



Cellphone Policy

SPAC

Jan. 23, 2025

Research Findings

Not a simple
question

Research on the use of
cellphones in schools
points to an issue with
multiple potential
impacts

Academic Performance

- Mixed findings
- Potential for impacts to differ among student groups

Classroom Behaviors

- Increased difficulty focusing
- Opportunities for academic dishonesty

Safety

- Links to social isolation and mental wellness
- Impacts cyberbullying and on campus incidents

AB 3216



Requires a Policy

"...to limit or prohibit the use by pupils of smartphones..."



Addresses Use During The Full Day

"... while the pupils are at a school site or while the pupils are under the supervision and control of an employee."



Must Be Updated

The policy must be reviewed and updated every five years.



Involves Stakeholders

Requires stakeholder participation to develop, review and update.



Limits When Phones Can Be Prohibited

Exemptions for emergencies, when permission is given, with a doctor's note or when included in an IEP.



Must be Completed by 2026

All districts must have an initial policy in place by July 1, 2026 but may implement earlier if prepared.

Current Policy

Prohibits Use

Requires devices be turned off in class EXCEPT when instructed to use or when authorized by a doctor.

Reflects Privacy Concerns

Directs that no device with recording capabilities may be used to infringe on another's privacy.

Sets Consequences

Authorizes staff to direct students to put devices away or confiscate them.

BP 5131: Conduct

Current Practices

Implementation

- Some require devices be turned off
- Some require devices be on silent
- Some allow students to keep devices, others require they place them in a central location
- Many favor all day restrictions vs. limiting to class time

Enforcement

- Can vary between classrooms
- Can be a point of conflict with some students/families

In 2023-24
12 @ Tk-5
1,762 @ 6-8
1,604 @ 9-12



Timeline



Board Consideration

Implementation for start of the 2025-26 school year with outreach and awareness conducted in May and over the summer.



Draft Policy & Collect Feedback

An initial draft of the policy will be shared widely for feedback and revision before a final recommendation is made.



Gather Voice

The workgroup will gather input from students, families, staff and others to inform recommendations.



Convene Workgroup

Surfacing Thoughts



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What should be considered as we develop a policy that details when students can and cannot use cellphones during the school day?

