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SB 350. Digital Instructional Ban.
Opposed. **Written Only Testimony**. House Education Committee Hearing. **Tuesday, March 3, 1:30 pm**, Room 218-N

Cyndie Rexer, Committee Assistant
785-296-7368 s.Education@senate.ks.gov
Room 445-S, State Capitol Building

Chair Erickson and Committee Members,

Kansas PTA opposes this mandate, directing how local school boards provide oversight and governance of district operations, including support for instructional strategies and expectations for high school graduates (KS PTA Legislative Priority 1). District leaders and the building educators put the educational needs and general well-being of our students at the forefront. This ban is an extreme departure from current practices, without a precise description of the problem it is attempting to solve, nor causal evidence to validate change, nor an analysis of potential unintended consequences. Consider the following:

- Teaching and learning in most classrooms make use of a combination of mediums including workbooks, worksheets, library books, textbooks, laptops/ipads, lab or station materials, white boards, overhead projections, paper, pencil, music, movement, outdoors, and such.
- Students' individualized instruction will be vastly diminished, slowed to the pace of paper-pencil assessments at the cost of instructional time. Teachers will no longer have access to integrated, digital instructional resources that provide ongoing data for teachers to adjust instruction and to direct students to personalized practice.
- Students' preparedness to be safe, self-confident digital citizens will be vastly diminished, with severely limited opportunity to gain proficiency on common software tools.
- Students access to quality instructional resources will be limited, to available to a minimal range of textbook based curriculum.
- This immediate ban would be incredibly costly to districts, most of whom would have break multi-year contracts to repurchasing lower quality products at a higher price and without the benefit of time for thorough review by teachers, students and parents.
- Sharing district devices is not logistically feasible in large districts.

Also note, the Kansas Constitution, Article VI, Sections 2 and 5, grants the following authority to boards of education:

- **State board of education …** shall have general supervision of public schools, educational institutions and all the educational interests of the state, except educational functions delegated by law to the state board of regents.

- **Local public schools** under the general supervision of the state board of education shall be maintained, developed and operated by locally elected boards.

When state or federal legislative bodies / entities, other than the State Board of Education, seek to mandate the operations of local school districts, unfunded or funded, these policies likely overstep the authority of locally elected school board members as defined in the state constitution.

Local control refers to this authority, autonomy, and legal power vested in local entities (such as city governments and school boards) to make decisions, enact regulations, and manage operations. Like all democratically elected bodies at the federal, state and local levels, decisions are made by majority rule determined at 50% or more of the body's vote, or some higher threshold.

Our public schools are the heart of Kansas communities, serving 90% of school age youth. Our teachers and administrators are committed to preparing all kids to thrive in work and in life. Creating opportunities for every child to engage and be successful serves to strengthen the viability of a thriving Kansas future.

Thank you for your consideration. I urge committee members, on behalf of the Kansas PTA, to vote no on SB 350.

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Cc: Angie Gunion, VP of Advocacy
Devin Wilson, Legislative Liaison
Mary Sinclair, PhD, Advocacy Team

THE PTA POSITION

Kansas PTA is a nonpartisan association that promotes the welfare of children and youth. The PTA does not endorse any candidate or political party. Rather, we advocate for policies and legislation that affect Kansas youth in alignment with our legislative platform and priorities. PTA mission and purpose have remained the same since our inception over 100 years ago, focused on facilitating every child's potential and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.