

SCREEN TIME AND EDTECH



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We support productive and educational uses of technology and recommend that school leaders strive to ensure that students are learning how to use EdTech tools responsibly. We believe that EdTech should be carefully filtered and vetted and used only when instructionally appropriate.

DEFINING “SCREEN TIME”

“Screen time” is not a single category and should not be evaluated as such. Educational technology—aligned with curriculum, guided by teachers, and governed by privacy and security policies—is fundamentally different from recreational technology.

TECHNOLOGY PROVIDES ACCESS

Educational technology enables students with unique learning needs and students without home internet access to fully participate in modern learning environments. Educational technology is also foundational to delivering the digital tools and rich content that teachers rely on to differentiate instruction, assess student understanding, and create opportunities for small-group and individualized learning.

EDTECH BENEFITS STUDENTS

According to a 2021 Institute of Education Sciences report, schools reported that technology use helps students:

- Engage in more active learning (93%)
- Become more independent and self directed (92%)
- Learn at their own pace (90%)
- Think critically (85%)
- Learn collaboratively with peers (83%)¹

EDTECH PREPS STUDENTS FOR THE WORLD

Rather than efforts to broadly prohibit access to technology, school leaders should focus on equipping young people with the skills to use technology responsibly, including AI. Through intentional and wise implementation, school districts can support effective, safe, and accessible learning environments for all students.

THREE TYPES OF SCREEN TIME



EdTech

- Used to support student learning.
- Used IN ADDITION to high-quality teaching.
- Designed to deepen content knowledge and build 21st-century skills.



Entertainment

- Refers to platforms that can be accessed beyond just via a cell phone.
- Includes video games, television, and desktop computers.



Cell Phones & Social Media

- Designed to incentivize consistent user engagement.
- Can serve as a significant distraction.
- Subject of recent legislation in most U.S. states.

¹ Gray, L., and Lewis, L. (2021). *Use of Educational Technology for Instruction in Public Schools: 2019–20* (NCES 2021-017). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, p.5, Retrieved December 22, 2025 from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2021017>