HADDONFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT • BOARD OF EDUCATION BRIEFING

EdTech Screen Time & Academic Efficacy

A Thoughtful, Evidence-Based K-5 EdTech Synthesis & Policy/Practice Framework

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Presented at the June 4, 2026 BOE Meeting

Overview

Purpose & Scope

- Quantify digital classroom engagement across Haddonfield's K-5 classrooms to compare district usage with national averages and support curriculum balance.
- Lay the groundwork for a standardized teacher guidance document that ensures all digital tools are applied with explicit intentionality, safety, and instructional value.

Policy Exploration

- We are thoughtfully examining this data not to eliminate technology, but to construct clear, balanced usage boundaries that maximize learning while safeguarding student developmental wellness.
- By assessing screen time metrics alongside student growth data and evidence based research, we establish a transparent, objective framework for parents and staff alike.

Defining Core vs. Productivity Tech

Framework 1: Core Curriculum

Required Digital Platforms: Standardized applications utilized for direct instruction, targeted practice, and benchmark diagnostic mastery in fundamental subjects.

Primary Channels: Literacy (Lexia Core5), Mathematics (i-Ready myPath), Fact Fluency (i-Ready Fluency Flight, Frax), and Social Studies (TCI Digital Text), and IXL (ELA).

Output Goal: Define "not-to-exceed" guidelines for core approved platforms.

Framework 2: Productivity Usage

Productivity Tools & Special Areas: Platforms utilized for digital composition (Google Docs/Slides/Sheets), Internet research), and enrichment across Special Area subjects.

Output Goal: Define guidelines for estimated auxiliary classroom usage.

The Curated K-5 Digital Ecosystem

Active Systems

IXL (ELA): An adaptive learning program that utilizes a Real-Time diagnostics to provide students with personalized learning paths and systematic instruction for reading and writing.

Lexia Core5: Highly personalized literacy development targeting critical phonics, spelling, and comprehension with direct, real-time teacher feedback loops.

i-Ready myPath Math: Adaptive instruction that automatically generates targeted, custom lessons based on individual student skill levels instead of generic worksheets.

Fluency Flight & Frax: Game-based math-fact and fraction fluency modules structured for brief, 8- to 10-minute bursts to build automaticity.

Typing Agent: An interactive, gamified curriculum that teaches foundational keyboarding skills. It adapts to a student's typing speed and accuracy as they progress.

Social Studies Alive: A digital curriculum that blends hands-on learning with an interactive platform to provide social studies content for students in grade 5.

Core Curriculum K-5 Classroom Daily Screen Profiles

Grade Level	Core Programs Utilized	Weekly Core Screen Time	Daily Core Screen Avg.	% of 395-Min. School Day
Kindergarten	Lexia (40m), i-Ready myPath Math (30m)	70 Minutes	14 Minutes	3.5% (Full) / 5.7% (Half-Day)
1st Grade	Lexia (40m), i-Ready myPath Math (30m)	70 Minutes	14 Minutes	3.5%
2nd Grade	Lexia (40m), Typing Agent (20m), myPath Math (40m), Fluency Flight (32m)	132 Minutes	26 Minutes	6.7%
3rd Grade	IXL ELA (30m), Typing Agent (20m), myPath Math (40m), Fluency/Frax (32m), Productivity (30m)	152 Minutes	30 Minutes	7.6%
4th Grade	IXL ELA (30m), i-Ready myPath Math (40m), Fluency/Frax (32m), Typing agent (30m), Productivity (60m)	192 Minutes	38 Minutes	9.6%
5th Grade	IXL ELA (30m), myPath Math (40m), Fluency/Frax (32m), TCI Social Studies (30m), Typing Agent (30m), Productivity (100m)	262 Minutes	52 Minutes	13%

- *Core program minutes based on curriculum recommendations currently in HSD's Board Approved curriculum documents.*
- *Productivity Activities for time spent in use of Google Docs, Sheets, Slides, and Chrome based on teacher consultation.*

Classroom EdTech vs. Social Media Harms

Guided Classroom EdTech

Intentional Design: Highly structured, curated, and interactive platforms managed directly by professional educators to teach specific literacy or mathematical concepts.

Academic Focus: Devoid of social networking. Focused purely on skill mastery, providing instant feedback and physical-instruction alerts.

Caution: Digital devices offer opportunities for cognitive engagement through interactive educational platforms, concerns are emerging over their potential to impair cognitive functions, such as attention, memory, and socio-emotional development, ***especially when usage is excessive or unregulated.***

Unregulated Out-of-School Social Media

Algorithmic Capture: Built with engagement-based, profit-driven loops (infinite scroll, notifications, likes) designed to capture attention and reward hyper-frequent checking behaviors.

Documented Harms: Directly correlated with sleep displacement, cyberbullying, body dissatisfaction, social isolation, and clinical depression in adolescent development stages.

SOURCE DOCUMENT *us-surgeon-generals-advisory-warning-on-the-harms-of-screen-use.pdf /Digital Device Usage and Childhood Cognitive Development: Exploring Effects on Cognitive Abilities*

EdTech vs. Home Recreational Screens

333m

Average Daily Recreational Screen Time (Ages 8-12)

15m

Average Daily EdTechScreen Time (Grades 1-5)

National survey data compiled by the American Academy of Pediatrics reveals that children ages 5 to 8 average **3 hours and 38 minutes** (218 minutes) of recreational screen media per day at home.
For tweens ages 8 to 12, that recreational figure rises to **5 hours and 33 minutes** (333 minutes) daily, dominated primarily by passive TV/video streaming (60%) and recreational gaming (26%).

The Contrast: Haddonfield's K-5 school day screen time (averaging 14–52 minutes daily) represents on average 7.3% of a child's total daily screen exposure.

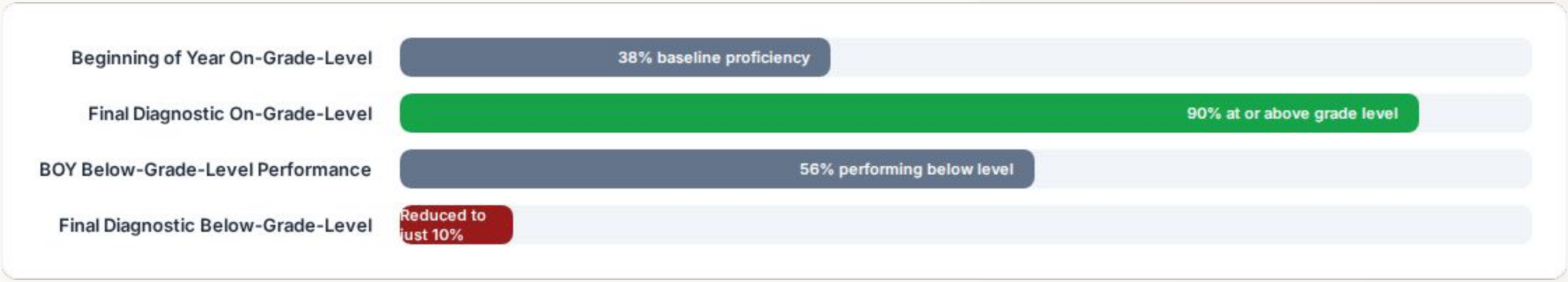
SOURCE DOCUMENT

Average Amount of Screen Time for Children and Young Adults.pdf

Lexia Efficacy: ELA Growth Metrics

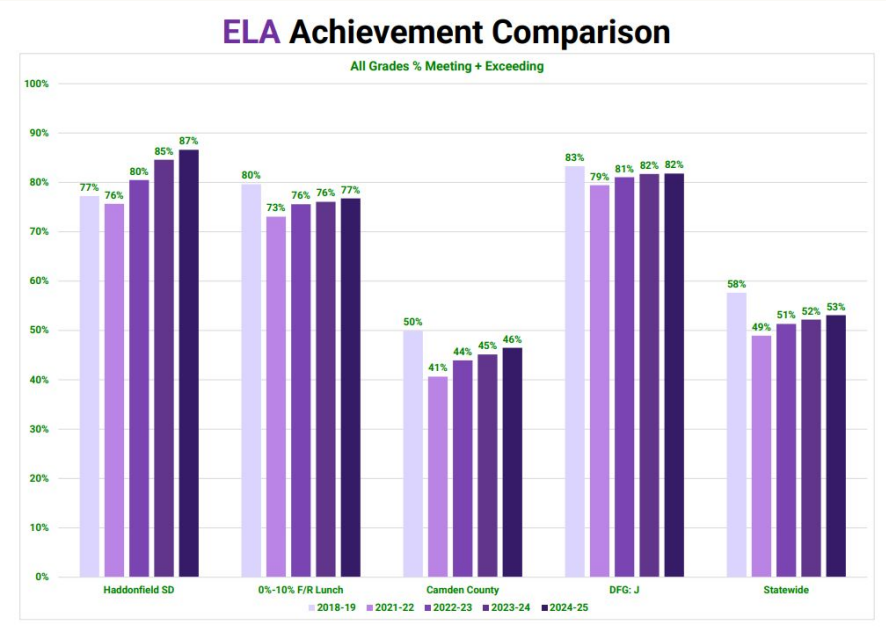
Across all Lexia cohorts, ELA grade-level proficiency increased from 55.4% to 86.1%. 68.9% of students who began the year performing below grade level successfully moved into or above grade-level benchmarks.

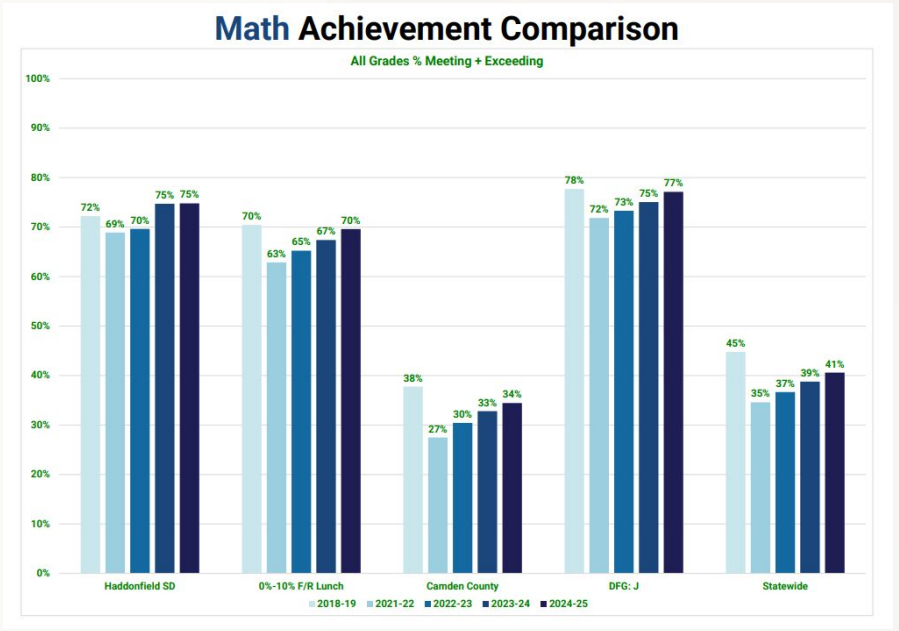
iReady Efficacy: Math Growth Metrics



i-Ready Personalized Instruction math diagnostics show an increase in students performing mid or above grade level from 15% to 71%, with a corresponding drop in below-grade-level performance down to only 10%.

A Broader View of Achievement: 5 Year NJSLA Data





Comparison Group Insights

ELA Trends

- In 2024-25, the district outperformed its socioeconomic peer group's (0%-10% F/R Lunch) proficiency (Meeting + Exceeding) by **+10%** (**87%** vs **77%**). The top performing grade (G8) surpassed its socioeconomic peer group with a recorded gain of **+12%** (**92%** vs **80%**).
- In 2024-25, the district outperformed the statewide proficiency average by **+34%** (**87%** vs **53%**).

Math Trends

- In 2024-25, the district outperformed its socioeconomic peer group's (0%-10% F/R Lunch) proficiency (Meeting + Exceeding) by **+5%** (**75%** vs **70%**). The top performing grade (G4) surpassed its socioeconomic peer group with a recorded gain of **+14%** (**87%** vs **73%**).
- In 2024-25, the district outperformed the statewide proficiency average by **+34%** (**75%** vs **41%**).

Science Trends

- In 2024-25, the district outperformed its socioeconomic peer group's (0%-10% F/R Lunch) proficiency (Proficient + Advanced) by **+3%** (**52%** vs **50%**). The top performing grade (G5) surpassed its socioeconomic peer group with a recorded gain of **+10%** (**65%** vs **55%**).
- In 2024-25, the district outperformed the statewide proficiency average by **+26%** (**52%** vs **27%**).

**Calculations may appear to be incorrect due to rounding.*

A Broader View of Achievement:

Performance Overview (2015–2025)

- Reading Gains: Haddonfield students gained 1.2 grade levels in reading over the past ten years.
- Math Gains: The district saw a 0.4-grade-level increase in math scores during the same period.
- Current Standing: As of 2025, Haddonfield students are performing 3.6 grades ahead of the 2015 U.S. average.

Comparative Analysis

- Against State Averages: Haddonfield significantly outperformed the state of New Jersey. While Haddonfield improved by 1.2 grade levels in reading, the average New Jersey district saw a decline of 0.6 grade levels.
- Against Similar Districts: Haddonfield's progress also outpaced other high-achieving, similar districts in the region.
- National Context: By improving its reading scores, Haddonfield has placed itself in the top 17% of American school districts that avoided the national decline.

Our primary goal is to ensure that EdTech serves as a purposeful supplement to, rather than a replacement for, high-quality human instruction.

We remain dedicated to this work not because we are falling behind, but because we are committed to moving even further ahead.

What We Anticipate to Be Included in the Guidance

Anticipated Inclusions

1. *Not to Exceed Screen Time minutes per grade level*
2. *Are Chromebooks to remain at school v. take home?*
3. *Expectations for screens and "free time" (snack, recess, rewards, etc.)*
4. *Print v. Digital Text for Reading*
5. *Handwriting v. Typing*
6. *Supplemental qualitative guidance on edTech use in special areas classes*
7. *Research based rationale for the guidance*

Limitations

- Tech reports: We currently do not have the capacity to generate reports to break down EdTech use confined to the school day.
- Teacher survey/self-reporting: We are considering an addem to this report to get clarity on "productivity use" minutes per day.

Scientific Guardrails Against Overload

Dose-Response Decline

Global PISA assessments show that academic performance drops monotonically when screen time exceeds moderate, structured levels. This highlights the critical need for strict classroom daily limits.

The Task-Switching Cost

Unregulated screen exposure can consume up to 38 minutes of every classroom hour in off-task distraction, reinforcing fragmented attentional habits instead of deep text processing.

The Displacement Threat

Early screen exposure must never displace physical, three-dimensional tactile play, print reading, or parent-child social interactions which form the baseline for neuroplasticity and vision health.

Next Steps: Building Shared Guidance

Step 1 (Current)

Synthesize Study Data
Establish baseline profiles of actual classroom screen hours per K-5 grade level.

Step 2 (July BOE Meeting)

Share Early Draft
Review the initial teacher guidance document outlining "not-to-exceed" time structures.

Step 3 (Late July/August)

Conduct Focus Groups
Facilitate structured feedback sessions with parent and teacher focus groups.

Step 4 (Sept. 2026)

Refine & Adopt
Finalize guidance parameters to reflect the core values and safety of Haddonfield.

Research Sources

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Additional Resources

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HADDONFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Questions & Discussion

Thank you for your partnership in balancing digital efficiency with childhood wellness.

Let's work together to make real-life learning and student health our primary classroom focus.