

Safe Technology Committee Report — November, 2020

1. *Screenagers: Next Chapter* viewing on November 17. Hosted by MCCPTA Safe Tech and Richard Montgomery HS.
2. Textbook advocacy continues — through Cynthia and Rodney
3. L. Cline has joined the MCCPTA Virtual Learning Subcommittee to help advocate for people-friendly platforms and outdoor learning.
4. L. Cline has been trying since August to obtain the required RF radiation emissions reports on all cell towers located on MCPS properties. Boyd Lawrence of MCPS Real Estate Div. and the Mont. Co. Tower Committee says Crown Castle hasn't provided one for Northwood HS after multiple requests and advises that I file an MPIA request for the other 14 towers.
5. Presented Safe Tech Workshop at Ridgeview MS PTSA meeting on November 9.
6. Safe Tech Vice Chair Laura Simon reached out to Reticare about screen protectors for Chromebooks. They said they have sold over 100,000 protectors for student use. Quote due this week.
7. Finding date to host "*Social Dilemma*" documentary.
8. Safe Tech Vice Chair Laura Simon drafted parent/student survey to inform going-forward screen-based education post-pandemic.

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MCPS students have had an unprecedented amount of screen time since the onset of COVID. Virtual learning is taking a social, emotional, physical, and educational toll on students in all grades. The fall 2020 MAP scores prepared by MCPS show big declines in achievement especially for middle school and high school students. Parents are seeing sharp declines in grades, mental health issues and kids with headaches, weight issues, and in general unhappy kids. When it is safe to go back to classroom learning MCPS will need to make up for this time of lost learning. BOE member Pat O'Neill in a recent interview said she is "very, very worried" about the school district's achievement gap widening while children learn from home... "I'm worried that when we get to the other side of the COVID mountain that we won't just have a gap, that it'll be like the Grand Canyon," O'Neill said. "I'm worried about our most at-risk kids, but the reality is that every student is losing out on something this year."

A survey is needed to hear from the parents. What do parents think about remote learning and what are parent's expectations for when kids return to school, especially in light of the need to make up for lost time?

Below are a few examples of possible questions for the short survey:

How has virtual learning been going for your child? (On a scale of 1 to 5)

Has the lack of movement affected your child? (On a scale of 1 to 5)

How important is interaction between the students and teachers? (On a scale of 1 to 5)

Does your child feel like they are an important part of the virtual classroom? (On a scale of 1 to 5)

How important is interaction between students and their peers? (On a scale of 1 to 5)

Would you prefer homework be done on a chromebook or pen and paper? (Yes or No)

Are you concerned about the amount of screen time for remote learning? (On a scale of 1 to 5)

How much time has your child spent online/at a screen for recreation or socializing? (minimal, 1-3, over 3 hours)

Has your child experienced headaches or eye strain from remote learning? (Yes or No)

How do you think your child learns best? (Choose 1 or more - using books and workbooks, hands-on projects, screen-based synchronous lessons, screen-based asynchronous lessons, face to face with teacher and peers)?

How important is chromebook use in the classroom once we return to in-person learning? [On a scale of 1 to 5.]

What would be the ideal amount of screentime for in-person learning? (none, 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 or more hours)

Do smartphones have a place in the classroom once we return to in-person learning? (yes or no)

What is the ideal use for a chromebook in the classroom once we return to in-person learning? (Choose option - group project, assignment, writing, note taking)

What do you think is the best in-person learning environment for your child? (choose 1 or more options: chromebooks, student participation, promethium board, group projects, teacher-student interaction)

Do you feel your child would benefit from more PE and recess to make up for lack of movement during virtual school? (Yes or No)