

What is the device my child has received?

Your child has received an Apple iPad or iPad Mini.

Does this device belong to my child?

No, the device belongs to Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. Just like any textbook or other learning tool the Board supplies, your student is expected to keep it clean, have it ready when needed in the classroom, and return it at the end of the school year. It is important your child charges their iPad every night so it is ready to use the next day.

Your child's iPad will also be collected during school holidays so we can do regular maintenance on the device to make sure it is always working for your child to learn.

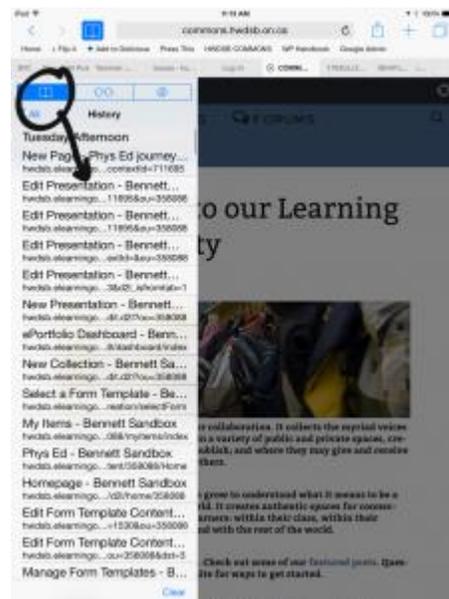
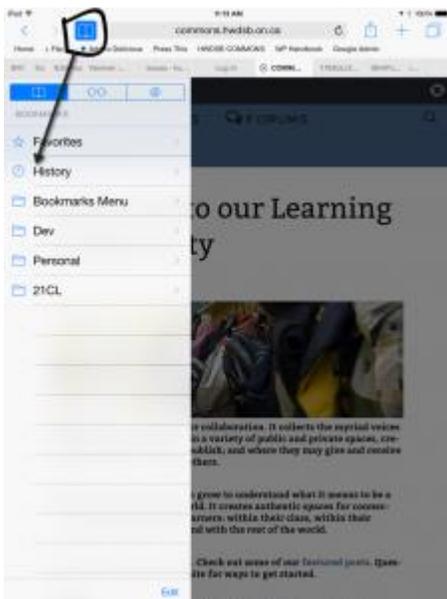
How can I monitor what my child is doing online?

It is important to monitor your child's online activities so you know where your child is spending time online. Your child should be sharing their password with you; this will allow parents to monitor activity on the device. Passwords should not be changed without letting you and the teacher know. Your child should not be using their device alone in their bedroom, for example.

You can check your child's online activities by going to the browser history. A browser is a software application that lets you search the internet and visit websites. Here are some simple instructions on how to track where your child is going on their iPad from the *Children's Rights Council*.

Quick and easy: [Checking Browser History – Tips for Parents video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9K7B_MZBL24)  
([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9K7B\\_MZBL24](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9K7B_MZBL24))

To get a more detailed look at the iPad browser history function, please see the diagrams below.



**Remember** Your child could be tech savvy as well. It's easy to delete your internet history. If you look into the history and there is nothing or barely anything there. Your child might be deleting their history because they are hiding something. If that is so, you need to have a talk with them about what is and is not appropriate to look at in your house.

### What if my child chooses not to share their password with me?

All students should be sharing their passwords with their parents and teacher. Sharing a password allows parents to monitor what their child is doing with their device at school and at home. However, some students may not share their password with their parents or change their password without letting the teacher know. If this becomes a concern, the device can be wiped clean, and a new password installed. This may mean that your child loses any work they have completed on the device, and they may be without their device for several days. Your child's teacher is able to reset the password for web sites used in the classroom (e.g.: Google Drive), and the IIT technician for the school is able to reset the lock-screen password on the device.

If you have any concerns about what your child is sharing with you, please connect with your child's teacher.

### My child is in French Immersion and the language is set to French. How can I change the language to help support my child with learning at home?

You can find instructions on how to do this at the following site:

<http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/tle/all-questions-single-page-view/>

### Who is able to reset the defaults for the iPad?

The IIT technician for the school is able to reset the iPad back to its default settings. If the device has been lost or stolen, this can be done remotely in order to ensure the privacy of information on the iPad. If the device has been tampered with and requires a refresh, the IIT technician for the school will refresh the device during one of their regularly scheduled visits, and set the device back up to the default settings. If you feel your child's device needs to be reset, speak with the teacher, who can make the necessary arrangements with the technician.

### How safe are the devices?

We want to ensure that your child's device provides a safe link to the outside world, but they need to learn how to connect safely as well. These skills are called *Digital Citizenship* [see details below] and they are an important part of what your child is learning with their device. There is no way to control what a child accesses once the device leaves the school board's network, so it is important for parents to work closely with their child to monitor use outside the classroom.

### What are Digital Citizenship skills?

Access to the Internet, and social media tools that help connect people globally, has a number of incredible benefits in a classroom, but it also brings with it risks. Schools have always worked with students to help them become good citizens. There are some specific skills we teach to help students continue to be safe, and to act in a caring manner, online, just as they do when they are working face-to-face. We call this collection of skills digital citizenship.

Teachers are helping students to understand how to behave online, just as they do in classroom interactions. Here are a few resources that you can work on with your child to help explore these ideas further at the following sites:

Grade 3-5: <https://www.digitalpassport.org/educator-registration>

Grade 6-9: <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/digital-compass>

Grade 8-12: <http://digitalbytes.commonsensemedia.org/>

### What are some of the ways I work closely with my child using the iPad?

Depending on the age of your child, the iPad may be used in a variety of different ways by the classroom teacher to help support their learning. Sitting with your child and having them show you what they did at school today using the iPad is a good strategy. If you are looking for activities to extend the learning your child is doing in class, speak with the teacher for some strategies to support the work your child is doing in class. Here are some examples:

- Using the Overdrive app, you can take out books from the HWDSB eBook Lending Library by following the steps detailed on this site: <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/tle/all-questions-single-page-view/>.
- Using the iMovie app, you can take family video and create a movie together.
- Using research tools in the Virtual Library, you can investigate and research questions together
- Take your iPad on a hike (in its case of course) and capture some photos of the natural world to share in class
- Using the Pages app, make a family newspaper to share with others

### What are filters and how can they be used to block content I don't think is appropriate for my child?

An Internet filter is software installed on your Internet router, or provided by your Internet Service Provider. It restricts information delivered over the Internet. The Board uses a filter to block content when a device is used in our schools or buildings. The filter makes sure our students don't access inappropriate content at school. We encourage parents to apply filtering on their home network.

At HWDSB, filtering occurs within the data centre at our Education Centre. Think of our data centre like security at the airport. All the data passes through security checkpoints and anything inappropriate is removed before it can get through the gates. Palo Alto frequently updates its restricted content listing to filter new, inappropriate content.

### Are there different filters of what students can access depending on the grade?

Content filtering is controlled at a board-wide network level. This is the same content that is available regardless of device or grade. We have applied the highest level of filtering possible to ensure inappropriate content is not delivered to students. Any further increases to this filter setting would block sites such as Google altogether and limit what students and teachers use for educational purposes.

### What filters are currently in place for students?

HWDSB uses Palo Alto, a leader in network traffic management, as the firewall to filter all traffic at HWDSB when the device is used in our schools and buildings. Its content filtering is intended for school-age children.

### What is the type of content we are filtering out?

We filter inappropriate content that falls under categories such as 'abused drugs', 'adult', 'auctions', 'dating', 'gambling', 'hacking', 'malware', 'nudity', 'parked domains', 'peer-to-peer', 'phishing', 'proxy and anonymizers', 'questionable', 'weapons', 'swimsuits and intimate apparel.'

### Do the Board filters work at home?

No. The Board filter only works when devices are used within our schools and buildings. Once the device goes home, the Board filters do not apply. We encourage parents to apply filtering on their current home network.

The following tools can filter Internet content in your home before it even arrives on your child's device or computer.

<https://www.opendns.com/home-internet-security/parental-controls/opendns-home/>

Here are links to security pages from various Internet Service Providers (ISPs):

[http://www.thedoorthatsnotlocked.ca/app/en/parent/10-12/parental\\_controls](http://www.thedoorthatsnotlocked.ca/app/en/parent/10-12/parental_controls)

### If YouTube must be permitted, does it need to be permitted for all grades and ages?

YouTube can be accessed regardless if an individual has an account or not. HWDSB, like most Boards, has open access to YouTube because of the many educational applications and digital streaming resources available to our staff and students. This does not mean that we believe that all of the content on YouTube is appropriate for student use. When YouTube is used in the classroom, it is done with teacher supervision.

### How else can families support safe learning for students at home?

Parents can do a variety of things if they would like to encourage their children to become good digital citizens:

- In addition to filters, you can set your browser to "Safe Search" to avoid stumbling on mature content. You can also limit screen time if you cap Internet usage through your Internet Service Provider.
- Young children should only go online if supervised, so spend time online as a family.
- Your child should not use a web-enabled device like an iPad or computer in their room; instead, choose a spot in the house that is easy to monitor.

### How will my child learn to print and write?

Students will continue to have opportunities to learn to print and write by hand. The iPad is not a replacement for regular teaching and learning, but it is an additional learning tool. Even if apps are used for learning letter shapes, there are several apps that can help develop handwriting skills.

### How can I support my child in balancing between learning activities that are digital and those that are traditional (e.g., using print books, brainstorming with peers etc.)?

Reading to and with your children is an important activity that shows them the value of reading, and reading books on your child's device is just as valuable as reading a "paper" book. Both have a place in your child's learning, and both digital and traditional learning activities are part of our classrooms today.

Finding the “right” balance between digital and traditional learning is best determined by what you and your child are comfortable doing together. It can be a valuable experience for your child to explain to you how they use their digital device for learning, even if it is challenging for the parent to be the “learner”.

The introduction of digital devices hasn’t changed what your child is learning, it’s just changed *how* your child is learning. Reading, math, history, science and all the other subjects your child is studying still have the same content, they just have new and interesting ways to find and receive that content.

If your child cannot or will not share their learning, please contact your child’s teacher for support.

### How do I know whether my child is using the device for schoolwork?

Students read books and watch television both for entertainment and for school. Knowing whether a particular television show, book, or application on their device is for school or for entertainment is really the same answer. Ask your child. If you don’t believe you’re getting a reliable answer, ask your child to explain how the show, book or application is related to the learning at school. You can also speak to your child’s teacher to find out what your child is studying or get support in asking “What did you learn at school today?” Also, be sure to ask your child’s teacher if they have a classroom blog that you can visit.

### My child is spending all their time at home on the device. What do I do about this?

Setting limits on how your child spends their time is an important part of parenting. Young children need guidance and clear limits on things like bedtime, eating, and behaviour. As they get older, we hope they will take more responsibility for how they spend their free time. Electronic devices such as an iPad, video games, television, and music can all distract children from spending their time productively. Setting clear limits, and enforcing those limits by removing the device from your child when the time is up, will help them to set their own limits in the future.

### How can I learn more about using the device my child has received?

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is developing new educational offerings for parents to learn more about the device their child is using in school. We know how important it is for parents to understand, encourage, and help their child with their schoolwork.

Some of these educational sessions will be offered at your child’s school, while others will be available online. Information about these sessions will be shared through your school’s principal and school council.

### What are “apps” and do I have to buy them for my child?

“Apps” are the programs that enable your child’s device to do things. Apps may be developed by the company that develops the device, or they may be developed by independent developers. Apps can be developed by anyone with knowledge of writing programs.

Parents do not need to buy any apps, or enter credit card information so that your child can use their device. All the apps that your child needs for classroom learning are available for them to download in our “App Catalogue”. If additional apps are needed to do new or different things in class, your child’s teacher will instruct them on how to load the app onto the student’s device from our App Catalogue.

Loading music, games, and other apps to your child's device may distract them from their schoolwork, and the HWDSB cannot be responsible for the cost or content of any app that is downloaded to your child's device.

### How will we track our progress?

The research department at HWDSB is monitoring how this work is supporting students' learning in different ways across all schools.

For the next 3 years, students will be asked to complete an on-line activity which includes (1) questions about what students think about their learning, and (2) interactive tasks for students to show how well they can use technology and their ability level across various 21st Century Skills (e.g., creativity, decision making, digital citizenship, etc.). The activity will be voluntary, based on students' skills, and completed in two 30 minute sessions. If you'd like to learn more about this activity please visit: <http://www.learning.com/21st-century-skills-assessment/>

We are also working with external partners from York University, Brock University, Wilfrid Laurier University, the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) and Curriculum Services Canada to look at how well students and teachers use digital tools in their everyday experiences.

We would like to combine your child's report card data and EQAO scores along with their results from the on-line activity and then share it with our research partners. The information will be shared in group format so that no individual student is identified. This will help us to know whether we are effectively supporting our students' school achievement, engagement and development of 21st Century Skills.

### How long will these projects go on for?

We are seeking consent for your child to participate over the next 3 years.

You will receive a letter every year reminding you about this work and providing you with an opportunity to withdraw your child's participation in the monitoring of the projects.

### What about risks and confidentiality?

When we report our findings we will describe them in general ways so that no individual student or classroom will be identified. There are no known risks to students in completing the computer activity or in using/sharing their report card data, EQAO data and/or school work. Your child will be asked if they want to participate in the computer activity. If you or your child decide to not participate, there will be no consequences and your child's school experience will not be affected.

### What if I have questions or concerns?

If you have questions about digital device use, please contact your child's Principal.

If you have questions about how we are tracking our progress, e-mail Dr. Dana Liebermann, the manager of the research department at our Board at [dlieberm@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:dlieberm@hwdsb.on.ca).

For any other concerns or question please contact your school Principal.