



# IT Services for Your School

THE CHARTER SCHOOL IT SERVICES GUIDE

In partnership with Software MSP

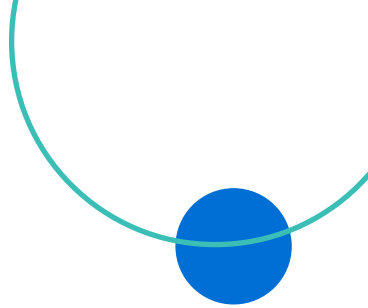
**Gr̃w**  
**Schools**

**It's crucial for charter schools to make their IT infrastructure future-proof. This means preparing it for the changes in technology that will come in the future and meeting the educational needs of tomorrow.**

To do this, schools can upgrade and modernize their systems to ensure their technology can work with the new and upcoming tools and technologies and handle the increasing demands as the school grows. This will improve the security, protecting against cyber threats. Not only will your school stay competitive and relevant in the digital world, but you'll also benefit from smoothly integrating new tools and applications, improving teaching and learning experiences.

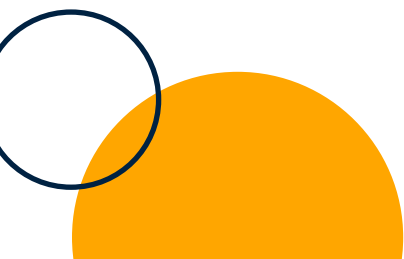
The information in this guide comes to you in collaboration with the team at **SoftwareMSP**, providing technology solutions to schools across the country.





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# Network Setup and Management





# Network Setup and Management

The importance of the best network setup and management for charter schools cannot be overstated. It directly impacts the school's operations and educational programs' overall effectiveness, efficiency, and security.

Network setup and management are vital for charter schools to provide a modern, effective, secure learning environment. It supports teaching, learning, communication, and administrative processes, ultimately contributing to the success and growth of your school, and fostering a more engaging and efficient learning experience for both students and teachers.

IT service providers can help charter schools set up robust and secure networks for reliable connectivity among students, teachers, and administrators. This includes installing, configuring, and maintaining routers, switches, and access points.

# Key Features of Your Network Setup and Management

## COMMUNICATION, ACCESS, AND SHARING

Effective network management facilitates clear communication channels among students, teachers, administrators, and families. This includes email, instant messaging, video conferencing, and other collaboration tools, enabling real-time interaction and feedback. In today's educational landscape, having a well-configured network is essential for supporting remote and blended learning. It allows students to access coursework and participate in virtual classes when they cannot physically attend school.

A well-managed network also enables efficient resource sharing among different departments and campuses within the charter school. This includes shared printers, network storage, and centralized administrative tools.

## SCALABLE AND EFFICIENT

As charter schools grow or undergo changes, their network must be able to scale and adapt to new requirements. Proper network setup ensures the infrastructure can accommodate future expansions without significant disruptions. An optimized network reduces downtime, connectivity issues, and technical glitches, increasing productivity and smoother operations for teachers and staff. A well-structured network setup also allows for more accessible IT support and troubleshooting. This reduces downtime and frustration for teachers and students when technical issues arise.



# How to Audit Your Network

By following this step-by-step process, charter schools can effectively assess their network setup and management, identify areas for improvement, and implement changes to enhance the network's performance, security, and overall reliability.

## □ **STEP 1: DEFINE ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES**

- Clarify the goals of the assessment, such as identifying network strengths and weaknesses, evaluating security measures, and determining scalability for future needs.

## □ **STEP 2: GATHER NETWORK DOCUMENTATION**

- Obtain network documentation, including network diagrams, device configurations, IP addresses, and network policies.

## □ **STEP 3: CONDUCT INTERVIEWS AND SURVEYS**

- Interview key stakeholders, such as IT staff, teachers, and administrators, to gather feedback on the network's performance and any issues they have encountered.
- Distribute surveys to gather additional feedback from network users about their experience and satisfaction with network services.

## □ **STEP 4: PERFORM NETWORK INVENTORY**

- Inventory all network devices, including routers, switches, access points, and firewalls.
- Record each device's specifications, models, firmware versions, and locations.

## □ **STEP 5: EVALUATE NETWORK PERFORMANCE**

- Use network monitoring tools to assess network performance metrics, such as bandwidth utilization, latency, and packet loss.
- Identify any bottlenecks or performance issues that may impact user experience.

## □ **STEP 6: CHECK NETWORK SECURITY**

- Evaluate network security measures, including firewalls, intrusion detection/prevention systems, access controls, and encryption.
- Perform vulnerability assessments and penetration testing to identify potential security weaknesses.

## □ **STEP 7: REVIEW NETWORK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- Assess network policies and procedures, such as acceptable use policies, data handling guidelines, and incident response protocols.
- Ensure that these policies align with best practices and compliance requirements.



#### **STEP 8: ASSESS NETWORK SCALABILITY**

- Determine if the network can accommodate future growth and increased demand for devices and bandwidth.
- Consider potential expansion plans for the charter school.

#### **STEP 9: ANALYZE NETWORK MANAGEMENT TOOLS**

- Evaluate the effectiveness of network management tools used by the IT team.
- Assess whether the tools enable efficient network device monitoring, configuration, and troubleshooting.

#### **STEP 10: REVIEW BUDGET AND COST ANALYSIS**

- Consider the budget allocated for network setup and management.
- Evaluate whether the current network provides value for the investment and identify areas for cost optimization.

#### **STEP 11: IDENTIFY SKILL GAPS AND TRAINING NEEDS**

- Assess the IT team's level of expertise and identify any skill gaps.
- Determine training needs to enhance the team's network setup and management capabilities.

#### **STEP 12: COMPLIANCE AND REGULATIONS**

- Ensure that the network setup adheres to relevant regulations and industry data security and privacy standards.

#### **STEP 13: BENCHMARK AND BEST PRACTICES**

- Compare the charter school's network setup and management practices with industry best practices and benchmarks.


#### **STEP 14: PREPARE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

- Compile all the findings from the assessment into a comprehensive report.
- Include recommendations for improving the network setup and management based on the assessment results.

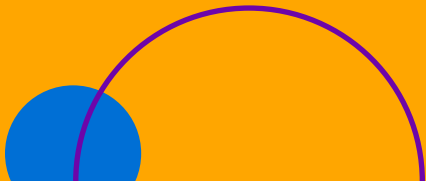
#### **STEP 15: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN**

- Based on the assessment report, develop a detailed action plan that outlines the steps to address identified issues and implement improvements.





# Choosing Hardware and Software



# Choosing Hardware and Software

IT services assist in selecting and procuring appropriate hardware (e.g., computers, tablets, printers) and software (e.g., learning management systems, productivity tools) that align with your school's needs and budget. Understanding the value of properly choosing hardware and software is beneficial in the short and long term—it allows you to scale up and down easily.

You can make well-informed decisions when procuring hardware and software, leading to successful technology integration and improved outcomes for kids.

## ENHANCED LEARNING AND TEACHING

Hardware and software provide a wide range of educational resources, interactive learning tools, and digital content that enrich the learning experience for students. Educational software can cater to different learning styles and allow for personalized learning experiences. Procuring hardware like computers, tablets, and internet connectivity, along with educational software, gives students access to vast online educational resources, digital libraries, and research materials, supplementing their classroom learning. Procuring hardware and software allows charter schools to adapt to various learning scenarios, such as remote learning during emergencies or personalized learning plans for individual students.

Teachers can utilize various software applications and digital tools to create engaging lessons, interactive presentations, and multimedia content. This enhances their ability to deliver information effectively and fosters a more dynamic and interactive learning environment.

## EFFICIENCY AND COLLABORATION

Hardware and software solutions help streamline administrative tasks, such as attendance tracking, grade management, scheduling, and report generation. This automation saves time for school administrators and reduces the chances of manual errors.

Communication software and collaboration platforms facilitate effective communication among teachers, students, families, and school staff. These tools enable real-time updates, progress tracking, and collaboration on projects and assignments.

### EXPERT TIP

#### STAY COMPETITIVE

As technology becomes more prevalent in education, charter schools must remain competitive by offering the latest educational tools and resources. Procuring hardware and software helps schools stay at the forefront of educational technology trends.

# How to Choose Hardware and Software

Choosing your technology solutions involves aligning it with your school's needs, budget, and long-term goals.

## STEP 1: ASSESS NEEDS AND PRIORITIZE

Start by conducting a thorough needs assessment. Involve teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders to identify the specific hardware and software requirements based on educational goals, curriculum, and administrative processes. Prioritize critical needs to focus on the most essential items first.

## STEP 2: DEVELOP YOUR TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Create a comprehensive technology plan that outlines the school's vision for integrating technology into teaching and learning. The plan should include a timeline, budget, and clear hardware and software implementation goals. Involve teachers, students, and administrators in decision-making. Gather their input and feedback during the evaluation and selection stages to ensure the chosen solutions meet their needs and preferences. Consult with educational technology specialists or IT professionals who have experience working with schools. They can provide valuable insights and help you make informed decisions based on your school's unique requirements.

## STEP 3: SET A BUDGET

Determine a realistic budget for acquiring hardware and software. Consider the upfront costs and ongoing maintenance, support, and upgrade expenses. Look for cost-effective solutions that provide the necessary features without compromising quality.

## STEP 4: RESEARCH AND EVALUATE SOLUTIONS

Conduct extensive research to identify hardware and software options that meet the identified needs. Request quotes and product information from reputable vendors or educational technology providers. Evaluate each solution based on functionality, compatibility, ease of use, support, and user reviews.





### **STEP 5: PLAN FOR TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

Allocate resources for teacher training on the selected hardware and software. Adequate training ensures educators can make the most of the technology to enhance their teaching methods. Additionally, establish support channels to address technical issues and troubleshoot problems as they arise.

### **STEP 6: MONITOR AND EVALUATE**

Continuously monitor the performance and effectiveness of the procured hardware and software. Gather user feedback and assess whether the technology meets the school's educational goals. Use this information to adjust and make improvements as needed.

#### **EXPERT TIP**

### **CONSIDER EDUCATIONAL DISCOUNTS AND PILOT PROGRAMS**

Many hardware and software vendors offer educational discounts to schools. Explore opportunities to use these discounts and special pricing arrangements to stretch the budget further. Before committing to a large-scale purchase, consider piloting hardware and software solutions with a smaller group of teachers or students. This allows for hands-on testing and feedback before full implementation.



# Help Desk Support



# Help Desk Support

IT help desk services offer technical assistance to teachers, staff, and students. They handle hardware and software troubleshooting, password resets, and other IT-related inquiries to minimize disruptions to the learning process.

Help desk support provides smooth operations, maximizes the use of technology, and provides a positive experience for students, teachers, and staff. Here's what to consider when shopping for help desk support.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Because your school relies heavily on technology for various tasks, including online learning, administrative processes, and communication, timeliness is key. Quick technical assistance and troubleshooting for hardware and software issues can reduce downtime and disruptions to your learning environment.

When technical problems arise, they can disrupt the teaching and learning process. An efficient help desk can quickly address issues, minimizing interruptions and keeping classes running smoothly.

## USER EMPOWERMENT AND STUDENT SUPPORT

Help desk support empowers teachers and staff by providing them with the resources and knowledge to handle common technical challenges. Students may encounter technical difficulties using educational software or accessing digital resources. A responsive help desk can assist students in resolving these issues, enabling them to focus on their studies without unnecessary frustration.

Help desk support becomes even more critical during remote learning scenarios. It ensures that students, teachers, and families have the necessary technical guidance and support to navigate the challenges of online education effectively. Help desk support can also extend to families and the wider community. Assisting families with technical issues accessing school portals or communication platforms enhance family engagement and support for their child's education.

## SECURITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Help desk support plays a role in reinforcing cybersecurity measures and data protection protocols. It educates users about online safety, helps detect and address security breaches, and ensures that sensitive data remains secure.

### EXPERT TIP

#### **BUILD A RELATIONSHIP**

Foster a relationship of continuous improvement with your help desk support so you can make informed decisions about technology investments, training needs, and policy adjustments.



# Choosing the Right Help Desk Partner

Above all, your support service needs to align with your school's specific needs and requirements. Here's a step-by-step guide to help you in the selection process.

## STEP 1: DEFINE YOUR NEEDS

Identify the specific help desk services your school requires. This could include technical support for hardware and software, assistance with educational platforms, network troubleshooting, and other IT-related issues.

Determine whether you need 24/7 support or if regular business hours will suffice. Choose a service that can respond promptly to urgent requests and critical issues.

## STEP 2: CHECK EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE

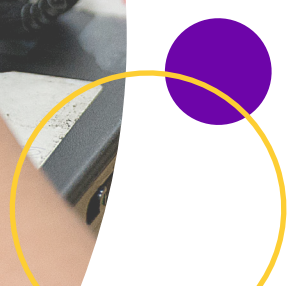
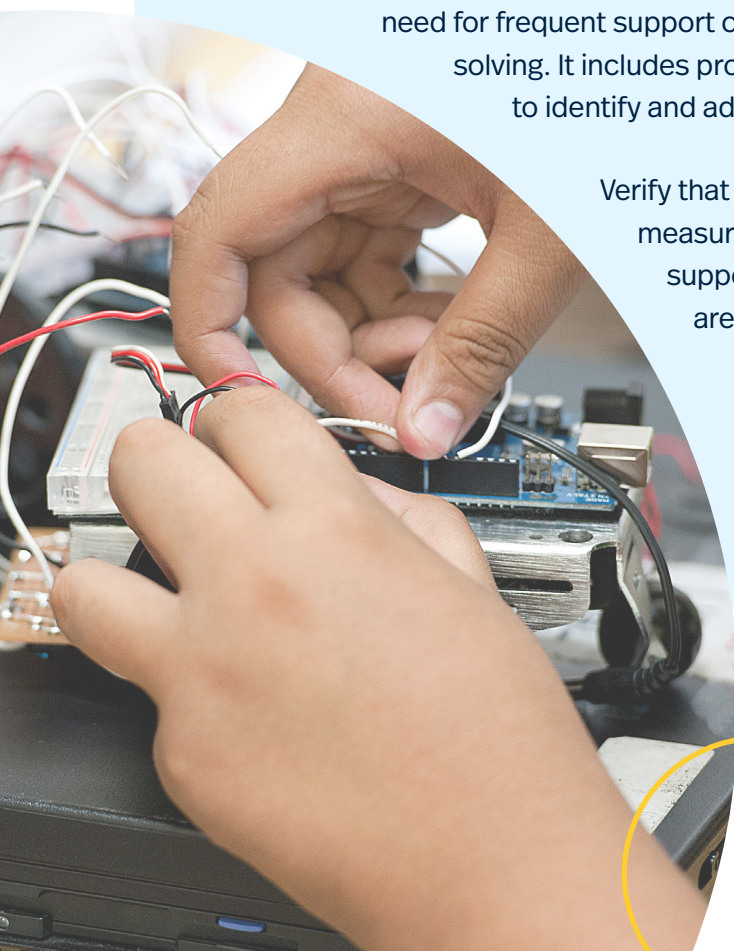
Evaluate the expertise and experience of the support team. Look for a provider with a track record of serving educational institutions and a team of skilled professionals who understand the unique challenges schools face.

Response time is crucial for timely issue resolution. Inquire about the average response time for different inquiries and ensure it aligns with your school's requirements.

A good help desk service provides training resources and documentation for teachers, staff, and students. This empowers users to handle common issues independently and reduces the need for frequent support calls. The best support goes beyond reactive problem-solving. It includes proactive monitoring, maintenance, and system checks to identify and address potential issues before they escalate.

Verify that the help desk service has appropriate security measures to protect sensitive information shared during support interactions. Data security and privacy compliance are essential for educational institutions.

Ask the potential help desk support provider for references from other schools they have served. Additionally, read online reviews and testimonials to gauge the satisfaction level of their existing clients.







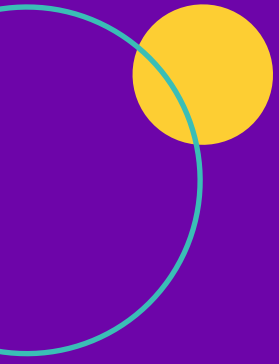
### **STEP 3: REVIEW COMMUNICATION CHANNELS**

Check the available communication channels for accessing help desk support. Look for options like phone, email, live chat, or ticketing systems, allowing users to contact support most conveniently.

Remote support enables technicians to access and troubleshoot systems directly, saving time and minimizing disruptions. Ensure the help desk service offers secure remote support options.

### **STEP 4: CONSIDER COST AND CONTRACT TERMS WITH YOUR TEAM**

Obtain detailed pricing information and consider the overall cost-effectiveness of the service. Evaluate contract terms, service-level agreements (SLAs), and hidden fees. Involve teachers, staff, and administrators in decision-making. Gather their input and feedback on the help desk support options to ensure the service meets their needs and expectations.



# **Data Management and Security**



# Data Management and Security

IT services implement data management systems to securely organize student records, grades, and administrative information. They also deploy security measures, such as firewalls, antivirus software, and encryption, to safeguard sensitive data from cyber threats.

## Aspects of Data Management

### STUDENT AND STAFF PRIVACY PROTECTION

Charter schools collect and store sensitive student information, including personal details, academic records, and health information. Proper data management and security measures safeguard student privacy and comply with data protection regulations, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Charter schools also possess confidential information about their staff, including employee records, payroll data, and other sensitive details. Data security ensures that this information remains confidential and is accessible only to authorized personnel.

### MANAGING ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS AND ACADEMIC RECORDS

Data management ensures the accuracy and integrity of student academic records, including grades and assessments. Maintaining secure and reliable data enhances the credibility of the school's academic achievements.

Effective data management streamlines administrative processes, such as student enrollment, scheduling, attendance tracking, and report generation. Well-organized data facilitates efficient operations and reduces administrative burdens.

### REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE

Charter schools must comply with state and federal reporting requirements. Proper data management ensures accurate and timely submissions to regulatory bodies and funding agencies.

### DECISION-MAKING AND PLANNING

Data management allows charter schools to collect and analyze educational data, helping them make informed decisions about curriculum, instruction, resource allocation, and strategic planning.

#### EXPERT TIP

### MAINTAIN CONSISTENT SECURITY PRACTICES

A data breach or mishandling of sensitive information can severely damage a charter school's reputation and erode trust among families, students, and the community.

Proper data management and security practices help build trust and maintain the school's reputation as a safe and reliable institution.

## DISASTER RECOVERY AND PREVENTION OF DATA BREACHES

Data management includes implementing robust backup and disaster recovery plans. Effective data management ensures the school can recover critical information and continue operations with minimal disruption in case of data loss due to hardware failure or cyberattacks.

Schools are potential targets for cyberattacks due to the sensitive data they hold. Data security measures, such as encryption, firewalls, access controls, and regular security audits, help prevent data breaches and protect against malicious activities.

# Implementing Effective Data Management and Security Practices

## IDENTIFY AND CLASSIFY DATA

Determine the types of data the charter school collects and processes, such as student records, staff information, financial data, and academic records. Classify data based on its sensitivity and importance to prioritize security measures.

From there, you'll want to create your data management policies. Outline how data should be collected, stored, accessed, and used. Include procedures for data retention, sharing, and disposal in compliance with relevant regulations.

### TIP

#### Appoint a data protection officer

Designate a data protection officer or a responsible staff member to oversee data management and security practices. This individual should ensure policy adherence and act as the point of contact for data-related issues.

## PROTECT YOUR DATA

Implement strong access controls to limit data access to authorized personnel only. Use role-based access to ensure users can access only the data necessary for their responsibilities.

### ■ Conduct Security Training

Provide data security training to all staff members, teachers, and administrators who handle sensitive information. Educate them on data protection best practices, password management, and how to recognize and report security threats.

### ■ Encrypt Sensitive Data

Use encryption to protect sensitive data, both when it is stored and transmitted. Encryption ensures that even if unauthorized individuals gain access to the data, they cannot decipher its contents.



- **Establish Incident Response Plan**

Develop an incident response plan that outlines procedures to follow in case of data breaches or security incidents. Assign roles and responsibilities, and practice mock drills to ensure a swift and coordinated response.

- **Network Security**

Implement robust network security measures, including firewalls, intrusion detection/prevention systems, and regular security updates. Regularly monitor network activity to detect any suspicious behavior.

- **Regular Data Backups**

Implement regular data backups to protect data against accidental loss, hardware failure, or cyberattacks. Store backups in secure locations separate from the primary data storage.

- **Regular Security Audits**

Conduct regular security audits and vulnerability assessments to identify potential data management and security practices weaknesses. Address any vulnerabilities promptly to mitigate risks.

- **Parent/Guardian Consent**

Obtain proper consent before collecting or using students' personal information for any non-educational purposes, per relevant data protection laws.

- **Periodic Review and Update**

Regularly review and update data management and security policies to adapt to changing threats and regulations. Involve stakeholders in the review process to gather feedback and ensure compliance.

- **Vendor Security**

If a school works with third-party vendors or cloud service providers, ensure they adhere to stringent data security standards. Establish data protection agreements with vendors to safeguard data sharing.



# Cybersecurity Tools





# Cybersecurity Tools

Cybersecurity tools are crucial for charter schools to protect sensitive data, prevent cyberattacks, and ensure a safe digital learning environment.

These tools safeguard against data breaches, malware, phishing, and other cyber threats, minimizing disruptions and protecting the school's reputation. They play a vital role in maintaining student privacy, securing website and network infrastructure, and providing a secure platform for students, teachers, and staff to engage in online activities safely.

## IMPLEMENT CRITICAL CYBERSECURITY TOOLS TO PROTECT YOUR DIGITAL ASSETS AND ENSURE A SECURE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

- **Antivirus/Antimalware Software**

This software detects and removes viruses, malware, and other malicious software from computers and devices.

- **Data Loss Prevention (DLP)**

DLP tools monitor and prevent unauthorized access or leakage of sensitive data, reducing the risk of data breaches.

- **Encryption Tools:** Encryption tools protect data by converting it into unreadable code, ensuring that sensitive information remains confidential.

- **Endpoint Protection**

Endpoint protection software secures individual devices (e.g., laptops, desktops, tablets) from various security threats.

- **Firewall**

A network firewall helps filter and control incoming and outgoing traffic, preventing unauthorized access and protecting against cyber threats.

- **Intrusion Detection/Prevention System (IDS/IPS)**

An IDS/IPS monitors network traffic for suspicious activities and helps detect and prevent intrusion attempts.

- **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)**

MFA adds an extra layer of security by requiring users to provide multiple forms of identification before accessing accounts or data.







- **Patch Management Software**

Patch management tools automatically update software and operating systems, ensuring that vulnerabilities are promptly patched.

- **Security Awareness Training**

While not a tool, cybersecurity training for staff and students is critical in building a security-aware culture and promoting safe online practices.

- **Secure Email Gateway**

An email gateway scans incoming and outgoing emails for spam, phishing, and malware, reducing the risk of email-based attacks.

- **Security Information and Event Management (SIEM)**

SIEM tools collect and analyze security-related data from various sources, enabling early detection of security incidents.

- **Web Application Firewall (WAF)**

A WAF protects web applications by filtering and monitoring HTTP requests, mitigating web-based attacks like SQL injection and cross-site scripting.



**Cybersecurity  
for Your  
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THE CHARTER SCHOOL CYBERSECURITY GUIDE

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To learn more about data safety and protecting your school from a cyberattack, download **The Cybersecurity Charter School Guide**



# Cloud Services



# Cloud Services

Charter schools often benefit from cloud-based solutions for data storage, collaboration tools, and software applications. IT services help integrate cloud services into the school's infrastructure and ensure data backups and disaster recovery procedures are in place. Cloud services offer numerous benefits for charter schools, making them an attractive option for meeting various technology needs.

Cloud services eliminate the need for expensive on-premises infrastructure and maintenance costs. Schools can pay for cloud services on a subscription basis, making it a cost-effective option, especially for smaller educational institutions with limited budgets. Cloud services allow charter schools to scale their technology resources up or down based on changing needs. This flexibility is beneficial for accommodating varying student populations and adjusting to fluctuating network bandwidth and storage demands.

## Other Benefits of Cloud Services

### ACCESSIBILITY

Cloud services enable students, teachers, and staff to access educational resources and applications from any location with an internet connection. This accessibility supports remote learning, personalized education, and collaborative projects.

### COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

Cloud-based collaboration tools, like Google Workspace (formerly G Suite) or Microsoft 365, facilitate real-time collaboration among students and teachers. Features like shared documents, video conferencing, and group chat enhance communication and teamwork.

### SOFTWARE AND APP INTEGRATION

Cloud services offer a wide range of software applications and educational tools that can be easily integrated into the school's technology ecosystem. This integration streamlines workflows and enhances teaching and learning experiences.

### SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE

Reputable cloud service providers invest heavily in security measures to protect data from cyber threats. They typically comply with industry security standards, ensuring data is stored and transmitted securely.

Cloud services offer robust disaster recovery capabilities, enabling quick data recovery in case of system failures or natural disasters. This ensures minimal disruptions to the learning process.

## IT SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE

Cloud services are managed and maintained by the service providers, reducing the burden on the school's IT staff. This allows the school to focus on its core educational mission while leaving technical support to experts.

Cloud services automatically update software and apply security patches, ensuring that educational tools and applications are up-to-date and protected against vulnerabilities.

## EDUCATION-SPECIFIC SOLUTIONS

Many cloud service providers offer specialized solutions for educational institutions. These solutions may include learning management systems, online assessment tools, and classroom management platforms.



# Popular and Widely Used Cloud Services

- **Camera System**

Cloud-based camera system for charter schools offers remote video monitoring, secure cloud storage, and enhanced security. It provides easy access to footage, promoting safety and surveillance efficiency on-campus and remotely.

- **Communication and Collaboration Tools**

Aside from Google Workspace and Microsoft Teams, charter schools may consider additional tools like Slack or Microsoft Yammer to enhance team communication and collaboration among staff members.

- **Data Analytics and Reporting**

Data analytics tools like Tableau or Microsoft Power BI can help charter schools analyze educational data, track student performance, and generate reports for decision-making.

- **Dropbox or OneDrive**

Cloud storage services like Dropbox and Microsoft's OneDrive allow charter schools to store and share files securely. These platforms help back up important documents, share resources, and collaborate on projects.

- **Google Workspace (formerly G Suite)**

Google Workspace provides a suite of cloud-based productivity tools, including Google Docs, Google Drive, Google Sheets, Google Slides, and Google Meet. These tools facilitate collaborative work, document sharing, video conferencing, and communication among students and teachers.

- **Learning Management Systems (LMS)**

LMS platforms like Google Classroom, Canvas, Moodle, or Schoology offer online learning environments where teachers can create, manage, and deliver educational content, assignments, and assessments. LMS platforms streamline the learning process and enable teachers to monitor student progress.

- **Mass Notification System**

A mass notification system for charter schools is essential for ensuring timely and efficient communication during emergencies. It enables administrators to quickly disseminate critical information to students, families, and staff, enhancing safety and response measures. The system can include alerts via SMS, email, voice calls, and other communication channels.





- **Microsoft 365**

Microsoft 365 (formerly Office 365) offers a collection of cloud-based applications, including Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams, and OneDrive. It provides similar features to Google Workspace, allowing for seamless collaboration and communication within the school community.

- **Online Assessment Tools**

Charter schools may use cloud-based assessment platforms like Quizlet, Kahoot, or Edulastic to create interactive quizzes, assessments, and student surveys. **Zoom or Microsoft Teams** Video conferencing tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams facilitate virtual classrooms, meetings, and webinars. These platforms are valuable for remote learning and conducting online staff meetings.

- **Online Learning Platforms**

Platforms like Khan Academy, Coursera for Schools, or Edmodo offer access to various educational resources, online courses, and learning materials that supplement classroom instruction.

- **Paging System**

An integrated paging system for VoIP for charter schools combines traditional paging with modern VoIP technology. It allows seamless communication between classrooms, offices, and outdoor areas, enhancing safety and coordination. The system enables easy announcements, emergency alerts, and group communication, promoting efficient school-wide communication.

- **Telephony Solutions**

VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) system. VoIP offers cost-effective and feature-rich communication solutions, including voice calling, video conferencing, and messaging. It enables seamless communication among students, teachers, and staff, supporting in-person and remote learning environments while optimizing communication costs.

- **Web Filtering and Cybersecurity**

Cloud-based web filtering and cybersecurity solutions like Cisco Umbrella or Norton Cloud Security can help protect the school's network from cyber threats and inappropriate content.



# **Classroom Technology Integration**





# Classroom Technology Integration

Classroom technology solutions offer a wide range of benefits, positively impacting teaching and learning processes and preparing students for success in the modern world. Not only that, but your school can become a champion of implementing cutting-edge technologies that will enrich students' lives and make learning fun.

## **BENEFITS OF CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY**

Technology enhances engagement and interactivity, improving student learning outcomes and academic performance. Teachers can adapt instruction to individual student needs, promoting personalized and differentiated learning experiences.

Classroom technology provides access to many educational resources, online libraries, and interactive learning tools, enriching the learning process. Integrating technology also prepares students for the digital age, developing essential skills like digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

It also enables collaborative projects, group discussions, and peer-to-peer learning, fostering teamwork and communication skills. It supports in-person and remote learning, providing flexibility and adaptability during various learning scenarios, along with accommodating diverse learning styles and abilities, promoting inclusivity in the learning environment.

Classroom technology allows teachers to gather student progress and performance data, facilitating data-driven instructional decisions and interventions.





# **Technology and Security Awareness Training**



# Technology and Security Awareness Training

IT services can provide your school with training sessions for teachers and staff to familiarize them with new hardware and software. These training sessions empower educators to leverage technology effectively in their teaching methods. Incorporate technology and security awareness training as a regular part of your school's professional development program.

## What IT Training Can Cover

### EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

Training equips teachers with the skills and knowledge to effectively integrate technology into their instructional practices, enhancing teaching methods and student engagement.

### DIGITAL LITERACY

Technology training fosters digital literacy among students, enabling them to navigate digital tools, research online, and use technology responsibly. Staff training on administrative software and tools streamlines school operations, resulting in increased efficiency in tasks such as grading, scheduling, and attendance tracking. Ensure your staff can adapt to new technological innovations and stay up-to-date with the latest educational technology trends. Training also raises awareness about cybersecurity threats, teaching staff to recognize and prevent cyberattacks, and safeguarding sensitive data.

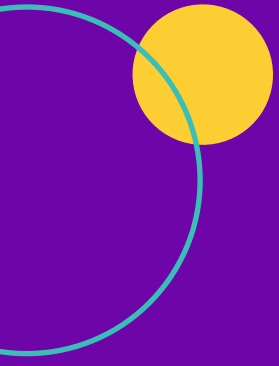
Technology training can empower staff to analyze data effectively, allowing for data-driven decision-making to improve instructional strategies and school management.

### ENHANCED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Technologically proficient teachers can create dynamic and interactive learning experiences, improving student learning outcomes.

### FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Educating families and the community about the technology used in the classroom fosters better understanding and involvement in the learning process.



# **Website Development and Maintenance**



# Website Development and Maintenance

Your school's website is a valuable tool—facilitating communication, promoting a positive school image, and creating community engagement while supporting essential administrative tasks. IT services can help create and maintain the school's website, ensuring it is user-friendly, up-to-date, and provides relevant information to families, students, and the community.

## Website Considerations

### YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

A well-designed website establishes a professional online presence, making it easier for prospective families and students to learn about the school and its offerings. Your website is a central communication platform for disseminating essential announcements, school events, and extracurricular activities, and showcasing student achievements, and news to families, students, and staff.

### RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

The website can host educational resources, calendars, curriculum information, and study materials, supporting teachers and students in their learning endeavors. It also facilitates the enrollment process, providing details about admissions requirements, procedures, and application forms. Enrolled families can access the website to monitor their child's progress, communicate with teachers, and participate in school-related activities.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An alum section on the website allows former students to stay connected with the school and each other, fostering a strong alum network. You might promote fundraising campaigns and accept online donations, supporting your school's financial needs. Your website attracts potential staff members and provides information on job openings, application processes, and staff resources. All of these reasons and more are why it needs to be secure.

# Website Security

Securing a website for a charter school involves implementing various measures to protect sensitive data and maintain a safe online environment. Essential secure website features include:

- **Content Security Policy (CSP)**  
Implement a CSP to control which resources can be loaded on the website, mitigating cross-site scripting (XSS) attacks.
- **Educated Staff**  
Train website administrators and content contributors on cybersecurity best practices and potential threats.
- **Regular Software Updates**  
Keep the website's content management system (CMS), plugins, themes, and other software updated to patch vulnerabilities and prevent potential exploits.
- **Regular Security Audits**  
Conduct regular security audits or penetration testing to identify vulnerabilities and assess the overall website security.
- **Restrict File Uploads**  
Limit file upload capabilities and validate file types to prevent the execution of malicious scripts or malware.
- **Privacy Policy and Terms of Use**  
Clearly state the website's privacy policy and terms of use, ensuring data collection and usage transparency.
- **SSL/TLS Encryption**  
Install an SSL/TLS certificate to encrypt data transmitted between the website and users, ensuring secure communication and preventing data interception.
- **Secure Forms**  
Use captcha or other anti-spam mechanisms on forms to prevent automated attacks and protect user data.
- **Secure Hosting Environment**  
Choose a reputable hosting provider with secure servers and regular security updates.
- **Secure Third-Party Integrations**  
Verify the security of third-party plugins and integrations used on the website to avoid vulnerabilities.
- **Strong Passwords and User Authentication**  
Enforce strong password policies and enable two-factor authentication to prevent unauthorized access to the website's backend.
- **Web Application Firewall (WAF)**  
Use a WAF to filter and monitor incoming traffic, blocking malicious requests and protecting against common web application attacks.
- **Website Activity Monitoring**  
Use website monitoring tools to detect unusual activity or potential security breaches, enabling prompt response and mitigation.



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We are grateful to the experts at SoftwareMSP for the co-creation of this guide.

Learn more about how their team can support your school's technology needs at [softmsp.com/growschools](https://softmsp.com/growschools) or email [info@softmsp.com](mailto:info@softmsp.com).

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