



From Vermont-NEA Legislative Agenda as Amended by Vermont-NEA Board of Directors

January 2024

Protect Students and Learning – Technology in the 21st Century

Educators use technology every day in school to support student learning. Schools and educators are constantly adapting with technology to ensure that it is being used in ways that help learning and don't distract from it. However, technology isn't all good. In the spring of 2023, the US Surgeon General issued an advisory about the mental health impacts of social media on young people. We also know cyber bullying is a significant issue that students experience often outside of the school setting, but it affects students' in-school learning. We know that cell phones can be a significant distraction for students in the classroom during the school day. Not only does this distract the individual student, but it impacts their peers and their educators. The state should work to protect students' mental health and learning by:

- Adopting common sense standards for social media companies that protect youth by adopting laws similar to those recently passed by California and Maryland.
- Require the Agency of Education to draft an in-school cell phone usage policy that creates a baseline that all Supervisory Unions/School Districts must adopt.
- Enacting policies that ensure the privacy of student and youth data from technology companies that may be used in both education and non-education settings.