

By: Parker

H.B. No. 3489

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to development of guidelines for the use of digital devices in public schools.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 38, Education Code, is modified by adding Section 38.0231 to read as follows:

Sec. 38.0231. GUIDELINES FOR USE OF DIGITAL DEVICES. (a)

The agency, in consultation with the Health and Human Services Commission, shall develop and distribute for use by school districts and open-enrollment charter schools health and safety guidelines for best practices for the effective integration of digital devices in public schools. The guidelines must:

(1) be based on evidence-based studies and practices;

(2) consider the potential costs of implementation of the guidelines and affordable ways to reduce the hazards associated with the extended use of digital devices; and

(3) address:

(A) digital device use for varying age ranges and developmental levels;

(B) the amount of time a student spends using digital devices in the classroom;

(C) appropriate frequency for breaks from the use of digital devices;

(D) physical positioning of digital devices in

1 the classroom;

2 (E) requiring the use of digital devices to  
3 complete homework assignments;

4 (F) recommended total daily screen time usage for  
5 students; and

6 (G) recommended teacher training regarding  
7 digital device use in the classroom to ensure implementation of the  
8 best practices.

9 (b) The school board of each school district or the  
10 governing body of each open-enrollment charter school may decide  
11 whether to adopt the guidelines developed under Subsection (a) for  
12 use in the district or school.

13 (c) Each school district or open-enrollment charter school  
14 that adopts the guidelines developed under Subsection (a) may  
15 implement the guidelines in a manner that best meets the district's  
16 or charter school's individual needs.

17 (d) If a school district or open-enrollment charter school  
18 adopts the guidelines developed under Subsection (a), the district  
19 or charter school shall:

20 (1) post the guidelines publicly on the district's or  
21 charter school's Internet website; and

22 (2) provide a copy of the guidelines with registration  
23 materials and require the signature of the student's parent or  
24 legal guardian acknowledging receipt of the guidelines.

25 SECTION 2. The Texas Education Agency shall develop and  
26 distribute the guidelines for the use of digital devices required  
27 under Section 38.0231, Education Code, as added by this Act, for use

1 beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.

2 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.