
- Instead of teachers having to log all students onto the WiFi network and load all of the grade-level apps on the rented iPads (this takes a considerable amount of time), a tech personnel come to each classroom and do this while the iPads aren't being used.
- Hand out at ice cream social with FAQ and assistance in setup
- Would like to see families come to school to pick up their devices....that way we could provide supports as needed.
- To receive correct student ID numbers and login information
- There needs to be some leadership around iTunes accounts

Appendix B: Open ended response related to parent/family understanding.

- While most parents have a very good idea of how the devices are used, we can always continue to communicate better and more.
- I would like our families to see the student devices as tools and treat them as such at home to uphold our policy of the device as a tool.
- We need some serious parent education!
- Most schools are on totally different pages within the same district/same vision. How can we promote/teach same vision when it has 12 different meanings?
- Parents are not interesting in see their students work online and still want paper pencil. I feel like the district could do a better job at explaining that most work will be online and that student learning is visible that way.
- Understanding that it is a tool and not a toy. Having parents support and ensure that they are used for educational purposes (no games, photos only for learning, etc) and that they encourage their child's responsibility.
- I have had mostly positive feedback from my parents and families about the way devices are being used in the corporation. They like that it is a balanced approach. They were relieved to find that it is not "replacing" all tools we use for learning, but the devices are being used to enhance their child's learning.
- Patent education has been completely missing!
- Change is tough, especially a jump from traditional methods. The district has started that change, proud to be part of a district that has started the work!
- Parents have told me they prefer their children not use devices at school because they play on them all night.
- Please send the teachers the sky alerts PRIOR to sending them to families. I often have to ask for information from families as I am not aware of sky alert messages being sent to them.
- Further family/parent training would help
- The parents were very well informed before the roll out and I have been very open and informative in my weekly newsletter and communication as well.
- ENL Families are not given the information needed to understand the use of the device in their home language
- The importance of the difference between keeping at school or taking home, and the responsibility that comes with it. We use them in the classroom and eventually encourage parents to allow them to go home, but it is important that parents know the timeline of making sure the iPad is ready to use in the classroom.