

Factors to Consider Before Selecting Electronic Textbooks

1. Determine if the district has policies and procedures that support electronic textbook use at school and their use at home.
2. Determine if the digital content is in the best format for both portability and student use and comprehension.
3. Ensure that teachers understand the implications of using electronic textbooks. Teachers, students, and parents will need to fully embrace the idea of “going paperless” if selecting the electronic textbook. Teachers will need time to learn new curriculum strategies, implement in the classroom, and modify to meet individual student needs. All stakeholders will need to understand the timeline for implementation and expected results.
4. Determine a process to provide internet to all students who will need it for access to their electronic textbook.
5. Ensure that all teachers have opportunities for a thorough hands-on review of the materials to determine the most appropriate instructional materials for their students. This is especially important as using electronic textbooks requires teacher and student technology proficiencies as well as new teaching strategies to incorporate the electronic textbooks into instructional practices.
6. Determine if the materials are accessible and address the needs of the students. The selected electronic textbook format can address students’ diverse learning styles and fit teachers’ needs.
7. Determine if unique selections from the textbook materials can be located easily and can be printed easily.
8. Have the broadband capacity for everyone to download the selected materials and access them, at times, simultaneously.
9. Ensure that students and teachers will have the technology skills to use the electronic textbook effectively and efficiently.
10. Makes plans for providing access and extensive professional development for teachers prior to the electronic textbook’s use in the classroom and the maintenance of access and professional development throughout the adoption.
11. Ensure that there can be sufficient product-focused professional development and on-going support for accessing, printing, downloading, and using the digital content.
12. Ensure that there can be sufficient pedagogical professional development and on-going support for effective use of the electronic textbooks in the classroom.
13. Consider whether students will retain access to the materials, and specifically their notes on those materials, once the materials have been selected and are in use.

Factors to Consider Before Selecting Technological Equipment

1. Determine what technological equipment is necessary to provide access to digital content.
2. Determine if the district infrastructure, bandwidth, and internet access that may be required for the use of the electronic textbook can be maintained by the district throughout the adoption cycle.
3. Determine the specifications for the technological equipment necessary to run the electronic textbook and the capability of the district to keep equipment available throughout the adoption cycle.
4. Determine if the technological equipment is sturdy enough to withstand rugged use by students.
5. Plan for the professional development necessary to use the technological equipment. Teachers must have access to professional development prior to student textbook adoption.
6. Ensure that technological equipment is equipped with enough memory to store subject materials and completed assignments.
7. Ensure that there can be adequate technical support to ensure the technology is working so that the electronic textbook is available when needed--at school or at home--24/7.
8. Ensure that the technological format selected for delivering the electronic textbooks will work for all the selected electronic textbooks (i.e., if a specific reader is chosen, are all the textbooks downloadable to that reader?)
9. Determine which features of the technological equipment are priorities for the district, such as options for highlighting or reading text, making notes in the margins of electronic readers, or accessing multimedia information.
10. Develop a plan for dealing with passwords, vendor data needs for subscriptions, interoperability, vendor support and training, and continuing contracts.
11. Provide students and parents with the expectations for appropriate care and use of the technological equipment and related policies and procedures for its use.
12. Ensure that students will have access to the technological equipment to run the electronic textbook in the classroom as well as at home. (Examples: schools may need to add wireless access points if needed to run computers or electricity for charging a device; schools may need extra "loaner" computers or other technological equipment on hand for use when student equipment needs repair or students do not bring it to school; schools and students have the broadband capacity to access the equipment; schools will need to consider how the electronic textbook will be assigned to teacher and students; home access might also be a consideration.)
13. Determine if the district will have insurance needed for the devices.