

School technology limits: source and methodology note

Cutoff: October 4, 2026. Research and publication audit prepared for Stewart Brown.

Publication decision

Publish the accompanying image as a **selected 2026 action snapshot**, with separate statewide and district maps. It shows six verified enacted state laws, two pending state bills, one board-adopted rule whose effective date was not verified, and ten selected district actions. It is not a census of current restrictions, a count of operating bans, or a measurement of implementation.

The requested exhaustive 2024-to-2026 comparison is not certified. Searches covered all 50 states plus D.C. and the same 35-district panel for current and historical evidence. Historical versions and negative findings were not resolved sufficiently to establish comparable prevalence. A national growth count or an almost-empty 2024 map would exceed this evidence.

Scope and inclusion rules

SCREEN: formal instructional screen limits, grade-based limits, or policies materially changing classroom exposure. **DEVICE:** school-issued device assignments, take-home arrangements or 1:1 requirements. **AI:** material limits on student-facing generative AI, including moratoria, age restrictions, approved-tool access and parent opt-outs. No fourth category was added.

Exclude personal-phone/smartwatch bans, general child social-media laws, ordinary acceptable-use rules, privacy/cybersecurity requirements without a material instructional-access restriction, staff-only AI rules, studies, commissions and proposed bills not verified as active. General state guidance is not shaded as enacted law. Formal district screen recommendations are included, but are explicitly distinguished from compulsory caps.

What each map means

Top: enacted state laws are teal even when implementation is future or phased. Gold outlines identify separately described bills/rule status. Utah is shaded for enacted HB273; its proposed R277-334 is recorded separately. Bottom: rust shading means at least one named selected district action in that state. It does not represent a statewide requirement. California appears in both maps; Florida has the separately described state rule and a district action.

Gray means no selected action is shown. It does not mean no policy, no restrictions, or no research. All counts are counts of the records displayed. Geography comes from us-atlas states-albers-10m v3; Alaska and Hawaii are inset and not to the same scale as the mainland. D.C. is retained in the boundary data but too small for an internal label.

Baseline and coverage

Recommended candidate baseline: December 31, 2024

Candidate	Assessment
2022	Predates most public GenAI response. Creates an avoidably dramatic contrast and still needs older device-policy research.
2023	Includes temporary ChatGPT blocks and reversals. A single snapshot could mistake a short-lived response for the durable baseline.
2024	Best conceptual candidate after the initial ChatGPT response. However, existing AI policies and historical device practices must be recovered before publication.
2025	A more recent baseline gives less elapsed time, but does not solve the missing-version problem. It was not established as a complete alternative.

Recommendation: retain 2024 for a later versioned longitudinal study, but do not publish this project as a measured 2024-to-2026 expansion yet. The choice above is methodological judgment, not an empirical finding that 2024 had few restrictions.

Exact district search universe

New York City Public Schools (NY); Los Angeles Unified (CA); Miami-Dade County (FL); Chicago Public Schools (IL); Clark County (NV); Broward County Public Schools (FL); Hillsborough County (FL); Orange County (FL); Palm Beach County (FL); Houston ISD (TX); Gwinnett County Public Schools (GA); Fairfax County Public Schools (VA); Hawaii Department of Education (HI); Wake County (NC); Montgomery County (MD); Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC); Dallas ISD (TX); Cypress-Fairbanks (TX); Prince George’s County Public Schools (MD); Duval County (FL); Cobb County (GA); Baltimore County (MD); Polk County (FL); Lee County (FL); San Diego Unified (CA); Beverly Hills Unified (CA); Marietta City Schools (GA); East Penn School District (PA); Oakland Unified (CA); Seattle Public Schools (WA); Philadelphia (PA); Boston (MA); Fort Worth ISD (TX); Baltimore City (MD); Madison Metropolitan (WI).

This is a purposive panel of large systems plus the named/high-profile policy districts in the brief. It includes NYC, Los Angeles, Miami-Dade, Chicago and Clark County, but it is **not presented as the 25 or 35 largest districts**. The same panel was searched for 2024 AI policy, historical device/take-home practices, and current screen/device/AI changes. Only primary-verified selected 2026 actions are shaded.

Search and adjudication

State screening used jurisdiction-specific screen/device searches and a separate AI-policy pass, followed by historical searches. District screening used the three consistent passes above. Source leads were then checked against legislature status pages, enacted text, education-agency material and district/board publications. Search date filters returned some newer material, so source dates and document versions, rather than query filters, determined historical coding.

A search without a qualifying hit is coded as unresolved, never as absence. Current policy wording is not automatically backdated to an earlier adoption date. Search-result snippets, bill titles, agendas and public comments do not establish operative restrictions. Failed retrievals and unresolved status are recorded in the workbook.

State evidence ledger

S01 | AL | Act 2026-169 / HB78

Enacted; future effective. Public kindergarten included in early-childhood framework; prohibits passive/background screen media and requires age-appropriate standards. No numeric kindergarten cap in the act. Applies: 2027-01-01; kindergarten local policies by 2027-28.

Primary source | Separate K-12 screen commission is not a restriction. Signing: [additional source](#)

S02 | CA | SB1128 / Chapter 191

Enacted; provision applies later. LEAs may not require kindergarten, including TK, to take home school-issued devices. Applies: 2027-28 school year.

Primary source | Final legislature text could not be retrieved; narrow mapped claim relies on official post-signing Senate summary. Governor signing: [additional source](#)

S03 | IA | HF2676 / Acts Chapter 1129

Enacted. K-5 digital instruction limited to 60 cumulative minutes/day; local technology-use policy; checklist before adoption or renewal of 1:1 programs. Applies: 2026-27 implementation; see DOE FAQ.

Primary source | Signed act: [additional source](#) A 1:1 adoption checklist is not a 1:1 ban.

S04 | OK | SB1734

Enacted; effective. Student-facing AI subject to educator direction; parents may opt students out without academic penalty or loss of core content. Applies: 2026-07-01; local policies before 2027-28.

Primary source | Approval verified in official status: [additional source](#)

S05 | TN | HB2393 / SB2310 / Public Chapter 808

Enacted; effective. LEAs and charters must adopt K-5 instructional-device policies minimizing unnecessary screen time. Applies: 2026-07-01.

Primary source | Original proposed device ban was amended. No universal numerical cap in the enacted requirement.

S06 | UT | HB273

Enacted; policy implementation later. Requires purposeful instructional technology, minimized nonessential screen time and balanced technology/AI policies. Applies: 2026-07-01; local policies before 2027-07-01.

Primary source | Official USBE summary pp.19 and 44-45. Detailed grade rules are recorded separately below; not presented as operational.

State evidence: bills and rules

S07 | UT | Proposed R277-334

Proposed implementing rule. Proposed K-3 screen restrictions; K-6 no required 1:1 or take-home devices; older-grade consent; approved AI rules. Applies: Earliest anticipated 2026-10-08, NOT an effective date.

[Primary source](#) | Bulletin pp.57-64 (PDF pp.63-70). Enacted HB273 and proposed rule are distinct records.

S08 | NY | S10685 / FOCUS Act

Active bill; in Rules Committee. Would restrict younger-grade internet-enabled devices, favor carts/labs and require caregiver opt-in for assigned devices in older grades. Applies: Not law.

[Primary source](#) | Official page explicitly marks ACTIVE. Do not treat NYC policy as state law.

S09 | NC | S948 / Screen Free Schools Act

Bill in Appropriations/Base Budget; not enacted. Proposes instructional screen limits and parent options for reduced or no device use. Applies: Not law.

[Primary source](#) | Last action 2026-05-04. Appropriations bill in 2025-26 session; pending classification is not a prediction of passage. Text: [additional source](#)

S10 | FL | Rule 6A-1.0957 AI amendment

Board-adopted; effective date not verified. Adopted amendment addresses parental choice, younger learners and bans companion-style AI in classrooms. Applies: Not verified in force at cutoff.

[Primary source](#) | Official FAC record still shows 2023 as latest final rule, with Sep18,2026 change notice: [additional source](#) . Shown separately from laws; do not call operative.

District evidence ledger

D01 | Los Angeles Unified (CA)

Early education–grade 1 default zero screen minutes and no individual assigned device; grade caps and take-home defaults in implementation matrix. **Timing:** EE–grade 1 Aug. 2026; grades 2–5 Nov. 2026; grades 6–12 Jan. 2027. [Primary source](#)

D02 | Beverly Hills Unified (CA)

TK–2 no assigned 1:1 devices; technology limited to assessments, teacher-led activities and required accommodations. **Timing:** 2026–27 framework. [Primary source](#)

D03 | San Diego Unified (CA)

Removes TK computer carts; developmentally appropriate use changes; student-direct YouTube access restricted. **Timing:** 2026-08-10 school year start. [Primary source](#)

D04 | New York City Public Schools (NY)

2K–8 student-facing GenAI moratorium; 2K–2 no 1:1 screen use; grades 3–5 recommended 30 min/day, grades 6–8 recommended 45 min/day. **Timing:** 2026–27 school year. [Primary source](#)

D05 | Marietta City Schools (GA)

Screens closed by default and opened with purpose; no screen use for behavior management; age-appropriate technology/AI expectations. **Timing:** 2026–27 strategy and phased implementation. [Primary source](#)

D06 | East Penn School District (PA)

Elementary district devices and chargers remain at school; student-device YouTube removed. **Timing:** 2026–27 school year. [Primary source](#)

D07 | Seattle Public Schools (WA)

K–2 moves from assigned 1:1 iPads to shared classroom devices; generally 0–30 minutes/day. **Timing:** 2027-01-04. [Primary source](#)

D08 | Fairfax County Public Schools (VA)

No FCPS-issued tablets/laptops in pre-K and kindergarten; student GenAI unavailable in elementary; secondary use needs principal authorization pending policy. **Timing:** Fall 2026. [Primary source](#)

D09 | Broward County Public Schools (FL)

Only approved student AI tools; no student-facing AI tool currently approved for K–5; secondary tools limited to approved uses. **Timing:** Current district AI hub at cutoff. [Primary source](#)

D10 | Dallas ISD (TX)

Daily recommendations: preK–2 60min; grades 3–5 90min; grades 6–8 120min. **Timing:** 2026–27. [Primary source](#)

Boundaries, launch and final review

Corrections that materially change the story

Oklahoma SB1734 belongs in the selected enacted-law list because its parent opt-out changes student access to AI. Alabama covers public kindergarten as well as early childhood; its separate K-12 commission does not justify shading. California does not ban all take-home devices or make its K/TK provision operational in October 2026. Tennessee requires local K-5 policy; it is not the original blanket device-ban proposal. Utah statute and proposed rule must be separate. Florida board adoption does not by itself verify a final effective date.

NYC combines a younger-grade student GenAI moratorium with high-school AI literacy. Its grade-specific minute recommendations are not identical to statutory caps. LAUSD implementation is phased; this map relies on its verified screen/device matrix rather than treating press reports of an AI moratorium as separately verified. Seattle is a January 2027 change. Dallas calls its figures recommendations. Marietta has an adopted direction and continuing implementation work, not a universal numeric cap.

What remains unresolved

Original historical versions of LAUSD, East Penn, Prince George's, Chicago and other AI policies; complete historical device rules in the 35-district panel; definitive exclusion/absence findings for every jurisdiction; some proposal dispositions and successor drafts; final Florida effective date; primary adoption evidence for Oakland and some reported Madison/Baltimore changes. These gaps prevent an exhaustive-audit claim. They do not license invented zeros or retrospective dates.

Live website inspection and launch

The live tracker was accessible. The main page distinguishes reviewed findings from unreviewed coverage. Its restriction-growth page already warns that the historical panel is not a systematic national historical audit. This package does not deploy website edits. Introduce the site as an open, searchable working resource, with sources and correction requests; do not call it definitive or claim that every policy in every state has been captured.

[Open the public tracker](#)

The launch should begin with the substantive education question and bridge naturally to the resource. One short acknowledgment of Robert Dickson is appropriate because Stewart explicitly identifies that inspiration. Credit the value of making research public; keep the taxonomy, visual and central question independent. Avoid the signals/governance positioning used on his research dashboard.

Final roast and stopping rule

The image is readable, restrained and explicit about district geography. Its weakness is that this is now a current-action snapshot, not the requested growth graphic, and the policy packages differ in strength. The labels make those limitations visible. The copy adds the useful tension between limiting use and teaching understanding, rather than reciting the map. Stop cosmetic iteration. Reopen only for a factual correction, policy status change or newly recovered historical evidence.

Verdict: the qualified current snapshot and accompanying copy can be shared. The original before/after growth claim, an exhaustive national restriction count, and a claim that the historical audit is complete are not ready.