

March 27th, 2019

Slide of BrainCo from the Oregonian on screen

My name is Deb Mayer. I represent the Parents Across America for Safe Technology project. *in support of SB 282*

Chair Wagner, members of the Committee:

I want to begin by saying we are not against the use of computer technology at school. We are for the safe, sensible use of computer technology in classrooms. As more curricula is being taught online, we want to make sure kids are safe while doing lesson in this way.

I direct your attention to this article from the Oregonian and ask that you indulge me in a simulation of the device featured in this article. The BrainCo headband allows the teacher to know who is focusing on the lesson. Now imagine a class of 25 – 35 students wearing this thing. With this device, students are being monitored electronically even though they are not online. Supposedly, the teacher can tell who is not focused by observing the light emanating from the headgear – like this. We are asking kids to wrap their brains with a radiation emitting device. This has not been tested for safety – just like every other digital device used in the classroom.

What you won't find in the Oregonian, or on radio and TV is information about the health risks posed by overexposure to devices – even though we have implored the media to cover the issue. We have a crisis in classrooms across the state. We are witnessing behaviors in children including screaming uncontrollably, violently throwing furniture across a classroom, and abusing educators. This is NOT NORMAL. We must look deeper for causes. Overexposure to devices should not be dismissed.

Also, requiring kids to do homework online extends screen time and presents equity problems as well – which is a whole other issue.

This bill asks for a study to determine how much online use is safe. We are asking that parents be informed and give consent, that time away from devices be given priority as well, and that data collected from online activity be minimal and data privacy assured. We are asking that parents have options to this type of learning.

Since the product manufacturers and the media have refused to inform parents of the risks, it is up to us to protect our children at school. So, I'm asking this deliberative body to FOCUS on doing what's best for the health, safety, and education of Oregon's children.

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Headband that detects brain activity gets tryout in schools; goal is to improve student engagement

By Douglas Perry | Posted January 15, 2019 at 01:30 PM



BrainCo

"She's bored, not napping. She has learned to think about schoolwork, and at the same time about other things in a private corner of her mind." That's a description of Ramona Quimby in class, but author Beverly Cleary's beloved character might not be able to get away with daydreaming during school for much longer.

A Boston technology company called BrainCo Inc. has created a headband, developed by Ph.D. students at Harvard University's Center for Brain Science, "that detects and quantifies students' attention levels in the

classroom." This allows teachers to pull up a screen and see who's zeroed in on the class topic and who's drifting away to a private corner of their mind.

"The headbands," writes Britain's *The Independent*, "use electroencephalography (EEG) sensors to detect brain activity when the wearer is engaged in a task."

The goal, says BrainCo, is to improve student engagement, show educators what teaching techniques are working, and identify students in class who need extra help. And the technology is already being put into practice. Thousands of students in China are using the headbands on a trial basis right now. That number, according to BrainCo, might soon grow to millions of Chinese students.

Critics told *The Independent* that any improvement in a student's performance is "likely to be caused by the placebo effect," but BrainCo is forging confidently ahead.

A promotional video hints that the company's original headband is only the beginning. Titled "May the FOCUS be with you," it shows people moving objects and turning on lights with their minds.

To read entire article: <https://expo.oregonlive.com/news/g66l-2019/01/7fa2c5265a1556/headband-that-detects-brain-activity-gets-tryout-in-schools-goal-is-to-improve-student-engagement.html>