

SECOND REGULAR SESSION  
HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
**HOUSE BILL NOS. 2230 & 2978**  
**103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

5744H.04C

JOSEPH ENGLER, Chief Clerk

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**AN ACT**

To amend chapters 160 and 186, RSMo, by adding thereto three new sections relating to instructional methods in schools.

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*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:*

Section A. Chapters 160 and 186, RSMo, are amended by adding thereto three new sections, to be known as sections 160.068, 186.085, and 186.095, to read as follows:

**160.068. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Student Screen-Time Standards Act".**

**2. As used in this section, the following terms mean:**

**(1) "Instructional technology", a laptop, tablet, computer, Chromebook, smart device, software platform, or other similar device or platform used for student learning;**

**(2) "Manipulatives", hands-on physical learning items including, but not limited to, blocks, counters, cubes, rulers, cards, science materials, and similar educational tools;**

**(3) "Traditional materials", printed books, paper-based workbooks, notebooks, handwriting materials, and physical educational resources.**

**3. For elementary school students in kindergarten through grade five, each school district and charter school, but not any virtual school, shall adopt a written screen time and instructional technology policy consistent with this section to promote the educational interests of students, prevent the harmful effects of screen time on child development, ensure that technology supports rather than supplants foundational learning, and restore evidence-based practices. The screen time and instructional technology policy shall establish the following:**

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

18           **(1) Limits and restrictions on student screen time and student use of**  
19 **instructional technology during the school day;**

20           **(2) Limits and restrictions on school district- or charter school-issued devices or**  
21 **school district or charter school educational technology being used outside the school**  
22 **day;**

23           **(3) Limits and restrictions on student access to internet-connected instructional**  
24 **technology;**

25           **(4) The digital platforms used;**

26           **(5) Standards and requirements for student use of manipulatives and traditional**  
27 **materials;**

28           **(6) The process for a parent or guardian to obtain information regarding his or**  
29 **her child's screen time and instructional technology use and the process for a parent or**  
30 **guardian to limit or eliminate his or her child's screen time and instructional technology**  
31 **use; and**

32           **(7) The research, evidence, and information upon which the policy is based.**

33           **4. In creating the policy, the district or charter school shall consider and**  
34 **document research on best practices in literacy instruction, instructional technology,**  
35 **and assessment and the optimal role for the use of handwriting and cursive writing in**  
36 **promoting literacy for all students.**

37           **5. Each elementary school shall notify parents and guardians annually of the**  
38 **policy adopted under subsection 3 of this section. Parents and guardians of students in**  
39 **grades kindergarten through five may, upon request, receive information about their**  
40 **child's login time and use of district-provided instructional technology and online**  
41 **learning platforms. The district or charter school shall provide such available**  
42 **information within a reasonable time and at no cost to the parent or guardian.**

43           **6. Each elementary school shall publish such policy on such school's website.**

44           **7. Each policy adopted under subsection 3 of this section shall be periodically**  
45 **updated, including incorporating the best practices recommendations from the**  
46 **recommended model school board policy on screen time and use of technology in**  
47 **instruction from the framework on classroom use of screens (FOCUS) council created**  
48 **under section 186.095, when such recommendations become available.**

49           **8. This section shall be implemented before the end of the 2027-28 school year**  
50 **and shall apply for all subsequent school years.**

**186.085. The literacy advisory council established under section 186.080 shall**  
2 **provide advice on the inclusion of instruction and assessment of cursive writing and**  
3 **reading, including the optimal role for the use of cursive writing and reading in**

4 **promoting literacy for all students. Such advice shall include recommendations for a**  
5 **related model policy on cursive.**

6 **186.095. 1. The commissioner of education shall establish a "Framework on**  
7 **Classroom Use of Screens Council" or "FOCUS Council". The council shall consist of**  
8 **at least twelve but no more than fifteen members. The council shall consist of the**  
9 **commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, who shall serve as chair of the council.**  
10 **The other members of the council shall be appointed by the commissioner and shall**  
11 **include members representing the following stakeholder groups:**

12 **(1) School boards;**

13 **(2) Charter schools;**

14 **(3) Elementary building principals who have gone through leadership training**  
15 **through the Missouri leadership development system;**

16 **(4) At least three teachers, including teachers with expertise in reading**  
17 **instruction, math instruction, and special education, with at least one teacher who has**  
18 **participated in the Missouri leadership development system;**

19 **(5) A representative from a parental advocacy group that represents children**  
20 **struggling with literacy and a representative from an advocacy group that represents**  
21 **children with disabilities;**

22 **(6) At least one faculty member of an institution of higher education with an**  
23 **approved teacher preparation program;**

24 **(7) A pediatric mental health professional or board-certified behavioral analyst**  
25 **licensed in the state, preferably with experience in technology and behavioral responses;**  
26 **and**

27 **(8) A medical professional with expertise in child health and development.**

28 **2. The department elementary and secondary education shall provide necessary**  
29 **staff and resources for the work of the advisory council.**

30 **3. (1) The council shall meet at least four times per year in its initial year and at**  
31 **least twice per year thereafter to conduct a comprehensive survey and analysis of screen**  
32 **time and instructional technology use in public schools and to review best practices**  
33 **regarding screen use and the use of technology in instruction and related policy**  
34 **provisions. Items and information related to such best practices and policies shall**  
35 **include, but not be limited to:**

36 **(a) Impacts on educational outcomes;**

37 **(b) Impacts on behavioral and discipline outcomes;**

38 **(c) Impacts on special education;**

39 **(d) Impacts on early childhood brain development, including reading and**  
40 **writing skills;**

36 (e) The deterioration of student competency in reading, writing, arithmetic, and  
37 science;

38 (f) The need to strengthen human connection in classrooms and support healthy,  
39 respectful relationships;

40 (g) The isolation of students in a digital and virtual world; and

41 (h) Other such items and information to be determined by the council.

42 (2) The council shall meet for the first time for purposes of this subsection before  
43 December 1, 2026, and the whole council or a subcommittee thereof shall hold at least  
44 three additional meetings for purposes of this subsection before July 1, 2027.

45 (3) On or before July 1, 2027, the council shall submit a report containing the  
46 council's actions, findings, recommendations, and policy proposals to the state board of  
47 education, the governor, and the joint committee on education.

48 (4) The recommendations shall include a recommended model school board  
49 policy on screen time and instructional technology use. The model policy shall  
50 recommend best practices regarding:

51 (a) Student screen time;

52 (b) Student use of instructional technology;

53 (c) Restrictions on student screen time;

54 (d) Restrictions on student use of instructional technology;

55 (e) Restrictions on student access to internet-connected instructional technology;

56 (f) Student use of manipulatives and traditional materials;

57 (g) The process for a parent or guardian to obtain information regarding his or  
58 her child's screen time and instructional technology use;

59 (h) Minimizing or eliminating school district- or charter school-issued devices or  
60 school district or charter school educational technology being used outside the school  
61 day; and

62 (i) The process for a parent or guardian to limit or eliminate his or her child's  
63 screen time and instructional technology use.

64 (5) The recommendations may include suggested changes to state law.

65 (6) The report shall be presented to the state board of education and to the joint  
66 committee on education in public hearings. The report shall be updated at least every  
67 two years to provide additional information regarding the council's actions,  
68 recommendations, and policy proposals.

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