



DISD Digitalization FAQ 20/21 for Parents

The following questions and answers serve as a guideline for our parents in regards to the digitalization at DISD for the school year 2019/20.

1. Why does the school require the purchase of iPads?

The introduction of the iPads is part of the digitization of the DISD.

The goal of digitalization at our school is to prepare students for a successful (private and professional) future. Technically and digitally, developments are progressing very fast in today's world; digital literacy is becoming increasingly important and already referred to as the fourth cultural technique.

As a result, we need our school to integrate digital media into teaching and learning at our school, to provide the necessary skills and to train our students to become Digital Citizens.

Especially during the time of the Corona crisis and the associated distance learning, the benefits of personal digital terminals have become apparent. Without digital devices, DISD would not be able to offer students effective and profitable distance learning.

2. What was the reason for choosing Apple?

Tablets from other manufacturers are sometimes much cheaper. The use of Apple iPads has been proven in many schools worldwide and Apple has a lot of experience using its devices in the education sector. It is a future-proof system paired with a reliable update policy from Apple. In addition, the range of apps for educational use is large and Apple offers continuous training to the teaching staff. Also, the increased data security compared to the products for example on *Google Classroom* was an important criterion for us.

3. Can my child also use another iPad/tablet or a laptop instead of the iPad in class?

This is not possible because the school environment is a self-contained IT-system. Only in this way all devices can be managed and thus also ensured that the devices are only used for teaching and learning purposes.

In addition, there are apps with different functions on different platforms. Only a homogeneous system can ensure that all students have the same preconditions and opportunities.

4. Why does every child have to have a tablet? Is it not enough to use the ICT lab (Computer classroom) every now and then?

This is not possible because the school environment is a self-contained IT-system. Only in this way all devices can be managed and thus also ensured that the devices are only used for teaching and learning purposes.

In addition, there are apps with different functions on different platforms. Only a homogeneous system can ensure that all students have the same preconditions and opportunities.

Here too, distance learning has shown the benefits and, in some ways, even the need for a personal device. Especially for families with more than one child the organization of the devices is not always easy to handle. The fact that each student has his or her own devices solves this problem. Each student always has his own

device to work with, with which he is familiar and on which all the programs necessary for him are installed and set up.

Only with personal student devices can DISD ensure that all students have the same requirements, can be provided with the necessary learning apps and technical support.

5. How much time in the classroom will the iPad be used or how many times a day will it be used?

Among other things, their use depends on the subject and varies from subject to subject and from grade level to grade level. The iPad will complement the lessons in a meaningful way and not be the focus of them.

6. Why should the iPad also be used in classes 1 and 2?

The iPad has proven to be particularly helpful in the distance learning phase for use in classes 1 and 2. Here, the iPad supports with learning apps, which the children can also work on independently in classes 1 and 2. Likewise, tasks can be set in a differentiated manner with the help of the "Showbie" platform. The children can work on them individually and at their own pace in the classroom or at home. Linguistically, the children can be supported more effectively by audio programs.

7. Should not handwriting be practiced elementary school? Why are the iPads already being used in elementary school?

Particularly in classes 1 and 2, the focus will continue to be on the classical acquisition of written language. In order to ensure the associated training of fine motor skills in writing, it goes without saying that writing with a pencil and later also with a pen is exclusively done in notebooks.

Sure enough also in grades 3 and 4 the focus will be on handwritten student work and manual skills. Nevertheless, we want to guide the children early on to a responsible use of digital media by teaching them skills for use and to open up spaces for research and creativity that are not comparable with other media. For example, the children can quickly write texts and books, turn them into different colors, insert pictures, send them to parents or hold them proudly as a finished, "professional" print result in their hands. They can film experiments, record themselves to rehearse a presentation, travel through a body via apps, search for English vocabulary or improve their reading by recording and replaying their voices.

In addition, the children can be offered more differentiated tasks chosen to meet their specific learning needs. For example, texts can be listened to, texts can be enlarged, different levels of tasks can be assigned, spelling can be checked, colors can be adjusted, etc.

Feedback from both the classmates and the teacher can be given directly from the iPad. Written and oral as a voice message, an individual feedback can be given so effectively and quickly with a revision assignment. For example, written homework can be photographed by students and sent to the teacher for review via an app.

8. What educational advantage do you expect from this measure or is it an officially assigned measure?

The benefits can be divided into different areas.

The teaching of digital skills

Students learn digital skills in the classroom such as the use of a word processor or a spreadsheet. This will not be done separately from lesson content, but will tie in with it. These competences were previously taught in ICT. Due to the shift into the other subjects, the contents of ICT can be adapted to a more rigorous curriculum.

The use of digital media to support the classroom

The iPad offers the students and teachers completely new possibilities in teaching topics. For instance, 3D maps can be used to illustrate altitude levels (geography), the recording and playback of one's own voice or experiments (languages or science) and the graphical representation of mathematical functions are just a few examples.

The ease of cooperation of students with each other and with the teacher

Because we rely on a cloud-based system, working on documents can be done from anywhere. It is also possible to work on shared documents together and at the same time. For example, facilitating the preparation of a presentation in group or with partner.

Checking the learning progress

Online quizzes and tests as well as the use of "exit tickets" can be used to measure the learning progress of the students easily and quickly.

Better differentiation and individualization

With the help of special apps like Anton or Literacy Pro, students can individually control, measure and improve their progress. Tasks can also be set in a more differentiated way or adapted more easily.

Participation in lessons in case of illness, etc.

For students who are absent due to illness or other reasons, Showbie now makes all tasks available and can be done from home. Students will no longer miss any assignments and can keep track of what has been done in class.

Easier communication between students and teachers

By using Showbie and also, in secondary schools, teams, the communication between students and teachers becomes much easier and more effective.

9. How do you ensure that children only use the iPad for pedagogically meaningful projects?

The devices are managed by the school. The school (during school time) determines which apps students use and which websites they can visit. An installation of apps (games, etc.) by the students is not possible.

In addition, the iPads are under constant observation during class by the teacher

through the app *Apple Classroom*. The teacher can see at all times what is happening on every single iPad and lock it or just allow the use of a particular app. At home, these restrictions are lifted and it can be used to its fullest. Here it will be the task of the parents to ensure the responsible and age-appropriate use of the iPad.

Before the iPads are distributed to the students, there will be a briefing and introduction for iPad usage. Students will be informed about consequences of violating these rules.

10. Information on using iPads and educational software

On the school website under Digitalization at DISD you will find help and support for using the iPads and the DISD learning software. Among other things, the use of Showbie and setting the screen time for home use is explained there. This section is updated regularly.