Technology Standards: What Should Children Know:

By the time children enter kindergarten, they should be able to navigate computers and iPads alike, launching applications, and negotiating menus. Why? Because many of their classmates will have these skills, which are required for basic computer and iPad usage. The following observable behaviors are typical of such mastery, but keep in mind that this is a suggested list designed to obtain a measure of a child’s knowledge. In addition, technology is continually evolving, so it is important that you use this list as a flexible guideline only.

A child entering kindergarten may:

- Use fine motor skills to use the mouse to move a cursor to a target on the screen.
- Show awareness of the “power keys” on a keyboard (e.g., “enter,” “esc,” “delete,” and the space bar).
- Know the difference between the left and right mouse button (which can be helped by a small label or sticker).
- Be familiar with at least five quality interactive applications, games or activities.
- Have a basic working vocabulary of common technology terms, such as “digital camera,” “iPad,” “computer,” “Internet,” “mouse,” “keyboard,” and “printer.”
- Have been exposed to common technology terms in the natural context of everyday conversation, such as “on/off,” “Internet,” “browser,” “software,” “hardware,” “computer,” “mouse,” “monitor,” “keyboard,” “digital camera,” “printer,” “battery,” and so on.
- Have taken their first digital photo.
- Find the numerals on a QWERTY keyboard.
- Type their first name on a QWERTY keyboard.
- Understand the basic functions of a browser, including how to open or close windows and use the “back” key.

Using and Choosing Technology for Preschoolers:

- Don’t try to formally “teach” technology skills and competencies. Instead, set the stage for successful experimentation by providing the materials, introducing them, and offering support.
- Let children practice using technology by pretending with the types of gadgets they see their parents using, such as a smart phone, iPad, or laptop.
- Use a wireless laptop so that you can bring a Web-based experience to children, in the context of their play.
- Keep a digital camera at the ready to capture and document children’s work.
- Set the stage for social, active learning. Choose activities that involve more than one child, like playing a Web-based game, such as Starfall, or drawing a picture at Kerpoof.
- Encourage children to represent what they do using digital cameras.
- Introduce new technology during circle time, prior to placing it in a learning center.
- Expand on your children’s interests by letting them come up with search words and see the results in ways they can understand (e.g., as a set of images rather than text alone).