THE INTENTIONAL TECH COALITION · CONCORD

Elementary asks *Grades K-5 · 2026-27*

Cognitive test performance rose across generations for most of the 20th century, then plateaued and reversed in many Western nations beginning in the mid-2000s, as classroom devices spread.[1]

These suggested asks are options for parents and caregivers to consider. Each one supports the Intentional Tech Coalition's top 2026-27 School Priorities of Safety, Efficacy, and Alignment. Choose the asks that matter most to your family, and use or adapt the sample message to start the conversation with your child's teacher or principal.

1 Allowed sites only SAFETY

School-issued devices reach only district-approved sites, instead of blocking harmful sites one at a time.

Research: 15% of U.S. teens first saw online pornography at age 10 or younger, and 58% had come across it by accident.[2]

Puts into practice: Allow-list internet

Sample message to the principal

Hi [Principal's name], could school-issued devices at [School] reach only district-approved sites, using an allow-list, rather than blocking harmful sites one at a time? Thank you! [Your name]

2 Screens are not a prize ALIGNMENT

Screen time is never given as a reward or taken away as a punishment.

Research: Using screens as a reward or punishment is linked to more screen time and more problematic gaming in early adolescents.[3]

Puts into practice: Student well-being

Sample message to the teacher

Hi [Teacher's name], could class rewards be something other than screen time, like extra recess, a class job, or choosing the read-aloud? Happy to help brainstorm. Thank you! [Your name]

3 Free time stays screen-free ALIGNMENT

No school-issued device use during recess, indoor recess, lunch, or free-choice time.

Research: The AAP's 2026 recess statement cites studies showing unstructured recess helps students retain new classroom learning.[4]

Puts into practice: Student well-being

Sample message to the teacher

Hi [Teacher's name], could school-issued devices stay away during recess, indoor recess, lunch, and free-choice time? I'd be glad to send in games or art supplies. Thank you! [Your name]

4 30 minutes a day, max SAFETY

K-5 students spend no more than 30 minutes a day on screens during the school day, outside of state-required MCAS testing.

Research: Recreational screen time over an hour a day is linked to lower child well-being,[5] and frequent in-class computer use to lower TIMSS math and science scores.[1]

Puts into practice: Screen time report

Sample message to the teacher

Hi [Teacher's name], about how many minutes a day is [Child's name] on a screen in class? We'd love to see it stay under 30 minutes, outside of MCAS testing. Thank you for partnering with us. [Your name]

5 Pencils and paper books first EFFICACY

Handwriting for writing practice and printed books for reading instruction, with screens used only when they do the job better.

Research: Handwriting practice, not typing or tracing, engaged five-year-olds' reading-related brain regions,[6] and comprehension is stronger on paper than on screens.[7]

Puts into practice: Evidence at adoption

Sample message to the teacher

Hi [Teacher's name], we'd love for [Child's name] to write by hand and read printed books whenever possible. Are there assignments where paper could replace the screen? Thank you! [Your name]

Opting out, tips for home, and sources on the back

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Opting out of internet on school-issued devices

If the protections on your child's school-issued device don't feel like enough, you can uncheck the internet consent box in Aspen and tell your principal what would need to be in place for you to check it. This is a request, not a refusal.

1. On a computer, log in to Aspen. On the **Pages** tab, under Announcements, open the **Online Student Demographic Verification Form**.
2. Choose your child and continue to **Student Permissions**. Uncheck the internet box, complete the rest of the form, and click **Finish**.
3. Email your principal the same day. Unchecking the box may not prompt a follow-up, so your email is what starts the conversation.

Our guide walks you through each step with screenshots and offers three email templates: intentionaltechcoalition.org/itc-internet-consent-guide.pdf

At home

For tips on managing devices intentionally at home, visit the At Home page on our website: intentionaltechcoalition.org/itc-at-home.html

Sources

1. Horvath (Jan. 15, 2026). U.S. Senate Commerce testimony.
2. Common Sense Media (2023). Teens and Pornography.
3. Nagata et al. (2025). Pediatric Research. ABCD Study.
4. AAP (2026). The Crucial Role of Recess in School. Pediatrics.
5. Twenge & Campbell (2018). Preventive Medicine Reports.
6. James & Engelhardt (2012). Trends in Neuroscience and Education.
7. Delgado et al. (2018). Educational Research Review. Meta-analysis.

These asks are in addition to the district-wide asks on the ITC School Priorities 2026-27 page.

See all school priorities