



MCDONELL AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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Nurturing Minds, Not Just Users: The Intentional Use of Technology at McDonnell Area Catholic Schools



How We Teach Students to Master Technology—Not Be Mastered by It

At McDonnell Area Catholic Schools (MACS), education is more than acquiring information—it is about forming the whole person: **mind, body, and soul**. As a Catholic liberal arts community, we believe technology can serve this mission—but only when used **intentionally**, in the right order, and in harmony with human development and faith.

"All things are lawful for me, but I will not be dominated by anything."

— 1 Corinthians 6:12

Technology at MACS is introduced **gradually and purposefully**, ensuring that every digital tool used in our classrooms enhances learning, rather than replaces it.

Our goal is simple: **to form wise, creative, and virtuous students who use technology to pursue truth, beauty, and goodness.**

Technology by Grade Level

Preschool – 2nd Grade (St. Charles Primary)

Focus: Wonder, Play, and Presence

Young children learn best through **touch, talk, and movement**—not screens.

- **Technology-free classrooms** for students.
- Teachers use **Promethean boards** only for direct instruction.
- No iPads or Chromebooks, except for limited student support services.
- Lessons center on **hands-on exploration, reading aloud, and social interaction.**

Goal: Children experience the joy of discovery through relationships, imagination, and the created world.

3rd – 5th Grade (Holy Ghost Elementary)

Focus: Curiosity and Stewardship

Students begin to understand **how technology works**—not just how to use it.

- **Limited, teacher-guided use** of computers for short writing or research tasks.

- Introduction to **basic typing, word processing, and digital care**.
- **No passive screen time**; video or audio used only to enrich learning.
- Technology in intervention settings used **sparingly and personally**.
- Gratitude for the **learning process** in communion with others.

Goal: Students learn responsible, balanced use of technology—anchored in gratitude, creativity, and community.

6th – 8th Grade (Notre Dame Middle School)

Focus: Discernment and Integrity

Technology becomes a means for **critical thinking, writing, and research**—not distraction.

- **Chromebooks on shared carts**, replacing 1:1 devices.
- Lessons focus on **credible research, digital citizenship, and academic honesty**.
- Assignments designed to be completed **without heavy screen use**.
- **Personal devices restricted** during school hours—creating a “distraction-free” culture.
- Teachers lean into **Catholic liberal arts pedagogy**—deep reading, conversation, and reasoning.

Goal: Students grow in self-control and moral discernment, using technology wisely and moderately.

9th – 12th Grade (McDonell Central Catholic High School)

Focus: Wisdom, Creativity, and Virtue

High school students learn to use technology as a **servant of truth, beauty, and goodness**—not an idol.

- Use of **scholarly databases, citation tools, and research platforms**.
- Training in **professional digital communication and etiquette**.
- Opportunities for **creative digital expression**—film, art, and design guided by faith and virtue.
- Ongoing reflection on **AI ethics, social media use, and digital moderation**.
- **Cell phones stored “bell to bell”**, ensuring presence and focus.

Goal: Graduates leave MACS as virtuous digital citizens—capable of thoughtful leadership and faithful innovation.



Technology Growth Pathway

Grade Band	Formation Focus	Technology Use	Faith Lens
PK–2	Wonder, attention, imagination	No student tech; teacher-only instruction tools	Joy in creation and relationship
3–5	Stewardship and curiosity	Guided, limited exposure	Gratitude and self-control
6–8	Discernment and critical thinking	Shared devices; guided research	Truth-seeking and virtue
9–12	Wisdom and vocation	Integrated, purposeful technology	Faith, reason, and moral clarity

In Summary

At MACS, technology is not feared—but **formed**. Our students are not shaped by screens, but by **wisdom, wonder, and love**.

We guide them to live with presence, think with clarity, and use every tool in pursuit of what is **good, true, and beautiful**. **Technology, rightly ordered, serves the soul.**



Our Mission: Centered on Jesus Christ and His Church, we partner with families to nurture young people's spiritual, intellectual, physical, and moral formation through a PreK-12 Catholic liberal arts education and vibrant student life of discipleship, athletics, and the arts.