



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOEL NELSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 7:51 AM

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I support these bills. Children should have limited technology exposure when young, and be learning handwriting skills and to become proficient at writing on paper.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: KIM WHITMAN		PHONE NUMBER: 816-260-6459	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: DISTRACTION-FREE SCHOOLS POLICY PROJECT; SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD US; BECCA SCHMILL FOUNDATION		TITLE: CO-LEAD	
ADDRESS: 4020 WEST 95TH TERRACE			
CITY: OVERLAND PARK		STATE: KS	ZIP: 66207
EMAIL: kimspikingwhitman@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 8:00 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

February 4, 2026

Dear Chair Banderman and Members of the Committee,

We applaud Representative Byrnes and Missouri for taking such a strong leadership role in introducing House Bill 2230.

We write as the leaders of the national Distraction-Free Schools Policy Project where for the past year we have been curating independent research to inform policy as it relates to how computers, digital and online products are used in our nation’s classrooms. The Distraction-Free Schools Policy Project is a joint initiative of the Becca Schmill Foundation and Smartphone Free Childhood U.S.

Students are spending more time in school and yet are less academically capable than past generations. It’s time to take an objective look at the industry that markets themselves under the title “education technology industry” (edtech). Edtech is a big business, and like the social media giants, its incentives prioritize profits over all else, including learning. The lack of oversight for this industry has left schools vulnerable to marketing scare tactics, leading them to spend taxpayer dollars on unproven—and often harmful—digital products. These products not only distract from learning but pose serious data privacy and safety risks.

The digital and online “edtech” products that are marketed and sold for use in our classrooms have never been independently vetted as 1) safe for students 2) effective for learning and 3) in compliance with existing law intended to protect children.

We support legislation that will prioritize every child's right to a safe, high-quality education. We believe such legislation should include the following:

1. Age appropriate Computer Introduction

Grades K-5: Should be screen-free, hands-on, print-based and should support foundational skills and developmental readiness;

Grades 6-8: Digital devices may be shared between students/classrooms. Use is teacher-led and actively supervised and only for academic purposes;

Grades 9–12: One-to-one digital devices may be introduced and used intentionally when it is independently established that the benefit and utility to using these digital products outperform the analog method.

2. Paper-and-Pencil Homework for K through 8: To preserve healthy boundaries between school and

home and to reduce unnecessary screen exposure, we advise all homework for TK–8 students be paper-and-pencil only, so that school-issued devices remain at school.

3. **No Recreational Screen Use During the School Day:** prohibition on Chromebook, iPads, or screen use before school, during lunch, during recess, or during unstructured downtime, as well as blocks on YouTube and video games like Minecraft. Unstructured time at school is critical for socialization, movement, imagination, and emotional regulation. Sites like YouTube and Minecraft pose well-documented risks related to distraction, dangerous content, and addictive design and should be entirely not accessible to students.

4. **No Generative AI Tools:** Families should not be defaulted into emerging technologies with unknown developmental and ethical implications.

5. **Meaningful Opt-Out from EdTech:** Families should have the right to opt out of educational technology without penalty to their child. We request a clear, written pathway for opting out.

6. **Obtain Parental Consent for Each Data-Collecting App or Website:** In alignment with updated FTC guidance under COPPA, parental consent should be required for each individual app or website that collects student data.

8. **Independent Vetting of Tech:** All student facing technology used by the school must be independently vetted for safety, effectiveness and compliance with data privacy laws by entities that have no funding from or partnerships with commercial entities that can create real or perceived bias.

9. **Limitations on screen time:** Middle and high school students should have limits on screen time in school and for homework. Sleep needs to be prioritized especially for high school students, and limiting screen based homework and help with this.

10. **Family Education About Screen Health Risks.** Education should be provided for families on the health and developmental risks of excessive screen use and how to recognize and respond to issues such as problematic or addictive screen behaviors.

We appreciate how House Bill 2230 significantly contributes to creating a better learning environment for students.

Thank you for your consideration. We are available to support and answer questions.

Sincerely,

-Kim Whitman, Smartphone Free Childhood US (Kansas)

-Deb Schmill, Becca Schmill Foundation (Massachusetts)

-Laura Derrenderinger, Smartphone Free Childhood US (Vermont)

Co-Leads, Distraction-Free Schools Policy Project

The Distraction-Free Schools Policy Project is an independent volunteer professional coalition of subject matter experts and parents across 33 states. We maintain full independence from any commercial industry entity neither accepting money or partnerships from “tech” related companies that would create real or perceived bias in how we read and interpret research to inform best practice policy.

Please find the following curated independent research below which supports our statements.

Online and digital products used at school increase student screen time at the risk of students’ physical and mental health.

Recent surveys show that students spend 1-4 hours daily on screens at school.

There is a 60% increase in psychological disorders in children who have more than 1-2 hours of screen time per day.

Using a computer seven hours a week or more triples the risk of nearsightedness.

Online and digital products are ineffective in producing positive learning outcomes.

A study called “How We Learn” by researchers for Scientific American Mind reviewed more than 700 scientific articles on ten common learning techniques to identify the most advantageous ways to study. Of those deemed most advantageous for learning, exactly ZERO used any sort of advanced digital technology.

The Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development studied millions of High School students worldwide and found that those who used computers heavily at school “do a lot worse in most learning outcomes, even after accounting for social background and student demographics.”

Research suggests that, on average, students using tablets in “all or most of all” of their classes have reading scores that are the equivalent of a full grade lower on assessments than students who never use tablets in their classrooms.

Fourth-grade students “who used tablets in all or almost all their classes had, on average, reading

scores 14 points lower than those who never used them – a differential equivalent to an entire grade level.”

When replication studies conducted by independent researchers were compared to research conducted by app developers, the developer studies tended to yield 80% higher academic gains. National assessment scores have declined in recent years, with mounting evidence suggesting a correlation between technology saturation and poor student outcomes, especially in early education.

References and publications re online and digital product exposure in youth "recreational and classroom exposure"



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KISHA MCNULTY TAYLOR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 6:15 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: OTTO FAJEN		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-3202	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI NEA		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 1810 E. ELM STREET			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: TERRILL C. HERRING, MBA		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 9:07 AM	
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Absolutely this bill!



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ALLIE RAINS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 12:18 PM
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Technology-enriched classrooms prepare students for a world filled with technology. These students will fall behind in global influence if the opportunity to learn and understand technology is not provided.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ALLY BECKER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 12:35 PM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ALYSSA FRANKE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 12:09 PM
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We oppose this because politicians aren't education experts, so they shouldn't be micromanaging our classrooms or instruction tools. Concerns about technology usage are valid, but this removes the flexibility that teachers need to meet the needs of all students in their classroom in any given day or lesson plan. It mandates the same rule no matter the elementary grade level.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ANDREA STEUDEMAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 4:52 PM
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Our teachers don't want it and I trust our teachers.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. AC DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 11:35 PM
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I believe in "Local-Control" and Educational Decision-Making to be made in Our State's 518 School District.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ASHLEY O'DANIEL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 6:21 PM
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This is a complete overreach. Let our teachers decide what works best for them.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CATHERINE HOLMES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 1:16 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I oppose this because politicians aren't education experts, so they shouldn't be micromanaging our classrooms or instruction tools. Concerns about technology usage are valid, but this removes the flexibility that teachers need to meet the needs of all students in their classroom in any given day or lesson plan. It mandates the same rule no matter the elementary grade level. Local school districts should decide what's best for their students.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTINE COX		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 6:13 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

This bill is an over reach of law, and an unfunded mandate in a time of concerning public Ed budgets. I agree with the sentiment of the bill, but don't think it should be written as law. I would prefer these be written as guidance from DESE. One of my concerns is the cost of implementing the bill- who will pay for curriculum for handwriting? Who will teach teachers how to teach it (curriculum admin that voters think we have too many of and won't pay for) Typing is still a skill students need as they continue learn an enter workforce. How will this impact state testing? Will students still be required to take their assessments by computer? Will they have the practice time to learn to type their answers efficiently? I've watch students struggle with this skill in the past. Overall, local control on technology use is essential.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CURTIS R BRENNECKE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 11:13 AM
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I oppose this bill because it imposes rigid, one-size-fits-all limits on classroom instruction that undermine local control and professional judgment of educators. Arbitrary caps on technology use ignore how digital tools are already used responsibly to support literacy, remediation, accessibility, and individualized learning. The mandates would force schools to purchase and maintain duplicate paper materials, creating new costs without providing additional funding. Restricting technology also disadvantages students with diverse learning needs and widens gaps for those who rely on adaptive or blended instruction models. Missouri should focus on adequately funding schools and trusting educators, not legislating inflexible classroom practices that reduce instructional effectiveness. Teaching cursive is only a small portion of what students should be learning. They need to focus on technology because we must look forward.



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: DAVA-LEIGH BRUSH		PHONE NUMBER: 314-600-6018
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI EQUITY EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP		TITLE:
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1352		
CITY: ST. CHARLES		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 63010
EMAIL: dlb@missouriequity.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 1:32 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The Missouri Equity Education Partnership opposes this bill as written. We believe the cost of physical textbooks will create an equity gap between financially fluid districts and those that struggle. Technology is here to stay, but we understand the benefit of using physical books, writing on paper with pencils/pens, and limiting technology. We are concerned this bill, as written, will throw the baby out with the bathwater. Until the State decides to fully fund the foundation formula and provide robust resources for all district, as distasteful as it is, cost has to be a factor. Furthermore, technology resources benefit ESL students by allowing access to hyperlinks that provide definitions quickly, images, and translation services in an efficient and financially feasible way. They need to be included in any carve outs. Finally, we believe that cursive writing should be a resource used as needed but not require for all.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DEBORAH FUCOLORO, PHD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 8:33 AM
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As an educator for 30 years, it is my belief that politicians are not education experts. They should not be micromanaging our classrooms or instructional tools. The use of technology in the classroom is a valid concern, but these bills remove the flexibility teachers need to meet the needs of all students regardless of lesson objective and/or grade level.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: EMILY CONLEY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 2:27 PM
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I oppose this because politicians aren't education experts, so they shouldn't be micromanaging our classrooms or instruction tools. Concerns about technology usage are valid, but this removes the flexibility that teachers need to meet the needs of all students in their classroom in any given day or lesson plan. It mandates the same rule no matter the elementary grade level.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER SHIRLEY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 7:34 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo. No to 2978. Let's schools and districts make this decision not the state			



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER UDING		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 11:51 AM
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This law would put an unnecessary burden on both educators and schools to track every minute a child is on the computer.

It also does not consider gifted education or alternative style schools that utilize real world opportunities.

It would absolutely decimate the ability of gifted educators to deliver real world learning opportunities and regular classroom teachers would be unable to meet the needs of our highest achieving students. I currently teach photography, programming, and robotics for elementary gifted students. I do not use any pencil paper assignments because my curriculum was developed in conjunction with experts in the field to simulate real world experience.

My high achieving gifted students would no longer have access to these advanced opportunities if this bill passes. They would be stuck learning the same grade level content other 8-10 year olds are learning despite being up to 7 grade levels above them in ability.

Please don't send our brightest students back to the stone age by ripping these opportunities away from them.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JERE HOCHMAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 10:55 PM	

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Teachers are professionals. Let them teach. Schools are forever learning. School districts engage experts and research and parents and frameworks for learning.

First, the Legislature is getting far too government-intrusive into teaching and learning. The legislature should not dictate curriculum resources, instructional methods, and classroom planning and instructional methodology. This has been a slippery slope for years and it fell off the cliff last year with the three-cueing system. "Evidence-based or not" - that is not government's job.

Second, kids do spend far too much time on SCREENS. However - "Instructional technology" and "technology for instruction" are vague and ambiguous. I agree with the intent 100%. I disagree with time limits pulled out of the air and generalizations. And again, it is not the job of government.

Third, cursive? Policy by nostalgia is foolish. Policy that dictates the physical actual motor skill of a child government overreach. Measuring it on a "performance assessment" is beyond understanding surpassed only by measuring BMI in PE class.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KATHLEEN LEE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 8:06 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KATIE SANDERS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 12:13 PM

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I oppose this because politicians aren't education experts, so they shouldn't be micromanaging our classrooms or instruction tools. Concerns about technology usage are valid, but this removes the flexibility that teachers need to meet the needs of all students in their classroom in any given day or lesson plan. It mandates the same rule no matter the elementary grade level. These rules also put a lot more responsibility and time on teachers, and they do not have the bandwidth to do all of this tracking.

A fifth grader headed into middle school has vastly different technology needs than a kindergartener does. By 5th grade students are researching and writing papers, technology is NEEDED for that.

Let the DESE be the ones to decide on technology use in schools, they are the education experts!



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KORTNIE HUDDLESTON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 10:58 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

This bill, while perhaps well-intentioned, represents a regressive and restrictive approach to education that will harm Missouri’s students and widen existing inequities.

It arbitrarily limits essential digital literacy—a core 21st-century skill—to just 45 minutes per day, hindering student preparedness for a technology-driven world. This restriction disproportionately impacts under-resourced districts that rely on technology to bridge gaps in materials and access to specialized instruction.

The bill’s rigid mandates on handwriting and physical materials ignore the diverse needs of learners and the professional judgment of educators. It forces a one-size-fits-all model, undermining differentiated instruction and failing students who thrive with adaptive or assistive technology outside of narrow exemptions.

Furthermore, it imposes unfunded burdens on schools for reporting and compliance, diverting scarce resources from direct student support. The legislation is rooted in a nostalgic vision of education that dismisses evidence-based, innovative teaching methods and the importance of digital fluency.

We should empower teachers to balance traditional and technological tools based on pedagogical best practices and individual student needs—not impose top-down, restrictive mandates that stifle educational progress and equity.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LAURA PHILLIPS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 10:02 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I'm for guidelines based on research but not for mandates on technology usage. Also, if you are putting limitations on screens then let's work together to get more money into schools for smaller classroom sizes.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LAURA ZINK		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 9:55 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I oppose HB 2978 because its too restrictive for the diverse learning needs of each elementary school, classroom, and child. I oppose the onerous reporting requirements that take valuable teaching time away from our kids. I think this is extreme government overreach in our classrooms despite understanding that overuse use of technology could be a concern in some instances in education. While I appreciate the carve out for special education, what about gifted education? And what about the kiddos that don't benefit from the individualized instruction of either SSD or gifted education, but should be and haven't been able to receive services for a variety of reasons. My point is that this bill is short sighted and too restrictive. This bill is a one-size-fits-all approach to a technology problem that is quite complex when you consider teaching methods and interventions plus the onerous requirements on teachers to meet the needs of all students in their classrooms.

I believe the most impactful change to overuse of technology can be from parents limiting screen time and social media outside of school hours. That is the most damaging technology to our children's development.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL DREYER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 10:57 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

This bill, while perhaps well-intentioned, represents a regressive and restrictive approach to education that will harm Missouri's students and widen existing inequities.

It arbitrarily limits essential digital literacy—a core 21st-century skill—to just 45 minutes per day, hindering student preparedness for a technology-driven world. This restriction disproportionately impacts under-resourced districts that rely on technology to bridge gaps in materials and access to specialized instruction.

The bill's rigid mandates on handwriting and physical materials ignore the diverse needs of learners and the professional judgment of educators. It forces a one-size-fits-all model, undermining differentiated instruction and failing students who thrive with adaptive or assistive technology outside of narrow exemptions.

Furthermore, it imposes unfunded burdens on schools for reporting and compliance, diverting scarce resources from direct student support. The legislation is rooted in a nostalgic vision of education that dismisses evidence-based, innovative teaching methods and the importance of digital fluency.

We should empower teachers to balance traditional and technological tools based on pedagogical best practices and individual student needs—not impose top-down, restrictive mandates that stifle educational progress and equity.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PAM SKELLY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 3:19 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Limiting use of technology will set students up for failure in high school, higher education, workplaces, and careers. Unless a person studies historical documents for a living, there is no need for such heavy emphasis on cursive writing. While handwriting can be good for the brain, it does not have to be cursive and it can be used successfully in conjunction with computers and technology.

The government should absolutely NOT be dictating how children are being taught. Leave it to the professionals. Teaching methods should be evidence and best practice based, and be able to prepare students for the future. The future does not include lots of paper and pencils and cursive writing. Please vote NO on HB 2978!



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: REBECCA VENNEMANN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 7:43 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am a public school teacher, and I am extremely opposed to this measure. Everyone can agree that too much technology can be harmful at any age, but especially childhood. But a law mandating how many minutes elementary students can use computers or other screens is not the way to moderate this. Ask any good teacher, and they will tell you they try to strike a balance between digital and handwritten classwork. We are very mindful about how much screen time our kids are using, but we also have to prepare them for the 21st century. Teachers are the ones with firsthand expertise about what our students need, not legislators in Jefferson City. Students' needs vary from community to community and even classroom to classroom. Let schools keep local control and let us make the decisions about what tools our kids need.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RYAN TINKER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 12:30 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I oppose this bill because politicians aren't education experts, so they shouldn't be micromanaging our classrooms or instruction tools. Concerns about technology usage are valid, but this removes the flexibility that teachers need to meet the needs of all students in their classroom in any given day or lesson plan. It mandates the same rule no matter the elementary grade level.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SALLY NICKEL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 1:12 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Concerns about technology use for children (and not just in school) are valid, however should not be micromanaged by politicians, especially ones that are not education experts. Furthermore, the reporting requirements put additional burden on classroom teachers when their time is already overextended.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SARA SIMPSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 12:07 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I oppose this because politicians aren't education experts, so they shouldn't be micromanaging our classrooms or instruction tools. Concerns about technology usage are valid, but this removes the flexibility that teachers need to meet the needs of all students in their classroom in any given day or lesson plan. It mandates the same rule no matter the elementary grade level which is ridiculous.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SARA SIMPSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 12:08 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I oppose this because politicians aren't education experts, so they shouldn't be micromanaging our classrooms or instruction tools. Concerns about technology usage are valid, but this removes the flexibility that teachers need to meet the needs of all students in their classroom in any given day or lesson plan. It mandates the same rule no matter the elementary grade level.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SARAH A BOYER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 11:16 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sarah Boyer, and I am writing as both a Missouri teacher and a parent of children in our public schools to respectfully express my opposition to HB 6630.

As an educator, I strongly believe in hands-on, meaningful learning. We know from both research and classroom experience that active, in-person instruction is powerful for children. However, mandates alone do not create those conditions. Teachers already carry enormous responsibility: large class sizes, increasing academic and behavioral needs, and extensive documentation requirements. If the goal is to increase hands-on instruction, educators must first be given the resources, staffing, and manageable class sizes that make it possible. Without additional funding and support, this bill becomes another unfunded mandate placed on teachers who are already stretched thin.

I am also concerned about the bill's rigid limits on instructional technology. Many modern curricula are published digitally so they can be updated as research evolves. Digital materials are often more current and cost-effective than printed textbooks. As a teacher, I prefer in-person and tactile learning whenever possible, but good teaching requires professional judgment and flexibility, not one-size-fits-all restrictions. Mandating specific formats does not guarantee better instruction and may prevent teachers from using tools that are working well for their students.

From a Special Education teacher perspective, I worry deeply about the impact on students with special needs. Some children rely on assistive technology for access to text, communication, or organization. Even with exemptions written into law, policies like this can unintentionally single out students whose learning looks different. Schools should be moving toward inclusive environments where supports are normalized, not policies that risk highlighting differences or creating logistical barriers.

I also question why statewide assessments continue to be delivered electronically while classroom technology use is being restricted. If digital tools are considered inappropriate for instruction, it raises concerns about fairness and consistency in how students are evaluated.

Teachers want what families want: engaged students, strong literacy skills, and meaningful learning experiences. But research consistently shows that lasting improvement comes from investment in people, smaller class sizes, adequate staffing, and professional trust, not from rigid mandates. I urge you to prioritize funding and structural support for schools rather than policies that restrict

instructional flexibility without addressing the underlying needs of classrooms.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to oppose HB 6630.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to Missouri's children.

**Sincerely,
Sarah Boyer**



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SARAH BERRY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 9:52 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

House Bill 2978 should not advance because it is materially duplicative of HB 2230, imposes unfunded and rigid instructional mandates on local school districts, and raises the same constitutional, administrative, and federal-compliance concerns already present in parallel legislation.

Advancing multiple, substantially identical bills on the same subject creates statutory risk, administrative confusion, and unnecessary legislative redundancy.

1. Duplicative Legislation and Cross-Bill Conflict

HB 2978 is substantively identical to HB 2230, including:
 identical section numbering (proposed §160.068),
 identical definitions,
 identical instructional caps and prohibitions,
 identical reporting and policy requirements, and
 identical effective dates.

Introducing and advancing multiple bills with overlapping language governing the same statutory section creates ambiguity as to legislative intent, complicates implementation, and increases the risk of conflicting amendments or inconsistent enforcement.

The General Assembly should not advance duplicative legislation when the same policy vehicle is already pending.

2. Unfunded Mandate on Local School Districts

HB 2978 requires districts to:
 redesign instructional delivery models,
 track daily instructional minutes by student and grade,
 implement new reporting systems,
 adopt, publish, and annually update detailed written policies, and
 ensure compliance with prescriptive material and instructional ratios.

The bill contains no appropriation, fiscal note offset, or reimbursement mechanism, shifting the full cost of compliance onto local districts.

This is particularly burdensome for rural and under-resourced districts.

3. Intrusion on Local Control of Education

Missouri law has long vested local boards of education with authority over curriculum, instructional methods, and classroom management.

HB 2978 replaces professional and local judgment with statewide micromanagement of daily classroom practices, including minute-based caps and material usage requirements.

This level of prescriptive control exceeds the legislature's traditional role of setting standards and instead imposes operational mandates that belong at the local level.

4. Federal Compliance Risk

Despite limited carve-outs, HB 2978 creates unavoidable tension with federal requirements under: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Title I program obligations.

Rigid instructional caps and reporting mandates risk placing districts in conflict with individualized educational determinations required under federal law, exposing districts and the state to enforcement actions and potential funding consequences.

5. Administrative and Enforcement Defects

The bill requires granular tracking and reporting while allowing individualized exceptions, creating an internally inconsistent compliance framework.

HB 2978 provides:
no enforcement authority,
no audit mechanism,
no standard for determining violations, and
no protection for districts acting in good faith.

This invites inconsistent application across districts and legal exposure without guidance.

HB 2978 is unnecessary, duplicative, unfunded, and structurally flawed. Its advancement alongside HB 2230 undermines legislative clarity and imposes substantial risk on school districts without providing resources or workable enforcement standards.

For these reasons, HB 2978 should not advance.

Footnotes

Mo. Const. art. III, § 21 (requiring bills to contain a single subject clearly expressed in the title; duplicative measures addressing the same statutory subject risk confusion as to legislative intent and scope).

Mo. Const. art. III, § 23 (prohibiting the enactment of laws in a manner that obscures their operation; parallel bills governing the same conduct undermine transparency and intelligibility).

Mo. Const. art. III, § 44 (vesting legislative authority in the General Assembly as a deliberative body; orderly lawmaking presumes coherent, non-redundant enactments).

Missouri canons of statutory construction (presuming the legislature does not intend meaningless, redundant, or superfluous enactments; duplicative bills frustrate this presumption).



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2978		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SUZANNE SHIMKUS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 8:36 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I am very concerned at the ramifications for my ELA classroom. I teach students who don't read at grade level. I allow them to listen to audiobooks while they read, which is done on their chromebooks. We also practice reading through a district-purchased curricular program. Year after year, 90+% of my students show significant gains in their reading abilities, and about 1/3 of them make it to grade-level reading! Chromebook's BENEFIT my students' learning!



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER KOCHER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 11:12 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am grateful for the work on this topic. I encourage clarification of the wording of the lines that prohibit the use of technology for classroom management, behavioral tracking, or entertainment.

The word "technology" there is undefined. The resulting ambiguity seems problematic. For example, it could mean that schools would not be permitted to use microphones, amplifiers, or speakers at school assemblies, since sometimes the performances are for entertainment.

Regarding activities like classroom management and behavioral tracking, the current language could prohibit the use of software that administrators use to track things like office referrals, when such data management can help teachers in the future work more effectively work with children with behavioral patterns.

If the goal is to minimize the use of methods that visibly track and display the behavioral status of a student to shame the student into behaving differently, banning the technology won't ban the method-- you can still do the same thing using paper posters and clothespins.

Behavior management for students with IEPs needs to be guided by this federal Department of Education Dear Colleague Letter about the requirements for preventing problematic behaviors and maximizing instructional time through the IEP. More than Behavior Intervention Plans are required. This is extremely informative. If educators followed this, they wouldn't have to shame anybody into behaving differently.

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/osep-dear-colleague-letter-on-ensuring-equity-and-providing-behavioral-supports-to-students-with-disabilities/>

I understand why instructional technology needs to be limited, but it is unclear why it is necessary to limit the use of technology to do important job functions like managing the classroom and tracking behavior in cases when the technology is not affecting the student. I suggest that it would be helpful to clarify the language to more closely match the issues it is intended to address.