

HB584 INTRODUCED



1 HB584

2 TBGJN55-1

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



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

SYNOPSIS:

This bill would require the State Board of Education to adopt standards for the use of screen-based instruction in kindergarten through fifth grade.

This bill would limit screen-based instruction to certain developmentally-appropriate uses, with exceptions.

This bill would establish the Elementary Instructional Technology Task Force within the State Department of Education to provide recommendations to the board relating to screen-based instruction, which the board must include in its standards.

This bill would require the task force to annually review its recommendations.

This bill would provide for the appointment of members to the task force.

This bill would require the board to submit an annual progress report to the Governor and the Legislature regarding the use of screen-based instruction in elementary schools.

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED



HB584 INTRODUCED

29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56

AN ACT

Relating to screen-based instruction; to require the State Board of Education to establish standards for screen-based instruction in kindergarten through fifth grade; to create the Elementary 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. 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 intentionally and in moderation and should not displace evidence-based instructional practices.

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

(5) The intent of this act is to promote balanced instructional practices in kindergarten through fifth grade



HB584 INTRODUCED

57 while preserving local flexibility and elevating educator
58 expertise.

59 (6) This act shall be read in pari materia with The
60 Healthy Early Development and Screen Time Act, Act 2026-169,
61 2026 Regular Session.

62 Section 2. For the purposes of this act, the following
63 terms have the following meanings:

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

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

66 (3) SCREEN-BASED INSTRUCTION. The individual use of an
67 electronic device, including, but not limited to, a laptop,
68 Chromebook, or tablet, by a student during instructional time.

69 Section 3. (a) The board shall adopt standards for
70 screen-based instruction for kindergarten through fifth grade.
71 The standards shall include specific guidance on appropriate
72 screen-based instruction for each grade and shall reflect, but
73 not be limited to, the following requirements:

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

76 (2) The use of screen-based instruction only as a
77 supplementary tool for instruction in core academic subjects
78 and may not serve as the primary mode of instruction.

79 (3) Screen-based instruction may not replace explicit
80 phonics instruction, handwriting, reading of physical texts,
81 manipulative-based mathematics instruction, or teacher-led
82 discussion.

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



HB584 INTRODUCED

85 (5) The scheduling of regular vision breaks after 20
86 minutes of screen-based instruction, and the encouragement of
87 off-screen play and movement between activities.

88 (6) Total screen-based instruction, including work done
89 in the classroom and assigned to be completed at home, may not
90 routinely exceed two hours per day, unless there is clear
91 educational value and the screen time is structured and
92 facilitated by adults.

93 (7) Any recommendations of the Elementary Instructional
94 Technology Task Force, pursuant to Section 4, including any
95 revised recommendations following the task force's annual
96 review.

97 (8) The exceptions provided in Section 5.

98 (b) Each local board of education shall adopt policies
99 consistent with the board's standards adopted pursuant to
100 subsection (a).

101 (c) The board shall annually prepare a progress report
102 relating to screen-based instruction in kindergarten through
103 fifth grade. The report shall include, but not be limited to,
104 the use of screen-based instruction in kindergarten through
105 fifth grade, any revisions to the screen-based instruction
106 standards, and the effect of the screen-based instruction
107 standards on students, such as the average daily screen time
108 use per student. The board shall provide a copy of the
109 progress report for the preceding academic year to the
110 Governor and the Legislature no later than October 1 of each
111 year.

112 (d) The department shall oversee compliance with this



HB584 INTRODUCED

113 act and may adopt rules necessary to enforce compliance.

114 Section 4. (a) (1) The Elementary Instructional
115 Technology Task Force is created within the department. The
116 membership of the task force shall be composed of the
117 following:

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

- 119 1. Two elementary school classroom teachers.
- 120 2. One parent of a public elementary school student.
- 121 3. One pediatric ophthalmologist or vision health
122 specialist.

123 b. Two nationally recognized experts in child
124 development, pediatric digital media research, or cognitive
125 science, one of whom shall be appointed by the President Pro
126 Tempore of the Senate and one of whom shall be appointed by
127 the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

128 c. Two early literacy or early childhood development
129 experts, one of whom shall be appointed by the President Pro
130 Tempore of the Senate and one of whom shall be appointed by
131 the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

132 d. One representative of the Alabama Department of
133 Education.

134 e. Each of the following, appointed by the State
135 Superintendent of Education:

- 136 1. One principal of a public elementary school.
- 137 2. One local superintendent of education.
- 138 3. One district instructional technology director.

139 (2) The appointing authorities shall assure the task
140 force membership is inclusive and reflects the racial, gender,



HB584 INTRODUCED

141 geographic, urban, rural, and economic diversity of the state.

142 (b) The task force shall provide recommendations to the
143 board on the screen-based instruction standards adopted
144 pursuant to Section 3. The duties of the task force are as
145 follows:

146 (1) Review up-to-date peer-reviewed research on screen
147 exposure and learning.

148 (2) Establish developmentally-appropriate grade-band
149 recommendations for screen-based instruction.

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

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

154 (5) Annually review its prior recommendations and, as
155 necessary, provide updated recommendations to the State Board
156 of Education for the next academic school year.

157 (c) The State Superintendent of Education and the State
158 Board of Education shall review any recommendations from the
159 task force. The board shall include the recommendations of the
160 task force in the standards created pursuant to Section 3.

161 Section 5. This act does not apply to any of the
162 following:

163 (1) Assistive technology required under an
164 Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.

165 (2) State or federally required assessments.

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

168 (4) Temporary emergency remote instruction.



HB584 INTRODUCED

169 (5) Any computer science course or instruction in
170 computer science pursuant to Section 16-46B-2, Code of Alabama
171 1975.

172 Section 6. This act shall become effective on October
173 1, 2026.