

Tech-Intentionality Survey

Summary of Parent Responses

NY area school districts | August 2026

14	12	11	2
substantive response records	responses from districts	distinct districts represented	additional responses

Executive Summary

The survey presents a consistent picture of parent concern about the breadth, timing, and oversight of educational technology use. Across the 14 substantive response records, every respondent reported screens in classrooms and 1:1 student devices, typically beginning in kindergarten or the early elementary grades. At the same time, formal guardrails appear limited: 12 respondents said there is no homework device opt-out, 13 said there is no in-class opt-out, 13 reported no published screen-time limit by grade, and 10 said parents are not given a grade-level software inventory. Respondents also described limited transparency around software selection, little evidence that tools are independently evaluated for learning impact, and few regular opportunities for parent input. These results suggest that device access is widespread, while the policies governing necessity, duration, effectiveness, and family choice are comparatively underdeveloped or poorly communicated.

The most repeated concerns were distraction and loss of attention; displacement of handwriting, books, discussion, hands-on work, and teacher-student interaction; exposure to inappropriate or non-academic content despite filtering; gamified products that reward engagement more than learning; and the rapid introduction of AI before students have developed foundational writing, research, and critical-thinking skills. Respondents cited games, workarounds around filters, online bullying, unsafe content, and easy access to AI-enabled tools as examples of the gap between policy and actual use. Although this is a small, self-selected, parent-reported sample and should not be treated as a representative measure of all district practices, the responses identify a clear agenda for discussion: publish inventories and selection standards, establish age-appropriate screen-time and device-use expectations, create meaningful opt-out pathways, strengthen monitoring and filtering, and adopt transparent AI rules with parent input.

How to read these results. The workbook contained 14 rows after the header. Twelve records are from Westchester County districts; 2 other district records are retained because they were included in the source file and provide useful comparison. Answers are self-reported, sometimes uncertain, and were not independently verified with districts.

Cross-Cutting Findings

Access is nearly universal and starts early

All 14 respondents reported classroom screens and 1:1 devices. Most described classroom screen exposure beginning in pre-K or kindergarten, even where take-home devices begin later.

Parent choice is rare

No respondent reported a generally available device opt-out. A few comments described exceptions granted privately on a case-by-case basis, but not a published districtwide option.

Governance trails usage

Most respondents did not see published screen-time limits, software inventories, independent evidence requirements, browsing-data access, or recurring parent consultation.

Filtering and supervision are inconsistent

Respondents reported games, video platforms, unsafe material, collaboration tools used for bullying, and students bypassing restrictions. Several also said limits vary by teacher or are not well understood.

AI policy is emerging but incomplete

Only four respondents reported an AI policy, just one reported an AI opt-out, and most said no parent-facing inventory identifies student software that integrates AI.

The educational concern is displacement, not only exposure

Parents repeatedly argued that screen-based work replaces books, handwriting, discussion, creative work, persistence, boredom, and direct relationships with teachers and peers.

Question-by-Question Results

Counts below use 14 substantive response records unless otherwise noted. “Unknown” combines responses such as “I don’t know,” “unsure,” or similarly uncertain answers.

1. Respondent name

Names were collected in the survey. They are not reproduced in this circulation summary in order to keep the focus on findings and limit unnecessary disclosure of personal information.

2. Respondent email

Email addresses were collected but are intentionally omitted from this summary.

3. Homework device opt-out

12 said no; 2 did not know. No respondent identified a broadly available homework device opt-out.

4. Grades eligible for homework opt-out

Because no respondent reported a general opt-out, no grade bands were identified. One later comment described a district granting individual exceptions when a parent asked, but not publicizing that option.

5. In-class device opt-out

13 said no; 1 did not know. No respondent reported a standard in-class opt-out policy.

6. Grades eligible for in-class opt-out

No grade levels were reported because respondents did not identify a formal in-class opt-out program.

7. Parent-facing software inventory by grade

2 said yes, 10 said no, and 2 did not know. One “yes” response cautioned that the published list was incomplete or inaccurate.

8. Software selection guidelines and evidence of learning impact

Most respondents did not know the selection standards or believed they were not transparent. Several referenced privacy or state requirements, BOCES/vendor procurement, cost, or bundling, but respondents generally did not see a requirement for independent evidence that a product improves learning.

9. Published screen-time limit by grade

13 said no; 1 said yes. The near-unanimous response suggests that parents generally do not receive clear grade-specific limits on cumulative classroom screen exposure.

10. Parent access to software and browsing data

13 said no; 1 said yes. A separate narrative response indicated that some parents received data after making a specific request, but the right or process was not proactively communicated.

11. Regular opportunities for parent input

3 said yes; 11 said no. Several narratives described advocacy meetings, technology committees, or responsive new administrators, but not an established, recurring system for parent participation.

12. Professional development on devices, EdTech, and harms

Most respondents knew of little or no professional development addressing physical, mental-health, developmental, or learning risks. A few cited training on “active versus passive” use, intentional use, Apple tools, or AI, but respondents generally distinguished product-use training from risk-focused training.

13. Screens in classrooms

All 14 said yes.

14. Grade at which classroom screens begin

Most respondents reported pre-K or kindergarten. A small number were uncertain, but none described screen use as beginning only in later grades.

15. YouTube shown in classrooms

12 said yes, 1 said no, and 1 did not know.

16. Limits on YouTube

Reported controls were inconsistent. Some districts or teachers limit access to approved or embedded videos and block student search; others had no known limits, teacher-by-teacher practices, or filters that students reportedly circumvent.

17. Phones physically locked away

4 said yes, 7 said no, and 3 did not know. Policies therefore appear inconsistent across districts and grade levels.

18. Phone use during the school day

8 said yes, 3 said no, and 3 did not know. Respondents also noted that laptops can enable messaging even where phones are restricted.

19. 1:1 student devices

All 14 said yes.

20. Grade at which 1:1 devices begin

Reported starting points ranged from kindergarten to sixth grade. In many districts, classroom sets or individual access begin in kindergarten or first grade, while formal device assignment or take-home privileges begin in third or sixth grade.

21. Chromebooks brought home for homework

13 said yes; 1 did not know.

22. Starting grade and weekly homework use

Take-home use most commonly begins in third or sixth grade, with isolated reports as early as kindergarten or second grade. Few respondents could quantify weekly hours; estimates varied by teacher, with one report of roughly one hour per day in grades 4-5 and another of about one hour for a third grader.

23. Inventory of student software integrating AI

1 said yes, 9 said no, and 4 did not know. Respondents repeatedly expressed concern that AI capabilities may be embedded in commonly used platforms without a clear parent-facing inventory.

24. District AI policy

4 said yes, 8 said no, and 2 did not know. One respondent noted that a policy was expected shortly, showing that district approaches are still developing.

25. Parent opt-out from AI use

1 said yes, 10 said no, and 3 did not know. A meaningful parent-choice mechanism for student-facing AI was therefore largely absent.

26. Access to the open internet with basic filtering

8 said yes and 6 did not know. No respondent clearly answered no. This indicates either broad filtered access or limited parent visibility into actual access settings.

27. Grade at which filtered internet access begins

Answers ranged from first grade through sixth grade, with several respondents inferring access from Google search or general device availability. The uncertainty shows that parents often do not receive a clear statement of when open-web access begins.

28. Harmful content despite filters

At least 8 respondents described confirmed or anecdotal access to inappropriate, violent, unsafe, or non-academic content; others were unsure or had not heard examples. Reports included games, workarounds around video restrictions, firearm-related content, online bullying, catfishing, and sexually explicit material. These are parent-reported anecdotes and were not independently verified.

29. Most concerning technology-related stories

Common stories involved students gaming throughout class, accessing unsafe content, bullying through shared documents or messaging, photographing or targeting peers, accidental display of inappropriate content, and teachers being unable to proceed when technology failed. Several respondents also emphasized routine but pervasive non-instructional use, such as passive videos and online “junk work.”

30. What parents are most worried about

The dominant concerns were distraction and fractured attention; weak foundational learning in reading, writing, and math; excessive total screen time; reduced social interaction and hands-on work; sleep, behavior, eyesight, and mental-health effects; privacy and safety; and a lack of confidence that districts are evaluating educational benefit.

31. Additional comments on district technology use

Respondents repeatedly asked for a clear district philosophy explaining when technology adds value over analog instruction. Several described current or planned advocacy, new board or superintendent engagement, and possible policy changes. Others reported frustration with limited transparency, inconsistent monitoring, and post-pandemic device practices continuing without a fresh educational rationale.

32. Top three concerns regarding EdTech, devices, and AI

Across responses, the three most consistent clusters were: (1) cognitive and academic impacts, including reduced attention, stamina, persistence, handwriting, reading comprehension, and independent thinking; (2) excessive, distracting, gamified, or unsafe device use that displaces human interaction and hands-on learning; and (3) AI, privacy, and security risks, especially premature AI exposure, offloading of thinking and writing, embedded AI features, unreliable outputs, and loss of control over student data.

Discussion Agenda Suggested by the Responses

- Publish a grade-by-grade inventory of devices, software, websites, AI features, intended educational purpose, and student-data practices.
- Adopt age-appropriate expectations for cumulative screen time, including limits on passive video, free-time use, and screens in non-core classes.
- Require a documented educational rationale and credible evidence of learning benefit before adopting or renewing student-facing software.
- Create clear, workable opt-out or alternative-assignment processes for devices, take-home Chromebooks, and student-facing AI.
- Set uniform standards for filtering, classroom monitoring, YouTube use, games, messaging, and consequences for bypassing controls.

- Adopt an AI policy that distinguishes teacher use from student use and protects foundational writing, research, creativity, and critical thinking.
- Provide recurring parent reporting and participation, including usage data, incident reporting, policy review, and opportunities for public input.
- Train educators and leaders not only on how to use EdTech, but also on developmental appropriateness, attention, privacy, mental health, and when analog instruction is preferable.

Source: “Tech-intentional survey (Responses).xlsx,” responses dated July 24 through August 10, 2026. This document summarizes the submitted responses and does not independently validate district policies or reported incidents.