

Not All Classroom Tech Is Created Equal

Annual Savvas Educator Index reveals **educators distinguish between instructional technology and digital distraction**, favoring tools that directly support learning.

Screen Time Conversation More Complex Than Headlines Suggest

As the national debate over blanket classroom screen time limits intensifies, a new survey from **Savvas Learning Company** reveals that educators¹ are pushing for a more nuanced perspective, suggesting that the focus should shift from the quantity of screen time to the instructional value of classroom technology.

Nearly a third of educators feel the current public narrative does not reflect the realities of the classroom, while at the same time an overwhelming 92% distinguish between passive and instructional use of technology. Ultimately, these findings from the 2026 Savvas Educator Index, a national survey of more than 1,700 U.S. public school educators, suggest that the conversation needs to move beyond a binary choice of more or less screen time, centering instead on how technology can meaningfully support student outcomes.

92%

...of educators distinguish between passive and instructional use of technology.

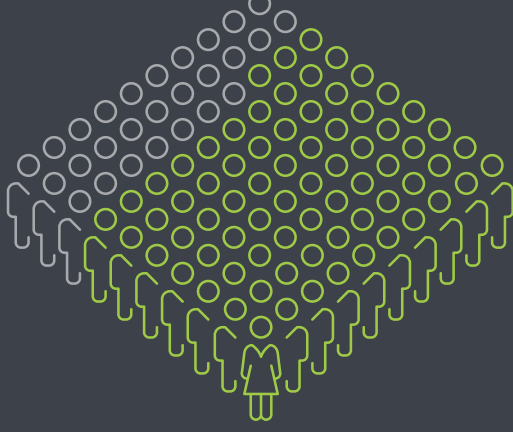
¹“Educators” refers to U.S.-based public school district-level and school-level administrators, as well as teachers.

“Rather than simply imposing one-size-fits-all, blanket limits on screen time use in K-12 classrooms, we must take into consideration the quality and pedagogical intent of the specific digital content and edtech tools being used. Finding the right balance and the right use of technology for the classroom should be an objective we all share. Our goal should be to equip educators with digital solutions and data-driven insights that help strengthen instruction, make learning more meaningful and personalized, and improve student outcomes.”

— Bethlam Forsa, CEO of Savvas Learning Company

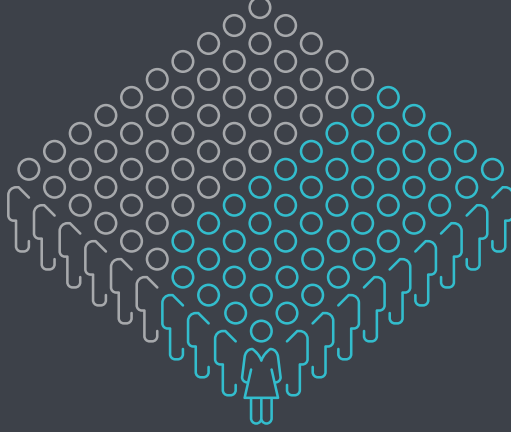
Educators Want Screen Time Used Purposefully

Most educators in the survey believe classroom screen time should be limited, but nearly all distinguish between passive screen use and instructional use, particularly when it comes to engaging students.



82%

of educators believe screen time in the classroom should be limited.



59%

of educators say it should be limited but used purposefully with pedagogically sound content.

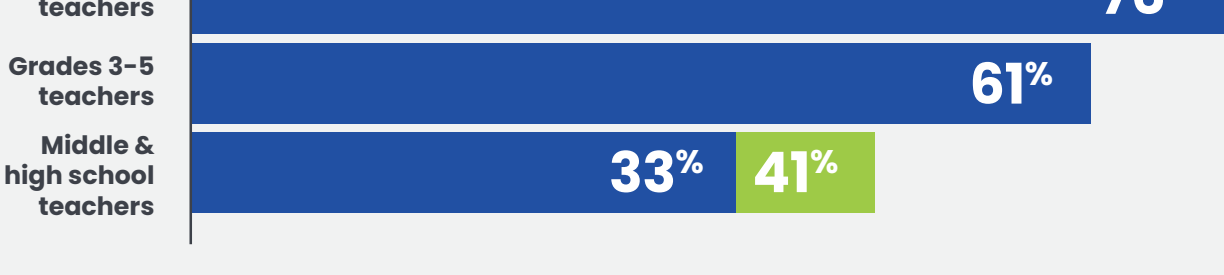
Despite screen time concerns, **63% of educators said school-provided technology does increase student engagement** in their classroom or district. That finding is especially significant given that **66% identified lack of engagement and motivation as top challenges students will face** in the 2026–27 school year.

Educators’ views on appropriate classroom screen time per school day shift by grade level:

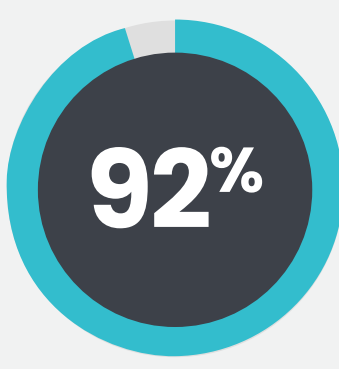
Especially for young learners, educators emphasized short bursts of technology use, with **76% of K-2 teachers** and **61% of 3-5 teachers** agreeing students should spend less than one hour using screens. A quarter of K-2 teachers prefer screen time be limited to 15-20 minute spans.

More than **40% of middle and high school teachers believe one to two hours is the right amount** of screen time, while approximately a third believe students should spend less than an hour on screens.

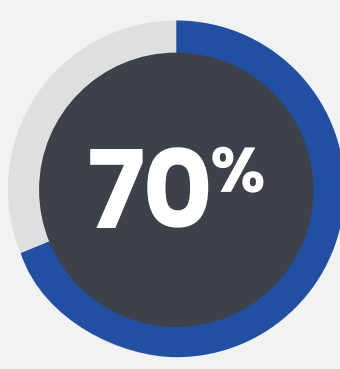
■ <1 hr/day ■ 1-2 hr/day



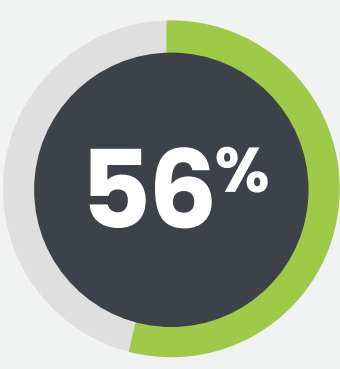
Educators also drew clear distinctions between the appropriate amount of screen time for different types of classroom technology:



of educators agreed personal smartphones and smartwatches have no place in the classroom.



of educators preferred educational games and apps be used in 15-20 minute intervals.



of educators favored 15-20 minute intervals for adaptive and digital instructional materials.

Technology Must Earn Its Place in the Classroom

Educators consistently prioritized technology that improves learning outcomes while simultaneously expressing concern that some tools are too often used for convenience rather than educational value:

72%

...of educators selected **“Does it support student learning?”** as one of the most important questions to ask when evaluating school-provided technology’s effectiveness in the classroom.

56% of all teachers selected practice and skills-building tools as one of the most valuable types of technology for student learning, **followed by interactive or adaptive learning tools at 50%.**

54% of all teachers described the current level of students’ technology use in their classroom as **“just right,”** driven by 62% of K-5 teachers. Meanwhile, **40% of teachers overall** reported that technology use is **“too much,”** a number that rises to **52% among high school teachers.**

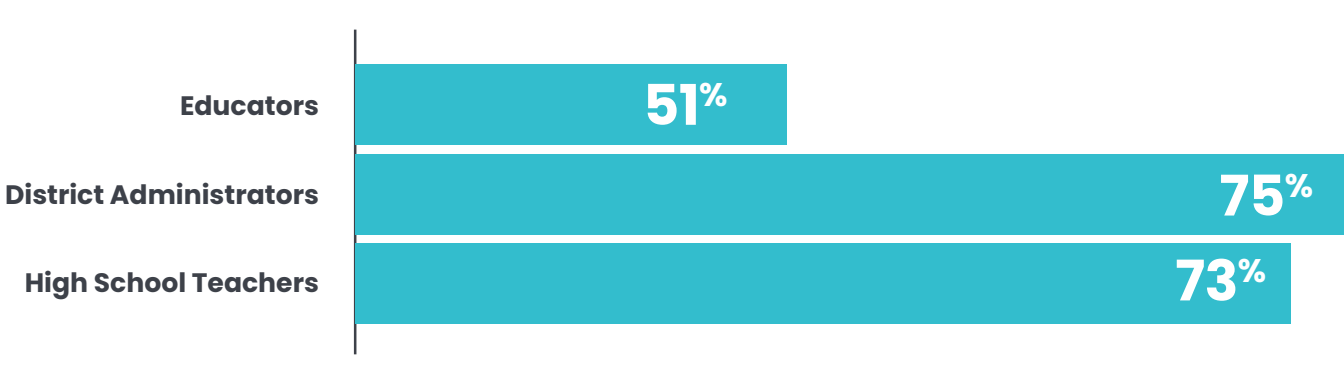
87% of educators believe school-provided technology is sometimes used when it isn’t necessary, **with 56%** of those respondents saying it is used unnecessarily to specifically fill time or keep students occupied, including **71%** of school and district administrators and **49%** of teachers.

Educators anticipate students’ use of AI to increase during the coming school year, while continuing to favor measured use over frequent reliance:

Educators expect student AI use to continue growing during the 2026–27 school year, with **51%** believing their students will use AI more than they did in 2025–26. That expectation rises to **75% among district administrators** and **73% among high school teachers.**

When asked how often they would ideally like students to use AI for schoolwork, **60% of educators selected a response within the moderate range, including 35% of educators** who prefer that students “use AI in limited, teacher-guided ways.”

■ believe students will use AI more during the 2026–27 school year



“Educators are drawing an important distinction between technology that advances learning and technology that merely adds more screen time to the school day. Their message is clear: Digital tools, including AI, have a valuable place in the classroom when they are thoughtfully designed, purposefully used, and guided by teachers. Listening to educators’ perspectives is essential as we continue developing high-quality learning solutions that strengthen instruction, deepen engagement, and support student success.”

— Bethlam Forsa, CEO of Savvas Learning Company

ABOUT THE SURVEY

Now in its third year, the Savvas Educator Index surveys K-12 educators on timely issues shaping education today. The 2026 survey explored educators’ perspectives on classroom technology, screen time, artificial intelligence, instructional materials, student engagement, and anticipated challenges for the 2026–27 school year.

The nationwide survey of 1,709 U.S.-based K-12 public-school educators included 158 district-level administrators, 344 school-level administrators, and 1,207 teachers. Respondents represented 49 states and the District of Columbia. The online survey was conducted from May 26 to June 21, 2026.

ABOUT SAVVAS LEARNING COMPANY

At Savvas, we believe learning should inspire. By combining new ideas, new ways of thinking, and new ways of interacting, we design engaging, next-generation learning solutions that give all students the best opportunity to succeed. Our award-winning, high-quality instructional materials span every grade level and discipline, from evidence-based, standards-aligned core curricula and supplemental and intervention programs to state-of-the-art assessment tools and the industry’s most innovative portfolio of college and career readiness solutions — all designed to meet the needs of every learner. Savvas products are used by millions of students and educators in more than 90 percent of the 13,000+ public school districts across all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, as well as globally in more than 125 countries.

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