tools for educators

screens in schools
action kit

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*For your convenience, each document in this Action Kit has only been listed once. However, these documents also fall under Tools for Educators. For a printable version of each full section, go to fairplayforkids.org/print-action-kit.

Introduction to Educator Resources

This section of the Screens in Schools Action Kit was created with the goal of helping guide teachers toward taking a more active role in questioning their district leaderships' overreliance on digital devices and computer-based instruction. This is often difficult for teachers to do, as raising questions can brand one as a "malcontent" or "foot-dragger." (Even with union protections, many teachers fear being singled out for exercising their basic right of free speech.) So, for now, parents are leading the way in trying to slow down the edtech juggernaut. Teachers can support them through joint presentations at PTA meetings and the like. We can also stand behind those parents who are requesting reductions in our school's screen use or are seeking to opt their children out entirely.

There are signs, however, that teachers are beginning to weigh in more forcefully on the issue. For example, in August 2019, *NEA Today* published an excellent article challenging the personalized learning trend. Some NEA state affiliates, such as the Massachusetts Teachers Association, have taken steps to bring edtech concerns to its membership, and, in some cases, into collective bargaining. Also, AFT president Randi Weingarten has spoken out strongly about the de-professionalization of teaching, criticizing the incessant, computer-based testing teachers are now required to administer.

Background

Teachers know that the "reform the curriculum" pendulum swings back and forth many times over the course of a teaching career – driven by fads, fears of falling behind the neighbors in standardized tests, and the marketing drive of the education industry, among other factors. Teachers also know that durable gains in students' learning come not through curriculum innovations, but rather through the positive influences of dedicated, caring teachers who are able to make a personal connection to a child and spark their love of learning.

Enabled by sharply lower prices for hardware, and improvements in AI, Wi-Fi, and cloud computing technology, no trend has overtaken schools as rapidly and thoroughly as the push for education technology (edtech) in our K-12 schools, and the associated trend toward computer-based instruction – dubbed, misleadingly, "personalized learning." More importantly, these trends have also been fueled by the enormous marketing power of the largest corporations in the world including Google, Apple, Facebook, and Amazon, which see K-12 education as a multibillion dollar profit-making opportunity.

Problems Associated with Excessive Screen Time in Schools

The edtech companies' main pitch is that schools need to prepare students for 21st century jobs; and this is a hard pitch for both administrators and parents to question. But schools *need* to be encouraging questions, for the following reasons:

Student Learning:

While the marketers come armed with self-produced studies proclaiming their products' effectiveness, long-term controlled studies have shown that the quantity and quality of student learning is similar, if not lower, in classrooms that rely heavily on computer technology. And students' future success will depend anyway on having gained "soft" skills such as critical thinking, written and oral communication, and group work.

Student Health:

Schools have a duty of care for students while they are at school. They are legally obligated to provide a safe learning environment, and that must include the safe use of digital devices, which have been shown to cause eye and musculoskeletal problems. Yet most schools have done little to provide the equipment and training to students and teachers about safe use.

Student Psychological and Social-Emotional Wellbeing:

The use of digital technology in classrooms cannot be addressed in isolation from students' home use, which, in many cases, is already excessive. By assigning homework online, teachers can – unwittingly – undermine parents or guardians who wish to monitor and control children's home use as a way to protect them from negative health effects, gaming addiction, and screen-related anxiety and depression.

(De-)Personalized Learning:

Computer-based "personalized" learning promises to teach children at their own pace, thus meeting learners exactly where they are. Students are constantly assessed, usually through multiple choice questions, and fed new lessons and assessments once mastery has been demonstrated. This is anything but "personal," as it reduces students' interaction with teachers and peers, leaving some students staring at computer screens for hours per day.

Student and Teacher Privacy and Misuse of Data:

The growing use of technology by schools, accelerated by the recent expansion of Cloud computing, creates serious concerns about children's privacy and the commercialization of the data collected by edtech platforms and apps. Many technology companies collect far more information on children than is necessary and store the data indefinitely.

De-professionalization and Loss of Teaching Jobs:

As schools increasingly rely on computers to instruct students, they can employ fewer teachers, and/or replace them with paraprofessionals, whose main role is to ensure that students remain on (screen-based) task. This is especially worrisome in the fiscal austerity setting in which most districts currently operate.

Distractions Caused by Device Use in Class:

Many teachers must now contend with the distractions created by students' use of digital devices for non-academic purposes. Studies show that the off-task use of digital devices distracts not only that student, but also all those within sight of the device.

Problems with Classroom Management:

Managing the classroom, many teachers contend, is becoming harder and harder. One factor contributing to children's apparent increased impatience and decreased focus is the stimulating effects that excessive screen time has on children's brain chemistry. Both excessive screen use and associated sleep deprivation can mimic and exacerbate conditions such as ADHD.

Commercialization and Privatization:

Robust curriculum, guided by and delivered with teachers' professional judgment, is replaced by predetermined computer algorithms and incessant testing, effectively turning over decisions about pedagogy and content to commercial interests.

Educator Commentaries

While parents are at the forefront of the battle against edtech overuse, many teachers are equally concerned about how edtech can harm students' health and learning, as well as edtech's impact upon the teaching profession itself. These recent commentaries and blog posts provide insight into their perspectives.

What Does "Personalized Learning" Even Mean?
Curdmudgucation Blog
August 10, 2019
Reasons to read: In this blog, Peter Greene, a former middle and high school English teacher, critically assesses the term "personalized learning," which marketers usually claim is the goal of educational technology. In fact, as Greene points out, the term has many meanings, and technology introduction often results in the *de-personalization* of learning as students spend less time interacting with peers and teachers.

Top 7 Ways Technology Stifles Student Learning in My Classroom
Gadfly on the Wall Blog
July 31, 2019
Reasons to read: Steven Singer, a middle school language arts teacher from Pennsylvania, outlines the ways that edtech undermines public education.

EdTech Utopia is Over
EducationNext
April 24, 2019
Reasons to read: This is a thorough, hard-hitting critique of the edtech industry by a former teacher and charter school administrator Steven F. Wilson.

Give Us Personalized Learning without the Algorithm
Renegade Teacher Blog
April 21, 2019
Reasons to read: This insightful blog by a Detroit-area high school social studies teacher puts edtech in the context of other education reform initiatives, predicting it will be used to promote standardized testing and replace teachers with tech. He contrasts the technology-first approach pushed by the Chan-Zuckerberg Initiative to the methods employed in Zuckerberg's own schooling at Phillips Exeter Academy.

Lies You Have Been Told About Educational Technology
Wait Until 8th Blog
March 6, 2019
Reasons to read: Matt Miles and Joe Clement, award-winning high school teachers in Virginia and co-authors of the book, *Screen Schooled*, summarize the myths that have allowed the edtech industry to gain a foothold in K-12 education.

Tech Companies Are Buying Their Own Education Research. That's a Problem
Edweek
February 6, 2019
Reasons to read: Matt Miles focuses on the health and social-emotional consequences of the drive to promote edtech, despite the lack of evidence that it actually improves learning outcomes. Miles highlights how much of the hype behind edtech is based on industry-sponsored studies of dubious value.

Personalized (Online) Learning Fails at Classroom Dynamics and Socialization
Nancy Bailey's Education Website
November 24, 2018
Reasons to read: Nancy Bailey, a former middle and high school special educator, writes about the high socialization costs of moving education online.

I gave my students iPads — then wished I could take them back
The Washington Post
December 2, 2015

Reasons to Read: In this excellent op-ed, Launa Hall, a DC-area third grade teacher**,** reflects on how a new 1:1 iPad program had her students isolated on screens rather than connecting with each other. She, like many teachers, appreciates the power of technology but worries that it has too much power over young children, and is concerned about the loss of communication skills that often accompanies screen overuse.

Selected Articles about Edtech and Teaching

A Union Perspective:

Has the Personalized Learning Hype Worn Off?

Tim Walker, *neaToday.* August 19, 2019

Loss of Teaching Jobs and Professionalism:

Forty Percent of Elementary School Teachers' Work Could Be Automated By 2030, McKinsey Global Institute Predicts
Benjamin Herold, *Education Week,* June 4, 2019

How Google's Former China Chief Thinks AI Will Reshape Teaching
Betsy Corcoran, *EdSurge*, December 11, 2018

5 Risks Posed by the Increasing Misuse of Technology in Schools
Diane Ravitch, *EdSurge*, December 29, 2017

Online Homework Issues:

How I lost the screen-time battle with my kids
Joe Mathews, *SF Chronicle*, May 5, 2019

Online Homework Conflicts with Parental Limits on Kids' Screen Time
Cait Etherington, *ELearning* newsletter, January 9, 2019

Andover Education Association

Educational Technology Report:
A Critical Analysis of Ed Tech in the Classroom
2018/2019

Executive Summary:
Over the past decade the proliferation of technology in Andover's classrooms has rapidly changed the dynamics of the learning environment. A veritable deluge of electronic toys, tablets, laptops, books, e-readers, interactive games, and applications has become inextricable from students' daily lives. Much of this technology is specifically marketed to young people, and much of it serves to harvest user data for private sector marketing and research purposes. The considerable effects of this technological eruption, and its intersection with the accumulation of data and individual information, is changing the experience of education before our eyes. Additionally, what seems clear from the research is that the ubiquity of these technologies in our learning environments poses serious health and safety implications for both students and educators in schools.

The Andover Education Association charged the Technology Study Committee with researching how Andover Public Schools utilizes technology, how AEA members experience technology, what research exists on the use of various technologies on student learning, and on the physical and psychological impact of technologies on students and educators.

We first solicited general feedback from faculty regarding three essential questions:

1. **What concerns do you have about the current technology initiatives and how they impact teaching and learning?**
2. **What concerns do you have regarding the roll-out and implementation of technology in the district?**
3. **What do you see as the strengths of technology in instruction and student learning?**

After reviewing this feedback, we crafted a survey that categorized and pinpointed issues that emerged across the district. We received a statistically significant sample (about 100 respondents/approximately 15-18% of our membership) representing every level of instruction. Thirty percent of respondents were Educational Support Personnel. Among other data, the survey reveals particular concern regarding how student wellness is impacted by technology in the classroom. The complete survey data can be found in the Appendix of this report. Some highlights:

- 72.8% of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" with the following statement: "**I am concerned about the amount of screen time students are exposed to at school.**"

- 81.5% of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" with the following statement: "**I am concerned about the effect screen time has on the social/emotional health of students.**"

- 70.6% of respondents "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with the following statement: "**I am satisfied that adequate safeguards are in place to protect students' social and emotional health as technology use increases.**"

Included in the committee's report are the following findings:

- Excessive screen time is linked to an increase in visual problems, anxiety, and depression among children and adolescents.
- Extensive use of a touch-screen tablet has a negative effect on the fine motor development of children age 5 and under.
- The academic effectiveness of online and blended learning programs on K-12 students is negligible.
- Cloud file-sharing programs provided through APS enables Google to mine data from students and faculty members without due compensation for their intellectual property.

We hope the following analyses and recommendations open a broader and deeper dialogue between the faculty, management, and the community-at-large regarding the understudied, but nevertheless ubiquitous, impacts of educational technology in the classroom.

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Student Wellness and Learning

As technology has rapidly expanded into almost every conceivable facet of our day-to-day lives, the same holds true for many K-12 classrooms in the United States. While the debate about smartphones and screen time in schools rages both in the U.S. and abroad – one notable European legislature overwhelmingly supported banning students' access to smartphones during the school day[1] – Andover Public Schools has opted to increase student exposure across-the-board despite evidence indicating the alarming risks of technology to both student health and achievement. In particular, our Bring Your Own Devices (BYOD) initiative has continued to bulldoze ahead with little to no consideration of the potentially harmful effects of ever-increasing student exposure to screen time both at school and at home. In light of an abundance of research that indicates serious cause for concern regarding technology use by young people, it would behoove the Andover Public Schools to conduct a thorough, multilateral, and meaningful review of its technology initiatives.

Andover's BYOD initiative has been supported under the auspices of "aim[ing] to enhance student learning by creating a personalized, student centered learning environment where every student has a laptop to use in school and at home. Students will leverage these tools in the classroom to learn how to collaborate, analyze data, and be effective members of a team."[2] In fact, if one were to peruse the *iAndover BYOD Pilot Report* from 2015, the only noted concerns were related to troubleshooting potential network connectivity issues and the financial burden placed on families. Nowhere in this document is there any reference to student health and well-being outside of a passing comment on student complaints re: the weight of their devices. There is, however, an abundance of anecdotal commentary about the purported educational benefits of an increased technology presence at the middle and high school levels. This seems rather odd when one considers that 95% of school administrators across the country feel that students spend too much time on screens at home.[3]

A cursory exploration of recent research indicates that an over-exposure to technology in both academic and social contexts can actually do more harm than good. A 2014 study of 450 undergraduates conducted at West Point indicated a statistically significant decrease in students' performance on exams in classrooms where laptops were allowed[4] compared with classes that did not allow laptops. A more recent undergraduate study from 2017 indicated that an over-reliance on devices/screens as a method of reading leads to poorer student comprehension, particularly with specific textual details.[5]

The impact of technology on students' social and emotional development is considerably more concerning than its effects in an academic context. A 2014 study of college students who had to go without using their phones found that the heaviest phone users experienced the greatest spike in self-reported levels of anxiety.[6] Another 2014 study conducted by the University of California, Los Angeles

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[1] Alissa J. Rubin and Elian Peltier, "France Bans Smartphones in Schools Through 9th Grade. Will It Help Students?" *The New York Times*. Sept. 20, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/world/europe/france-smartphones-schools.html

[2] https://www.aps1.net/DocumentCenter/View/6491/iAndover1to1-Learning-Initiative_Final-06-11-15?bidId=

[3] Christina A. Samuels, "School Principals Overwhelmingly Concerned About Children's Screen Time," *Education Week*. April 17, 2018. https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/04/18/school-principals-overwhelmingly-concerned-about-childrens-scree.html

[4] Susan Payne Carter, Kyle Greenberg, and Michael Walker, "The Impact of Computer Usage on Academic Performance: Evidence from a Randomized Trial at the United States Military Academy" SEII Discussion Paper #2016.02, May 2016. https://seii.mit.edu/research/study/the-impact-of-computer-usage-on-academic-performance-evidence-from-a-randomized-trial-at-the-united-states-military-academy/

[5] https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00220973.2016.1143794?journalCode=vjxe20

[6] https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/rewired-the-psychology-technology/201706/the-anxiety-epidemic

found that young people were spending more time than ever before in front of screens, and that it may be limiting their ability to recognize emotions.[7] Young people today are also less socially active in person than previous generations, and shockingly, 12th graders in 2015 spent even less in-person time with their friends than 8th graders in 2009.[8] A study from The National Institute on Drug Abuse found that, "Teens who spend more time than average on screen activities are more likely to be unhappy, and those who spend more time than average on non-screen activities are more likely to be happy.... Eighth-graders who spend 10 or more hours a week on social media are 56 percent more likely to say they're unhappy than those who devote less time to social media… those who spend six to nine hours a week on social media are still 47 percent more likely to say they are unhappy than those who use social media even less."[9] A 2017 study from Florida State University found "compelling evidence that the more time teenagers spend on smartphones and other electronic screens, the more likely they are to feel depressed and think about, or attempt, suicide."[10] When viewed comprehensively, these studies and findings at the very least indicate a need for a much more in-depth examination of the district's technology policies and procedures, as well as the short- and long-term effects of technology use on student and faculty social/emotional and physical health.

Recommendations

1. Screen time guidelines and limits for the school day should be established at all levels: These should be grounded in sound academic and medical research, and clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

2. APS technology initiatives must be thoroughly vetted by a multilateral committee of stakeholders that includes parents, students, teachers, and administrators before they are implemented.

3. APS technology initiatives should support our stated mission of "providing creative and quality instruction that educates the whole child so that they are prepared for success in college, career & life**.**"

4. APS technology initiatives should be regularly reviewed to assess: A) The effects on student academic achievement, and B) the effects on students' social and emotional health, as well as compatibility with the district's educational mission statement.

5. APS technology initiatives should be supported by sound academic and medical research, as well as demonstrate a measurable benefit to both student academic achievement and student/faculty social and emotional health.

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[7] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0747563214003227
[8] https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/09/has-the-smartphone-destroyed-a-generation/534198/
[9] Ibid.
[10] https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/11/171130170212.htm

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For a copy of the complete report, please email the Andover Education Association: andovereducator@gmail.com.

Resolutions on Edtech

2019 Annual Meeting
Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA)

The Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) and other associations have begun to speak out and educate their members about some of the negative impacts of educational technology.

The MTA passed the following resolutions in relation to edtech at its Annual Meeting in May 2019. (Additions to existing resolutions are underlined.)

Revised B-30

B-30 TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

The Massachusetts Teachers Association recognizes that access to new technology is essential to the expansion of knowledge and the development of new skills. Therefore, the MTA supports the appropriate use of technology in education and urges school committees and governing boards of higher education to bargain with local associations and chapters to develop policies regarding the use of such technology. The MTA believes that educators and students should be given the opportunity to explore and use the potential of emerging technologies under conditions that ensure their health and safety. Filtering of Internet websites must maintain a balance between the protection of students and the open flow of information.

The MTA also believes that every student should have the opportunity to experience technology education and that all educational professionals should have the opportunity for training in their schools in utilizing educational technology in their classrooms. Furthermore, the MTA believes that instructional technology should be used to support, but not to supplant, the classroom teacher <u>educator</u>.

<u>The MTA believes that the use of digital technology in classrooms cannot be addressed in isolation from students' home use. The MTA encourages a holistic approach in which educators and administrators work with parents or guardians wishing to protect children from the dangers of excessive screen use, including health effects, gaming addiction and screen-related anxiety and depression.</u>

<u>The MTA encourages districts to enact policies that result in limiting the distractions caused by smartphones and other digital devices, including school-issued devices, in schools.</u>

<u>The MTA also encourages schools to moderate the use of online homework and online textbooks in order to help students avoid excessive screen exposure.</u>

Revised C-12

C-12 <u>DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY</u> COMPUTER SAFETY

The Massachusetts Teachers Association strongly urges that school committee, boards of trustees and the governing boards of higher <u>education governing bodies</u> throughout Massachusetts take appropriate steps to ensure the health and safety of students and school personnel in using computers in classrooms and offices.

The MTA believes that measures should be taken to avoid the potential of harmful effects of computer usage such as using digital technology, including radiation, eye strain, muscular and neurological disorders, <u>as well as social, emotional and psychological impacts</u>.

Whenever public school or higher education systems require substantial use of electronic screen devices, such requirements should be widely publicized and debated by educators, school health officials, parents or guardians, and education governing bodies.

Rationale provided by Education Policy Committee:
Growing children are not just small adults; they are developing in specific stages and at different rates, without a full set of adult physical or psychological capabilities. As such, children are more vulnerable to the hazards posed by digital devices. Students will suffer more serious damage due to those vulnerabilities, because the related health risks are cumulative and the schools are demanding use of devices at ever-earlier ages.

Because the schools are requiring daily device use from students, starting at a very young age, and continuing throughout these developmentally critical stages, extreme caution should be applied when demanding the use of school equipment – equipment that has been regulated for adults by OSHA since the 1990s.

New technologies poised for classroom use – including virtual reality tools and computer-based learning applications – will bring even higher levels of risk to Massachusetts students. It is within this context of increased digital exposures that policy makers must make responsible, well-informed, regulatory and purchase decisions to protect students from known – and future – classroom hazards.

Revised C-15
C-15 ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOL
The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that schools provide an educational setting that should not be influenced by outside commercial interests. Therefore, the MTA is strongly opposed to providing access to public school facilities for commercial gain.
The MTA believes that any introduction of technology must be undertaken in ways that limit commercial access to students and their data wherever and whenever possible.

MORE SCREEN TIME?

From the folks who brought you...

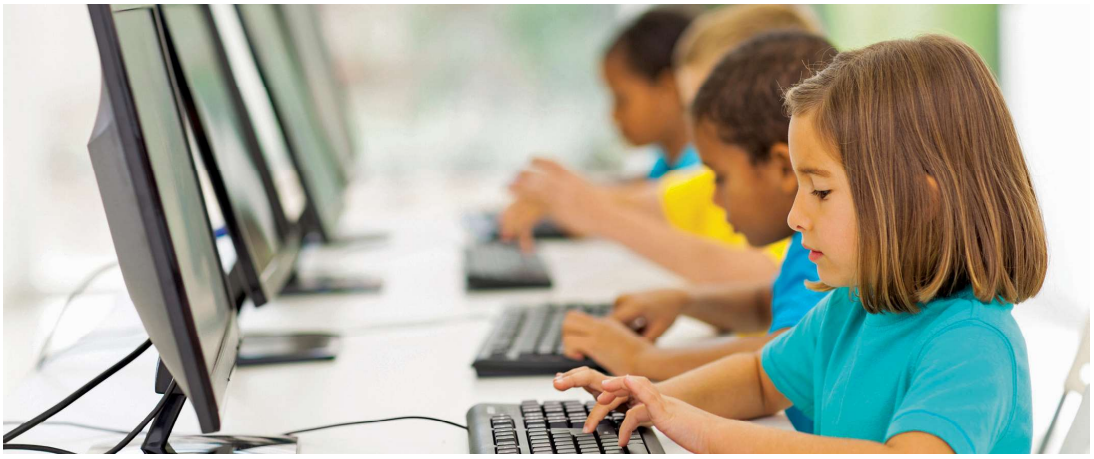
Charter schools!

High-stakes testing!

Teacher evaluations!

State takeovers!

Empowerment zones!



It's New. It's Hot. It's backed by Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, and all those other supercool champions of the working people.

It's *personalized* learning!

Who knew? Sitting kids down in front of a computer and having them follow the orders of its algorithm is (in corporate-reform-speak) "personalized."

The former head of Google China has put forward his vision:

"In a new form that we are investing in, in China, which is a 1-to-1,000 student-teacher ratio. ... In the 1-to-1,000 classroom, we also have teaching assistants. ... The local teachers can be trained to be teaching assistants, so a job that's much easier for each teacher to learn to do. ... So that kind of combination should replace the current type of lectures that people get.

If you think about the job of a teacher today, we just took away the lecture part and turned it into an assistant job. Teachers also have to take attendance. AI [artificial intelligence] can recognize students and the way in which they participate, and it can certainly save time from taking attendance. Now, some parents will start to worry, say, 'Wait a minute, I don't want my kids captured on video all the time.' But the benefit is that the system will know the comprehension level of the students, not just by how they do on exam."[1]

The high-flyers in the tech industry want this for the kids you teach.

But they don't want it for their kids: "Bill Gates banned cellphones until his children were teenagers, and Melinda Gates wrote that she wished they had waited even longer."

The former editor of *Wired* explained: "On the scale between candy and crack cocaine, it's closer to crack cocaine. … We thought we could control it. And this is beyond our power to control. This is going straight to the pleasure centers of the developing brain."[2]

End-of-year high-stakes tests will be replaced by testing and monitoring of students every day. The data from all those daily tests will belong to the commercial enterprise that provides the computer setup and software programs. But if they sell the data from your third-grader it will only be for the most noble of learning purposes, such as developing better software and making available helpful products. They promise.[3]

This doesn't even mention the health effects, mental and physical, of kids spending hours and hours staring at a screen. Or the lack of human group interaction and development of social skills.

It sounds crazy and stupid beyond belief. But the ed "reformers" see it as the next big thing and insist on calling screen time "personalized."

As educators, we have a responsibility to address these issues, and many parents want to work with us in doing so — they are worried about how much time their kids spend on screens and don't want the schools pushing more of that. (Or helping big tech companies collect data on their children.)

As a union, the MTA is taking up these issues. The MTA Education Policy and Practice Committee is developing resources to help educators and locals tackle the issue of screen time.

Is your district pushing more screen time?

Want to fight back? We can help.

We can help your local organize a forum for educators, parents and the community to talk about the issue of excessive screen time for students.

If your local thinks it might be interested in organizing such a discussion, either just for educators or for the broader community, please get in touch with the Education Policy and Practice Committee. We are eager to have conversations with people about their thoughts and experiences, as parents or as educators. Please stop by our table and chat.

— send us an email —

EPP@massteacher.org

1 Betsy Corcoran, "How Google's Former China Chief Thinks AI Will Reshape Teaching," *EdSurge*, December 11, 2018.

2 Nellie Bowles, "A Dark Consensus About Screens and Kids Begins to Emerge in Silicon Valley." *The New York Times,* October 26, 2018. Ask for references to additional articles in *Business Insider*, *The Washington Post*, NBC News, etc.

3 Dipayan Ghosh and Jim Steyer, "Kids Shouldn't Have to Sacrifice Privacy for Education." *The New York Times*, December 13, 2018. See *https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/13/opinion/children-privacy- online.html.* "The Summit 'personalized learning' educational tool — a platform for online lessons and assessments that was developed by a charter school network with the help of Facebook engineers and is backed by the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative — has been criticized for asking parents to consent to sharing their children's personal data, including their names, internet activity and grades."

Additional Resources

Educator Toolkit for Teacher and Student Privacy: A Practical Guide for Protecting Personal Data
Parent Coalition for Student Privacy, in partnership with the Badass Teachers Association
October 2018
From the introduction: "This toolkit complements the Parent Toolkit for Student Privacy, released in 2017 with Fairplay (formerly Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood). The educator toolkit is a comprehensive guide to help teachers understand the increased threats to education-related data made worse by the rapid adoption of education technology. It is designed to support their efforts to become responsible digital citizens by providing strategies and best practices to minimize the disclosure of personal data and protect the privacy of their students as well as their own."

Personalized Learning and the Digital Privatization of Curriculum and Teaching
Faith Boninger, Alex Molnar, and Christopher Saldana, National Education Policy Center
April 30, 2019
From the introduction: "Personalized learning programs are proliferating in schools across the United States, fueled by philanthropic dollars, tech industry lobbying, marketing by third-party vendors, and a policy environment that provides little guidance and few constraints. In this research brief, the authors consider how we got to this point. Beginning with an examination of the history of personalized learning and the key assumptions made by its proponents, they review the research evidence and reflect on the roles and possible impacts of the digital technologies deployed by many programs."

Outsourcing the Classroom to Ed Tech and Machine-Learning: Why parents and teachers should resist,
Leonie Haimson of the Parent Coalition for Student Privacy
October 2018
Overview: This PowerPoint provides a comprehensive overview of edtech that can be used in teacher and/or parent/teacher presentations.

Online Learning: What every parent should know
Network for Public Education
March 2018
From the introduction: "The 18-page guide is a parent-friendly review of the research on virtual schools, online courses, blended learning and behavior management apps. It also includes a discussion of the student privacy issues that arise when highly sensitive personal student data is collected by online programs and then distributed to third-party vendors without parent knowledge or consent."

screens in schools
action kit

With profound thanks, we honor these volunteer contributors for their tenacity, dedication and courage to create the original documents. Taking on this critical issue and providing tools to parents and teachers represents hope for generations of learners to come.

Seth Evans, Chair, Screens in Schools Work Group

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