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NEWS

HDSB launches new online tech resource for students and parents

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The Halton District School Board (HDSB) has launched a new online resource aimed at helping students, teachers, and parents navigate the ever-changing world of technology in school.

Dubbed "Technology and You", the resource is available on the board's website as well as all of its school sites.

With technology and personal devices becoming more and more ubiquitous in the classroom, the idea is to provide a one-stop resource offering information and tips for everything from using board and school accounts to online literacy, privacy, and safety.

"We talk about devices that exist in our schools, our WI-FI, what does digital citizenship mean, (and) how to be safe online. We talk about our Google Cloud, our Halton Cloud . taking a digital footprint

of yourself online, the dangers of sharing personal information, privacy - keep your passwords confidential," said superintendent of education Gord Truffen. "It's a resource for parents, staff, and students."

According to Truffen, the genesis of the initiative lay in the difficulty staff was having in finding specific documents online under the old system. The idea being if it was difficult for staff, it can't be much easier for students.

"We were looking for a document and had to go about 10 clicks in, and so we just decided we wanted to consolidate everything that existed on our corporate and staff websites into one resource. So now, we don't really have to go hunting for it, we can just go to one spot and find it," said Truffen.

The webpage, which is available now, is designed to evolve along with technology and its uses in the classroom.

"What's also important is this is an ever-evolving document. This document is not complete. It's ready to be shared right now, but it's never complete because it will be a live document," added Truffen. "As technology changes, as devices change, as directions change, we can change this resource."

Truffen said the board hopes the resource will help bridge the gap between technology, personal devices, and classroom learning.

While technology and personal devices are now a daily reality in schools, board and school administrators are keen on maintaining the line between personal use and personal devices as learning tools in the classroom.

"Personal devices are in our classrooms, but it's always with the teacher's guidance and facilitation. Personal devices shouldn't be a distraction, they should be a learning tool," said Truffen.



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