

Technology in the School Setting



Granby Public Schools
Board of Education Presentation
October 7, 2026

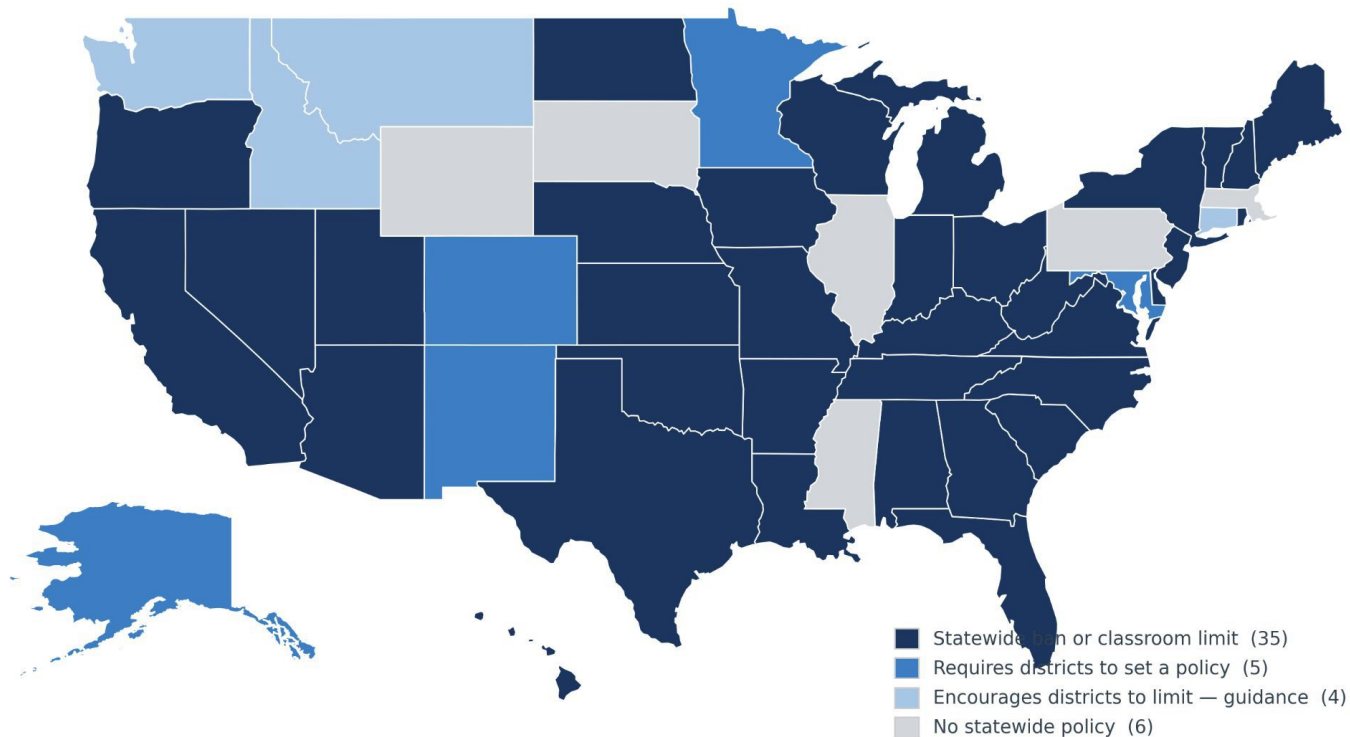
Screen Time & Personal Technology

Personal Technology refers to all student-owned devices, primarily cell phones, but may also include TV, computers, smartwatches, tablets, and other current and emerging technologies.

- According to the CDC Data Brief on Teen Screen Time, about 50.4% of teenagers aged 12–17 log four or more hours of daily recreational screen time outside of schoolwork
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also reports that students with higher non-schoolwork screen use were more likely to experience a range of negative health outcomes, including lower levels of physical activity; poor sleep quality; symptoms of depression and anxiety; and reduced social, emotional, and peer support
- Screens are reaching children earlier. 40% of children have a tablet by age 2. 1 in 4 children have a personal cell phone by age 8 and gaming time has increased by 65% in the last 4 years (*Common Sense Media Census*)
- A survey conducted by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) between October 2024 and February 2025 showed that personal technology use policies that restricted access are working. Of the 140 districts that responded, 66 percent reported that their policy was either “very effective” or “somewhat effective” in increasing student engagement and learning

State cell phone policies in K-12 schools, 2026

Restrictions on students' personal devices — companion to classroom screen time



CT Guidance on Personal Technology in School

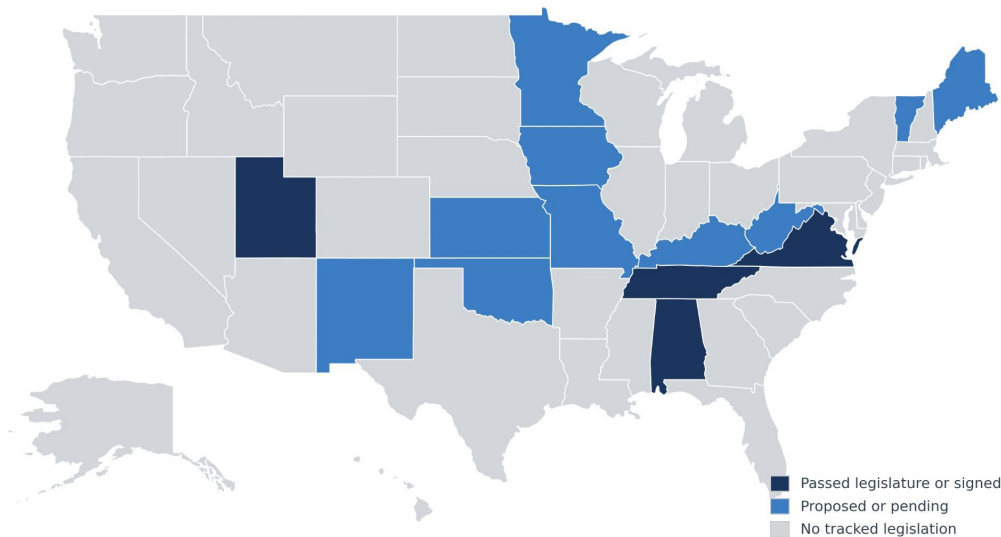
Connecticut does not have a mandatory K-12 screen time or cell phone law yet, but the State Board of Education adopted new guidance on August 2026, urging school districts to set bell-to-bell restrictions on personal tech and limits on classroom screen time. ([State Board Position Statement](#))

State Board of Education Guidance

- **Non-Binding Rules:** The guidance approved in August 2026 acts as a strong recommendation rather than a strict legal mandate, leaving final policy choices to local school boards
- **New Policies:** The board asks districts to adopt "Personal Technology Use and Purposeful Screen Time Policies".
- **Bell-to-Bell Limits:** The guidelines strongly recommend blocking student access to cellphones, smartwatches, and other personal devices from the start to the end of the school day
- **Screen Time Rules:** Districts are also encouraged to evaluate school-issued devices and set limits on daily classroom screen time, promoting hands-on learning for younger children
- **Exceptions:** Rules allow for thoughtful exceptions, including for students with documented disabilities or special health care needs

Classroom screen time legislation, 2026

Limits on instructional ed-tech use — excludes personal cell phone bans



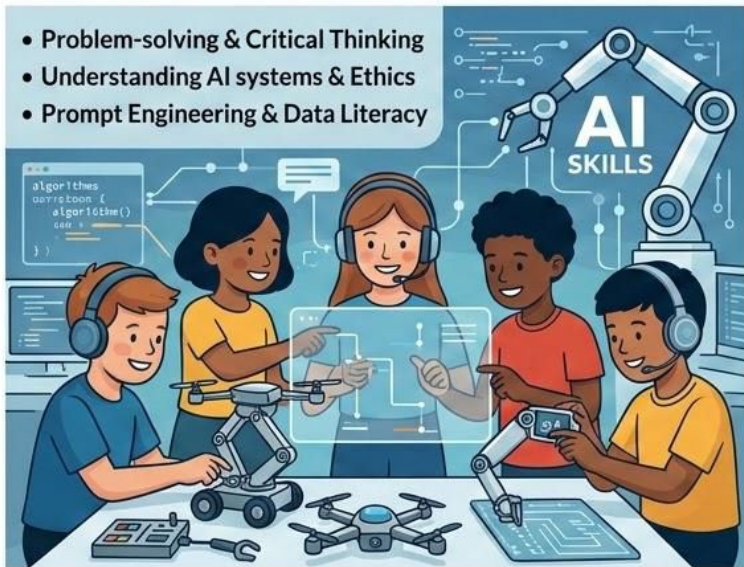
Current Legislative Status in CT

- **Failed Bill:** Lawmakers in the General Assembly tried to pass a mandatory statewide bell-to-bell cell phone ban in spring 2026, but the legislation did not pass
- **Future Plans:** It is anticipated that the governor and state legislative leaders will bring mandatory legislation back for another vote next year

THE EDUCATIONAL PARADOX

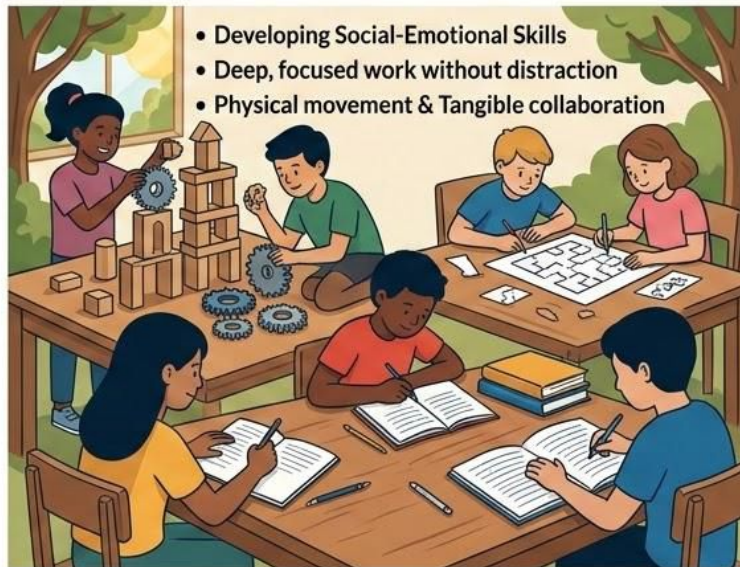
PREPARING KIDS FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK WITH AI

- Problem-solving & Critical Thinking
- Understanding AI systems & Ethics
- Prompt Engineering & Data Literacy



LIMITING SCREEN TIME IN THE CLASSROOM

- Developing Social-Emotional Skills
- Deep, focused work without distraction
- Physical movement & Tangible collaboration



How can districts create balanced policies?

Defining meaningful usage, not just time metrics.

Beyond Minutes: Quality, Context, and Balance

The field is moving beyond minutes

Content Quality

What is being viewed or used matters, whether educational, enriching, creative, or passive.

Child Age/Development

Children's needs, abilities, and self-regulation change with age and stage.

Context & Adult Support

Co-viewing, guiding, and setting limits shape how screen use fits into daily life.

What Gets Crowded Out

Screen use can displace sleep, physical activity, in-person connections, and other vital experiences.

AAP Guidance

AAP does not recommend one universal “safe” screen-time number for all children and teens.

Instead, it emphasizes **quality of interactions, the activity, developmental context**, and whether screen use **crowds out** sleep, physical activity, and other important experiences.

Minutes matter, but minutes alone do not tell us whether the experience is meaningful, harmful, neutral, or necessary.

A balanced childhood is built on more than screen-time minutes.

Intentional Shifts

- ❖ Purposeful Technology Use
- ❖ Personal technology off and away during the school day
- ❖ Classroom technology used for intentional practice and application
- ❖ Elimination of classroom technology for entertainment purposes
- ❖ Further evaluation of which screen time is necessary, valuable, and developmentally appropriate, and which should be redesigned or removed

Current Practice

- ❖ Phones off and away all day PK-8
- ❖ Phones off and away during class bell to bell 9-12
- ❖ Access to 4-5 iPads per classroom PK-2 for intentional skill practice
- ❖ Access to Chromebooks 3-5 for intentional skill practice and application
- ❖ 1:1 Chromebooks access for academics 6-12
- ❖ Instructional classroom screens used in place of whiteboards and projectors

Moving Forward

- ❖ Consideration of reduced access to personal technology at the high school
- ❖ Student led efforts to choose face to face interactions over screens
- ❖ Additional guidance around Artificial Intelligence (AI): How can we maximize the power of AI and minimize screen time?
- ❖ Monitoring of classroom screen time and a return to paper where appropriate

Connections to the Strategic Plan

Connect:

1. Build a districtwide culture of ***belonging and connection*** through relationship-centered practices.
5. Develop ***community partnerships***, intergenerational connections and service- learning opportunities.

Believe:

1. Define the district's ***Vision of a Learner (VOL)*** with measurable criteria and ensure that learners receive feedback on their progress toward proficiency.
3. Strengthen ***curriculum development and revision*** to ensure relevance, rigor, and access for all learners and opportunities for all students to see themselves represented within the curriculum.

Achieve:

4. Expand opportunities for ***authentic learning experiences*** and performance-based demonstrations of learning to increase cognitive engagement.
8. ***Enhance digital literacy to ensure that technology use, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), supports critical thinking and is utilized in informed, effective, and ethical ways.***

Play Based Learning

- ★ All PK-2 classrooms integrate regular play opportunities
- ★ Play centers are included in PK & K
- ★ Soft start allows students to socialize and develop interpersonal and creative skills each morning
- ★ Staff supported recess opportunities



Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The Reality: AI is already heavily integrated into student workflows, with roughly 50% of high school students utilizing tools like Google Gemini weekly.

The Objective: Provide a proactive, structured framework that ensures state compliance, data privacy, and student readiness

- Google Gemini & Notebook LM are CT approved AI tools currently in use
- Students in grades 6-12 can use AI when appropriate and approved
- Guidelines include what is not acceptable, like copying work, spreading false information, breaking privacy rules, plagiarism, misinformation, and privacy violations
- Our focus is on the importance of EdTech quality, balancing innovation with integrity, helping students leverage AI as a tool for growth
- The district must approve AI tools to ensure that they are safe and appropriate
- Educators must model the appropriate way to use AI tools in line with privacy and age

CT Guidance on AI

The state has shifted away from outright bans, moving instead toward a framework of digital literacy, student data privacy compliance, and structured pilot programs

Computer Science & AI Curriculum: Beginning with the 2026–27 school year, computer science—explicitly including instruction on artificial intelligence and emerging technologies—is a required component of instruction for all public schools under recent state legislation

AI Pilot Program: CSDE launched an AI pilot program across 6 selected school districts to evaluate safe, FERPA-compliant tools and establish best practices. Part 1 of the program evaluates the AI pilot programs. In Part 2 researchers conduct a survey of all CT school districts, interview technology leaders, and analyze existing policies in order to better develop best practices and policies.

Model Digital Citizenship Curriculum: CSDE released a sample K-12 Model Digital Citizenship and Well-being Curriculum, which integrates ethical technology use, online safety, and responsible [AI literacy](#)

Data Privacy Compliance: Districts must strictly adhere to state student data privacy statutes (CGS §§ 10-234aa–dd) when vetting or deploying any generative AI tools

[Connecticut Association of Boards of Education \(CABE\) Policy Manual on Generative AI](#)

More on AI

The [Connecticut Online AI Academy](#) is a statewide workforce initiative powered by Charter Oak State College in partnership with Google, offering free artificial intelligence training to Connecticut residents.

Available Courses

- **Google AI Essentials (Literacy):** A 5-week introductory course covering generative AI, prompt writing, and responsible tool use for beginners.
- **Google AI Essentials (Fluency):** A 6-week advanced course designed to apply AI skills to real-world scenarios.
- **Credential:** Both primary courses award a recognized Google certificate upon completion.

Expansion & Upcoming Programs

The academy has expanded its curriculum through partnerships with organizations like the Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF) and Axim Collaborative. Upcoming and expanding tracks include:

- **Teens AI Academy:** Programs introducing youth and parents to safe, responsible AI use.
- **K-12 Educator & Leadership Training:** Resources for teachers and district leaders to integrate AI safely and ethically into classrooms and policy.
- **Small Business & Nonprofit Support:** Specialized modules focusing on operational efficiency, strategy, and decision-making

Resources

[GoOpen CT CSDE K-12 Model Digital Literacy & Well-Being Curriculum](#)

[CSDE Updated Position Statement and Guidance on the Use of Personal and Purposeful Technology in Schools](#)

[EdWeek Screen Time and AI: An Evidence Playbook for School Leaders](#)

[ISTE + ASCD From Panic to Proof: A Data-Driven Approach to Screen Time](#)

[CT-DAS Student Data Privacy](#)

[State of CT Guidance on AI](#)