NEA NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION | Health and Safety PROGRAM

State Advocacy and Action to Protect Students from Digital Risks

State affiliates have tremendous potential to identify and promote policies that will protect students from digital risks and enhance learning environments.

State Legislative Initiatives

Sample Goal: Support new or strengthened legislation requiring restrictions on student personal devices from bell-to-bell, including limited but necessary exceptions.

Keep in Mind:

- Check NEA's model policy language for content but be aware that state legislation often only provides a broad framework that must be filled in at a local level.
- Push to ensure that requirements for local development of policy do not push enforcement onto individual educators and that it includes the limited but necessary exceptions identified in NEA policy guidance.
- Ensure that local policy development, review, and revision processes include educators, families, and students.

Sample Goal: Support new or revised legislation that embeds media literacy into state education standards while ensuring that educators receive professional learning, are supported, and play a leading role in developing and implementing any requirements.

Keep in Mind:

- Start by reviewing existing legal requirements; legislative-required standards may already be in the books.
- Check out state-by-state analysis of existing legislation and proposed legislation addressing media literacy in schools.

Sample Goal: Support an existing Kids Code initiative and/or fine-tune language in a bill or initiate work on a Kids Code bill.

Keep in Mind:

- Check out The Kids Code Coalition to see where laws have already been passed and connect with national or state groups. Chances are good that they know the state of play, which legislators support or oppose a bill, what amendments would strengthen a bill, and where the governor stands.
- Employ NEA state affiliate legislative expertise and relationships, if not already deployed on a Kids Code bill, to move the Kids Code forward.

State Government Policy Initiatives

Sample Goal: Work with the State Department of Education to encourage development or revision of guidance on student personal device restrictions and/or media literacy.

Keep in Mind:

- Review existing guidance to identify both the state of play and where to turn to engage state officials. State policies tend to emanate from multiple places, including families, the governor's office, department of education, and advocacy groups.
- Review Putting Media Literacy on the Public Policy Agenda on the Media Literacy Now website to learn how states around the country address the issue.
- Check out the Virginia Education Association's interview in support of Virginia Executive Order 33 on cellphone policies in schools and guidance.

State-Level Support for Locals

Sample Goal: Develop bargaining and/or advocacy material for local affiliate use.

Keep in Mind:

- Start by reviewing existing contracts for language that may be related to this topic.
- Look for language on health and safety, wellness, or other committees.
- Pull together local leaders, staff, and members to identify needs, opportunities, and positive local examples of how these topics have been addressed at regularly scheduled state affiliate bargaining or other meetings or conferences.