

H.830

Introduced by Representatives Arsenault of Williston, Dobrovich of

Williamstown, Hunter of Manchester, Morgan, L. of Milton,

Taylor of Milton, and Torre of Moretown

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Education; courses of study; electronic devices

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to give students

or the parents or guardians of students in public schools and approved

independent schools the right to opt out of using electronic devices as part of

their education. It would also prohibit dismissing, suspending, disciplining,

reassigning, or transferring a teacher for choosing to teach a class or portions

of a class without the use of electronic devices.

An act relating to the right of a student or parent or guardian to opt out of
electronic device usage

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds:

(1) In September 2025, the National Education Policy Center (NEPC)

reported that “research has not supported the common-sense presumption that

1 digital approaches to schooling are better than non-digital alternatives. At the
2 broadest level, widespread computer use in education has been found to be
3 associated with lower student achievement.”

4 (2) The NEPC also warned of the harmful data collection practices
5 utilized by so-called “ed tech” products, explaining that “the same platform
6 that delivers curricular materials to students also harvests, for example, those
7 students’ usage patterns, performance data, and engagement metrics... often
8 without the knowledge or consent of students, families, or educators.”

9 (3) After initially mandating the widespread adoption of technology in
10 schools, and subsequently prompted by sharp declines in student achievement,
11 the Swedish government has invested millions of dollars to ensure that
12 students have more access to textbooks. The Swedish government also
13 amended national curriculum requirements to say that “only analog learning
14 tools, such as books, should be used for children under the age of two and that
15 potential use of non-analog learning tools should be greatly restricted for all
16 other children.”

17 (4) In a 2025 national survey conducted by *The New York Times*, 70
18 percent of teachers said that school-issued devices distract students from
19 learning and engagement in class, and a majority said students had “used them
20 to play games or watch videos unrelated to school.”

1 (5) Vermont students' reading test scores have declined significantly
2 since 2016, and currently sit at an all-time low. Also in 2016, the Agency of
3 Education reported a dramatic increase in one-to-one devices for students. In
4 fact, that year there were 85,000 computers for student use in Vermont schools,
5 which is more than the total number of students in Vermont schools.

6 Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. § 914 is added to read:

7 § 914. STUDENT AND PARENT OR GUARDIAN RIGHT OF REFUSAL;
8 ELECTRONIC DEVICE USAGE

9 (a) A student or parent or guardian of a student in a public elementary or
10 secondary school or an approved independent school shall have the right to
11 refuse to use an electronic device in order to perform work forming part of a
12 course of instruction.

13 (b) Each school district and approved independent school shall adopt and
14 implement policies regarding a student's or parent's or guardian's right of
15 refusal under this section, which shall include:

16 (1) the process by which a student or parent or guardian may exercise
17 this right;

18 (2) alternative education methods through which a student exercising the
19 right under this section can learn and be assessed on material required by the
20 course; and

1 (3) a statement that no student shall be discriminated against or
2 penalized for the decision to exercise the right of refusal afforded by this
3 section.

4 (c) A teacher employed by a public school or approved independent school
5 shall not be dismissed, suspended, disciplined, reassigned, or transferred for
6 choosing to teach a class or portions of a class without the use of electronic
7 devices.

8 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

9 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.