Thank you to the committee for undertaking this important hearing topic. It comes at a critical time as researchers, educators, and parents grapple with new technology and the appropriate use inside, and out, of the classroom. For years, parents, educators, and policymakers were promised that technology would transform education—enhance learning outcomes, reduce teacher workload, and expand access to quality resources. In some cases, those benefits have materialized. But too often, the reality has fallen short of the promise.

This is not an argument against educational technology. Rather, it reflects a broader challenge: as a nation, we have not invested enough in rigorous, independent research to guide when, how, and for whom technology actually supports learning—and when it may be a distraction or even a barrier.

The influx of personal devices into schools, and the recent advances in generative AI, have made it clear that we are unprepared for the scale and complexity of technology's role in education. Instead of thoughtful integration, many schools have adopted digital tools without adequate evidence, guardrails, or training. We owe it to students and teachers to do better.

Our nation is faced with a moment of reflection and opportunity. With bipartisan support, we can commit to asking the right questions: Where does technology genuinely improve educational outcomes? Where might it undermine them? And how do we ensure that our approach is equitable, evidence-based, and centered on student well-being?

To answer these questions, we need a renewed national investment in research on the impact of digital technology in education—research that is transparent, nonpartisan, and focused on what works for children, families, and educators.

Children and Screens: Institute of Digital Media and Child Development has the following policy recommendations:

- Invest in and support public interest research to study the effects of technology and digital media, especially education technology and artificial intelligence, on children's learning and development.
- Study the impacts of school smart device bans, including but not limited to any actual changes in student device use, enforcement of school smart device policies, student academic achievement, student mental health and wellbeing, disciplinary actions and incidences involving devices, and staff mental health and wellbeing.
- Do not require or encourage integrating a technology in schools until it has been thoroughly studied for its pedagogical or educational value.
- Increase enforcement of existing regulations including the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- Compel companies to divulge the information necessary to enforce regulations and inform consumers. This includes, but is not limited to, advertising data, the number and age of users, any uses of AI, data handling practices, content and account moderation practices, and derived user data.

Since 2013, Children and Screens–a 501(c)(3) organization–has worked to help young people lead healthy lives in a digital world by synthesizing and disseminating the latest scientific research, while also supporting advancements in the field through research funding and scientific convenings. We stand ready to assist the committee in this important issue through offering validated data and research.