



**House Education Policy Reported Substitute for
HB584**

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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. 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



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29 evidence-based instructional practices.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

63 (5) The scheduling of regular vision breaks during
64 screen-based instruction which require students to follow the
65 20-20-20 rule. For the purposes of this subdivision, the
66 "20-20-20 rule" means that every 20 minutes, students must
67 spend at least 20 seconds looking at an object at least 20
68 feet away.

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

75 (7) The exceptions provided in Section 5.

76 (b) Each local board of education shall adopt policies
77 consistent with the board's standards adopted pursuant to
78 subsection (a).

79 (c) The board shall annually prepare a progress report
80 relating to screen-based instruction in kindergarten through
81 twelfth grade. The report shall include, but not be limited
82 to, the use of screen-based instruction in kindergarten
83 through twelfth grade, any revisions to the screen-based
84 instruction standards, and the effect of the screen-based



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85 instruction standards on students, such as the average daily
86 screen time use per student. The board shall provide a copy of
87 the progress report for the preceding academic year to the
88 Governor and the Legislature no later than October 1 of each
89 year.

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

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

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

96 1. Four classroom teachers, including two elementary
97 school teachers, one middle school teacher, and one high
98 school teacher.

99 2. One parent of a public school student.

100 3. One pediatric ophthalmologist or vision health
101 specialist.

102 b. Two nationally recognized experts in child
103 development, pediatric digital media research, or cognitive
104 science, one of whom shall be appointed by the President Pro
105 Tempore of the Senate and one of whom shall be appointed by
106 the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

107 c. Two literacy or childhood development experts, one
108 of whom shall specialize in adolescents and be appointed by
109 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and one of whom shall
110 specialize in early childhood and be appointed by the Speaker
111 of the House of Representatives.

112 d. One representative of the Alabama Department of



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113 Education.

114 e. Each of the following, appointed by the State
115 Superintendent of Education:

116 1. Two principals of public schools, including one
117 principal of an elementary school and one principal of a
118 middle school or high school.

119 2. One local superintendent of education.

120 3. One district instructional technology director.

121 4. One school curriculum and instruction specialist.

122 5. One local curriculum director.

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

126 (b) The task force shall provide recommendations to the
127 board on the screen-based instruction standards adopted
128 pursuant to Section 3. The duties of the task force are as
129 follows:

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

132 (2) Establish developmentally-appropriate grade-band
133 recommendations for screen-based instruction.

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

136 (4) Develop guidelines and best practices for virtual
137 delivery of instruction, including any e-days or remote
138 learning days.

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



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141 (6) Annually review its prior recommendations and, as
142 necessary, provide updated recommendations to the State Board
143 of Education for the next academic school year.

144 (c) The State Superintendent of Education and the State
145 Board of Education shall review any recommendations from the
146 task force. The board shall include the recommendations of the
147 task force in the standards created pursuant to Section 3.

148 Section 5. This act does not apply to any of the
149 following:

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

152 (2) State or federally required assessments.

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

155 (4) Temporary emergency remote instruction.

156 (5) Any computer science course or instruction in
157 computer science pursuant to Section 16-46B-2, Code of Alabama
158 1975.

159 Section 6. This act shall become effective on October
160 1, 2026.