

**HB584 ENGROSSED**



1 HB584

2 I3L9BZ6-2

3 By Representatives Ross, Givens, Lamb, Gidley, Holk-Jones,  
4 Faulkner, Baker, Blackshear, Collins, DuBose, Smith, Colvin,  
5 Paschal, Hulsey, Paramore, Robbins

6 RFD: Education Policy

7 First Read: 05-Mar-26



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A BILL  
TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

Relating to screen-based instruction; to require the State Board of Education to establish standards for screen-based instruction in kindergarten through twelfth grade; to create the Instructional Technology Task Force within the State Department of Education; to require the standards to reflect the recommendations of the task force; and to provide certain exceptions from any prohibitions on screen-use.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. (a) This act shall be known and may be cited as the Alabama Balanced Instruction and Screen Use Act.

(b) The Legislature finds and declares the following:

(1) Early elementary years are critical for children's brain development, literacy acquisition, attention formation, and executive function.

(2) Research demonstrates that children learn foundation skills most effectively through direct instruction, handwriting, physical texts, manipulatives, and sustained interaction with teachers and peers.

(3) Educational technology is most effective when used



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29 intentionally and in moderation and should not displace  
30 evidence-based instructional practices.

31 (4) It is in the best interest of Alabama's children to  
32 ensure that screen-based instruction is developmentally  
33 appropriate and grounded in current research.

34 (5) The intent of this act is to promote balanced  
35 instructional practices in kindergarten through twelfth grade  
36 while preserving local flexibility and elevating educator  
37 expertise.

38 (6) This act shall be read in pari materia with The  
39 Healthy Early Development and Screen Time Act, Act 2026-169,  
40 2026 Regular Session.

41 Section 2. For the purposes of this act, the following  
42 terms have the following meanings:

43 (1) BOARD. The State Board of Education.

44 (2) DEPARTMENT. The State Department of Education.

45 (3) SCREEN-BASED INSTRUCTION. The delivery of  
46 educational content primarily through digital devices,  
47 including, but not limited to, a laptop, Chromebook, or  
48 tablet, in lieu of direct teacher-led instruction.

49 Section 3. (a) The board shall adopt standards for  
50 screen-based instruction for kindergarten through twelfth  
51 grade. The standards shall include specific guidance on  
52 appropriate screen-based instruction for each grade and shall  
53 reflect, but not be limited to, the following requirements:

54 (1) The use of screen-based instruction as  
55 developmentally appropriate and supported by research.

56 (2) The use of screen-based instruction only as a



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57 supplementary tool for instruction in core academic subjects  
58 and may not serve as the primary mode of instruction.

59 (3) Screen-based instruction may not replace explicit  
60 phonics instruction, handwriting, reading of physical texts,  
61 manipulative-based mathematics instruction, or teacher-led  
62 discussion.

63 (4) Continuous, self-paced digital coursework may not  
64 be used as a substitute for teacher-directed instruction.

65 (5) The scheduling of regular vision breaks guided by  
66 research, which may include the requirement that students  
67 follow the 20-20-20 rule. For the purposes of this  
68 subdivision, the "20-20-20 rule" means that every 20 minutes,  
69 students must spend at least 20 seconds looking at an object  
70 at least 20 feet away.

71 (6) Screen-based instruction, including work done in  
72 the classroom and assigned to be completed at home, must have  
73 clear educational value or involve critical thinking  
74 activities, including, but not limited to, coding, immersive  
75 simulations, creating multimedia projects, design, interaction  
76 with experts, peer collaboration, and research.

77 (7) Screen-based instruction must be compliant with  
78 applicable courses of study.

79 (8) Screen-based instruction must be compliant with  
80 state and federal privacy and data protection laws,  
81 regulations, and rules, and data governance policies adopted  
82 by the State Board of Education and local boards of education.

83 (9) The exceptions provided in Section 5.

84 (b) Each local board of education shall adopt policies



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85 consistent with the board's standards adopted pursuant to  
86 subsection (a).

87 (c) The board shall annually prepare a progress report  
88 relating to screen-based instruction in kindergarten through  
89 twelfth grade. The report shall include, but not be limited  
90 to, the use of screen-based instruction in kindergarten  
91 through twelfth grade, any revisions to the screen-based  
92 instruction standards, and the effect of the screen-based  
93 instruction standards on students, such as the average daily  
94 screen time use per student. The board shall provide a copy of  
95 the progress report for the preceding academic year to the  
96 Governor and the Legislature no later than October 1 of each  
97 year.

98 (d) The department shall oversee compliance with this  
99 act and may adopt rules necessary to enforce compliance.

100 Section 4. (a) (1) The Instructional Technology Task  
101 Force is created within the department. The membership of the  
102 task force shall be composed of the following:

103 a. Each of the following, appointed by the Governor:

104 1. Four classroom teachers, including two elementary  
105 school teachers, one middle school teacher, and one high  
106 school teacher.

107 2. One parent of a public school student.

108 3. One pediatric ophthalmologist or vision health  
109 specialist.

110 b. Two nationally recognized experts in child  
111 development, pediatric digital media research, or cognitive  
112 science, one of whom shall be appointed by the President Pro



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113 Tempore of the Senate and one of whom shall be appointed by  
114 the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

115 c. Two literacy or childhood development experts, one  
116 of whom shall specialize in adolescents and be appointed by  
117 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and one of whom shall  
118 specialize in early childhood and be appointed by the Speaker  
119 of the House of Representatives.

120 d. One representative of the Alabama Department of  
121 Education.

122 e. Each of the following, appointed by the State  
123 Superintendent of Education:

124 1. Two principals of public schools, including one  
125 principal of an elementary school and one principal of a  
126 middle school or high school.

127 2. One local superintendent of education.

128 3. One district instructional technology director.

129 4. One school curriculum and instruction specialist.

130 5. One local curriculum director.

131 (2) The appointing authorities shall assure the task  
132 force membership is inclusive and reflects the racial, gender,  
133 geographic, urban, rural, and economic diversity of the state.

134 (3) The State Superintendent of Education shall call  
135 the first meeting of the task force no later than June 1,  
136 2026, at which time the task force shall elect a chair and a  
137 vice chair. The task force may then meet as necessary to  
138 conduct business.

139 (b) The task force shall provide recommendations to the  
140 board on the screen-based instruction standards adopted



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141 pursuant to Section 3. The duties of the task force are as  
142 follows:

143 (1) Review up-to-date peer-reviewed research on screen  
144 use, learning, and instruction.

145 (2) Establish developmentally-appropriate grade-band  
146 recommendations for screen-based instruction.

147 (3) Identify best practices to ensure technology  
148 enhances rather than replaces direct instruction.

149 (4) Develop guidelines and best practices for virtual  
150 delivery of instruction, including any e-days or remote  
151 learning days.

152 (5) Issue written recommendations to the State Board of  
153 Education no later than October 1, 2027.

154 (6) Annually until 2030, review its prior  
155 recommendations and, as necessary, provide updated  
156 recommendations to the State Board of Education for the next  
157 academic school year. Beginning in 2030, the State Department  
158 of Education shall convene the task force for review of its  
159 prior recommendations at the same interval as the department  
160 reviews the Computer Sciences Course of Study, or its  
161 successor.

162 (c) The State Superintendent of Education and the State  
163 Board of Education shall review any recommendations from the  
164 task force. The board shall include the recommendations of the  
165 task force in the standards created pursuant to Section 3.

166 Section 5. This act does not apply to any of the  
167 following:

168 (1) Assistive technology required under an



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169 Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.

170 (2) State or federally required assessments.

171 (3) A teacher's use of technology for instructional  
172 displays or presentations.

173 (4) Temporary emergency remote instruction.

174 (5) Any computer science course or instruction in  
175 computer science pursuant to Section 16-46B-2, Code of Alabama  
176 1975.

177 (6) Online high school or college courses taken by  
178 public school students.

179 (7) Summer school courses taken via ACCESS Virtual  
180 Learning.

181 (8) Teacher's intermittent use of technology for the  
182 purposes of collecting rapid formative assessments to increase  
183 student engagement with teacher-led instruction.

184 Section 6. This act shall become effective on October  
185 1, 2026.





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House of Representatives

189 Read for the first time and referred .....05-Mar-26  
190 to the House of Representatives  
191 committee on Education Policy  
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193 Read for the second time and placed .....12-Mar-26  
194 on the calendar:  
195 2 amendments  
196  
197 Read for the third time and passed ..... 31-Mar-26  
198 as amended  
199 Yeas 98  
200 Nays 0  
201 Abs 4  
202  
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John Treadwell  
Clerk

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