



ANALYSIS: Incident exposes challenge for Democrats

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ANALYSIS

UNPLUGGED



Schools rethink technology use in the classroom, examine student screen time

Janice Mak
Arizona State University | THE CONVERSATION

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced in-person classroom instruction to go virtual, students suddenly needed to have their own laptops or tablets in order to interact with teachers and complete assignments.

Most states used federal pandemic funding to address the digital divide. This refers to the gap between students and families who had their own tablets, computers and high-speed internet, and those who did not.

While most schools resumed in-person classes by 2021, many of them continued to rely heavily on online platforms and apps to help

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Experts say students need to learn more than how to use a laptop or an artificial intelligence chatbot; they should also understand how data is collected and used, how AI and other computing systems work and how technology affects people and society. PHOTO AND ART BY GETTY IMAGES



Research shows students learn the most when they use tech actively rather than passively.

For older students, technology may remain central to learning, particularly when students are using it to program, analyze data, model complex systems and critically evaluate information.

‘SMART AND RESPONSIBLE’

Kings Mountain extends data center moratorium

HB2K would bring millions in taxes to the city if given green light

Rebecca Sitzes
Shelby Star
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A moratorium on data centers in Kings Mountain is being extended for another year after a recent 6-1 vote by the City Council.

In February, the council voted to put a pause on the developments while an ordinance was developed by staff. In June, it was brought back to council after the state introduced Senate Bill 730, which would regulate and create standards for data centers. Staff recommended extending the moratorium to see what the state would put in place and to allow more time for a city ordinance to be created.

Henry Earle, assistant city manager, said data centers have been rapidly evolving from smaller storage locations to massive centers and cities do not have standards for them.

“It’s smart and responsible for us as a city to take time to get this right,” he said.

He recommended the extension of the moratorium and said staff would continue to work on an ordinance while waiting on the state’s to be passed. He said council could decide to come back sooner than 12 months if they so chose.

Scott Neisler, who was the only council member to vote against the moratorium, spoke in support of data centers and said it was discriminating against a project known to council over a year ago.

He said the company, HB2K, which has proposed a 150-megawatt AI center in Kings Mountain, would bring millions in taxes to the city if given the green light.

Neisler then proposed extending the moratorium but exclude HB2K and have council authorize the city manager to enter into a development agreement with the company. He said the project could be transformational for Kings Mountain.

Earle said HB2K was not part of the moratorium request and it was something that council could look at later.

“It’s not just staff working on standards. We’re also hoping state legislature will approve or not approve one way or another the House bill so we don’t have to redo or undo our standards,” Shearra Miller said. “It’s waiting on the General Assembly.”

Jimmy West suggested residents be involved in the decision to allow data centers in city limits through a referendum and the city attorney said he would look into that possibility.

Reporter Rebecca Sitzes covers Cleveland County for The Star. You can reach her at RSitzes@usatodayco.com.

