

SAVE THE SCREENS: SMART STRATEGIES FOR KEEPING STUDENT DEVICES INTACT

Ensuring student devices remain in good working condition throughout the school year requires a proactive approach. By implementing a few strategic policies and reinforcing responsible habits, districts can reduce repair costs and maximize device uptime for learning. Here are key steps to consider:

1. ENCOURAGE TIMELY REPAIR REPORTING

Small issues can quickly escalate into costly repairs if left unaddressed. Encouraging students and staff to report needed repairs as soon as they notice them can prevent minor problems from becoming major failures. Schools can streamline this process with an easy-to-use reporting system and clear communication on how to request a fix.

2. USE HARD CASES, NOT SOFT ONES

While soft cases may seem convenient, they often lead to more damage. Students frequently use them as briefcases, stuffing them with papers, pens, and books—leading to cracked screens and other internal damage. Hard-shell cases provide better protection and discourage improper storage practices.

3. IMPLEMENT SMART INCENTIVES FOR DEVICE CARE

Recognizing students who take good care of their devices can reinforce positive behavior, but incentives should be carefully designed. Instead of punishing students who experience device failures due to OEM issues, consider reward programs based on actions within their control, such as proper storage, regular maintenance checks, and responsible handling.

4. COMMUNICATE DEVICE CARE EXPECTATIONS TO PARENTS

Parents play a vital role in ensuring students treat their devices with care. Schools should send periodic communications outlining expected device care, including proper charging habits, carrying guidelines, and storage recommendations. A simple flyer, email, or meeting at the beginning of the year can help set clear expectations.

5. EVALUATE KEEPING DEVICES IN SCHOOL

While take-home devices are standard in many districts, keeping devices at school can help reduce loss, accidental damage, and unauthorized use. This approach is especially effective for younger students or certain grade levels, and some districts are exploring hybrid models where only older students take devices home.

6. ESTABLISH A CLEAR REPAIR PLAN

Device maintenance should not be an afterthought. Schools need a structured repair plan—whether it's an in-house team, third-party accidental damage protection (ADP), flat-rate repairs, or a mix of solutions. A well-documented plan should include:

- Defined repair process and response time expectations
- Budget allocation for repairs and replacements
- Staff training on identifying and reporting device issues
- A clear communication strategy for students, parents, and teachers

7. TRAIN STAFF AND STUDENTS ON PROPER DEVICE HANDLING

Beyond policy implementation, ongoing training for students and teachers helps reinforce good device care habits. Hands-on workshops, quick instructional videos, and reminders through posters or digital messages can be effective in reducing accidental damage.

8. UTILIZE A DASHBOARD TO MONITOR REPAIRS

Having a dashboard to track device repairs allows schools to gain valuable insights into what devices are breaking, when, where, and why. Schools can view data by school, grade level, classroom, and device type, helping to identify patterns and proactively address recurring issues. For example:

If a specific grade level experiences high screen breakage, additional reinforcement on proper handling may be needed.

- If a certain model has frequent battery issues, warranty claims or adjustments in purchasing decisions can be made.
- If a specific school reports higher repair rates, targeted training for students and staff may be beneficial. By leveraging repair data, schools can make informed decisions that reduce costs and improve device longevity.

9. MONITOR AND ADJUST POLICIES AS NEEDED

No approach is one-size-fits-all. Schools should periodically assess the effectiveness of their device care strategies, gather feedback, and adjust policies based on data trends and repair reports.

By taking these proactive steps, schools can extend device lifespans, minimize repair expenses, and ensure students have reliable technology to support their learning.

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