Technology Integration and Assessment Practices at Nittany Valley Charter School

Nittany Valley Charter School (NVCS) integrates technology intentionally and purposefully to enhance learning outcomes while maintaining a balanced approach to digital exposure. The use of technology at NVCS is guided by clear objectives, appropriate supervision, and a commitment to ensuring that "screen time" remains meaningful, limited, and developmentally appropriate.

Purposeful Technology Use

NVCS believes that technology should serve as a tool to support, not replace, high-quality instruction. Teachers incorporate digital tools to reinforce skill development, promote creativity, and expand research and collaboration opportunities. All technology use is linked directly to academic standards and specific learning goals.

• Grades K–2: Students use iPads and tablets on a limited basis for educational purposes such as literacy, numeracy, and interactive learning activities aligned with classroom instruction. Device use is always teacher-guided and intentionally brief to maintain engagement in hands-on, play-based, and collaborative learning.
• Grades 3–6: Students use Chromebooks under teacher supervision for research, writing, keyboarding, and project-based learning activities. Technology use at these levels focuses on building digital literacy, responsible online behavior, and academic independence.

To protect student well-being and maintain accountability, NVCS does not send Chromebooks or iPads home with students. All device use occurs on campus within a structured and monitored environment.

Network and Data Security

NVCS provides a secure, schoolwide wireless internet network protected by firewalls and monitored through content filters that block inappropriate or unsafe websites. Students access the internet only under teacher supervision. NVCS utilizes Google Workspace for Education (formerly Google Apps for Education), which provides secure, school-managed accounts for all staff and students, allowing for communication, collaboration, and the creation of academic work within a safe, managed environment.

Assessment and Data-Driven Instruction

Technology is also used to strengthen NVCS's commitment to individualized learning through the MAP Growth assessment system from the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). These assessments are administered to all students at least three times each school year in reading and mathematics. Results provide real-time data on student growth and performance, enabling teachers to adjust instruction to meet individual needs.

Student MAP results are shared with parents and included with report cards to maintain transparency and strengthen the home-school connection.

Alignment with State Standards

NVCS's use of technology and digital learning tools aligns with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Science and Technology, as established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Technology integration supports these standards by promoting inquiry, problem-solving, and critical thinking while preparing students to be responsible, capable digital citizens.