

Screen Time, EdTech and A.I. in Schools

A Conversation with NYSUT President Melinda Person

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We are very grateful to NYSUT for championing “Bell to Bell” last year and for further protecting NYS children via a new Resolution to limit screens, EdTech and A.I. in our classrooms. As parents, educators, and community leaders, we offer recommendations that build on the Resolution, recognize the central importance of the human educator and deliver additional essential benefits to our children.

Emily Wells, In Real Life

- Protect children's right to play and socialize by making recess, lunch and free periods screen-free.
- Encourage screen-free, paper-based homework in grades K-8, and do not send devices home in grades K-8.
- Allow parents to “opt-out” of school-issued personal devices for all grades.

Caroline Rivera, Schools Beyond Screens

- Discourage use of EdTech applications and devices that have little or no independent, empirical data or peer-reviewed studies which support their efficacy.
- Provide strict limits on the use of 1:1 devices in grades K-5.

Jill Marie Anderson, Mindful Tech Lessons

- Limit videos to clearly defined educational purposes, ensuring that videos do not replace real books or direct instruction.
- Urge school districts to allocate funds for paper books and library staff, including an increased focus on teaching long-form reading skills and reading engagement.
- Implement clear parameters on A.I., for example, no student-facing A.I. in grades K-8; any A.I. use to be closely monitored by a teacher; no use of A.I. embedded chatbots in any grade; provision of A.I. education that includes its limitations, how to analyze and verify A.I. information, and the socio-economic and environmental impacts of A.I.

Brett Goldman, Ok to Delay

- Institute independent screen audits, ensuring that compliance with screentime guidelines and policies are tracked.
- Encourage school districts to establish district-wide technology committees composed of administrators, teachers, and parents to vet selection and stipulate usage of technology and software.