



ACT #2025 - 386

1 HB166

2 W11V3EE-3

3 By Representatives Hulsey, Collins, Baker, Faulkner, DuBose

4 RFD: Education Policy

5 First Read: 04-Feb-25





HB166 Enrolled

Enrolled, An Act,

Relating to public K-12 education; to establish the Freeing our Classrooms of Unnecessary Screens for Safety (FOCUS) Act; to prohibit the use, operation, and possession of wireless communication devices on certain public school properties; to require local boards of education to adopt an Internet safety policy; to add Section 16-40-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975, to require students to complete a social media safety course prior to entering the eighth grade; and to repeal Section 16-1-27, Code of Alabama 1975, providing for the use of electronic communication devices on school property.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. The Legislature finds and declares the following:

(1) Each student in an Alabama public K-12 school should be college-ready or career-ready upon high school graduation.

(2) Many high school teachers believe that cell phones and other electronic communication devices are distracting students in the classroom.

(3) Studies have shown that cell phones and other electronic communication devices are negatively impacting learning outcomes.

(4) Studies have shown that increased social media usage may negatively affect the mental health of school-aged children.



HB166 Enrolled

Section 2. For the purposes of this act, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) INSTRUCTIONAL DAY. The period of time during which a public elementary or secondary school is open and in session for purpose of meeting the minimum number of instructional days or hours pursuant to Section 16-13-231, Code of Alabama 1975. The term also includes class transitions, lunch, non-instructional times, and any other time specified in a wireless communication device policy.

(2) WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICE. A cellular telephone, tablet computer, laptop computer, pager, gaming device, or any other portable electronic device identified in a wireless communication device policy that has the capability of exchanging voice, messaging, or other data communication with another electronic device.

(3) WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICE POLICY. A written policy adopted by a local board of education to implement this act.

Section 3. (a) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, no student shall use or operate any wireless communication device in any public elementary or secondary school building or on the grounds thereof during the instructional day.

(b) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, no student may possess a wireless communication device in any public elementary or secondary school building or on the grounds thereof during the instructional day unless the wireless communication device is turned off and stored off their person in a locker, car, or similar storage location.



HB166 Enrolled

(c) Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b), a student may use, operate, or possess a wireless communication device in a public elementary or secondary school building or on the grounds thereof during the instructional day in any of the following circumstances:

(1) The use, operation, or possession is pursuant to the student's Individualized Education Program, Individualized Accommodation Plan, Section 504 plan, or Individualized Health Plan.

(2) The use, operation, or possession is for educational or learning purposes under the supervision of local board of education personnel.

(3) The use, operation, or possession occurs during an emergency threatening the life or safety of the student or another person.

(d) No later than July 1, 2025, each local board of education shall adopt a wireless communication device policy. The wireless communication device policy shall include consequences for violations. The local board of education shall reasonably distribute the wireless communication device policy to students, parents, faculty, staff, and the State Board of Education.

Section 4. (a) No later than July 1, 2025, each local board of education shall adopt an Internet safety policy that addresses student access to the Internet on devices owned by the local board of education.

(b) The policy shall do all of the following:



HB166 Enrolled

(1) Limit Internet access by students to only age-appropriate subject matters and materials deemed age-appropriate pursuant to the policy.

(2) Provide specific procedures and other protections that prioritize the safety and security of students when using email, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communication.

(3) Prohibit access by students to unlawfully obtained data or information, including hacking, and other unlawful online activity by students.

(4) Prohibit access to websites, web applications, or software that exposes students to the disclosure, use, or dissemination of their personal information.

(5) Prohibit students from accessing social media platforms, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes.

(c) The principal shall be responsible for ensuring consistent compliance with the policy by school personnel.

Section 5. (a) Each certificated staff member employed by the local board education shall complete an annual written anonymous survey regarding the implementation of the wireless communication device policy and to measure uniform compliance within the school.

(b) On or before October 1, 2025, the State Department of Education shall develop a survey to assess the levels of participation and compliance with the wireless communication device policy. On or before June 1, each subsequent year, the annual survey results shall be submitted by the principal to



HB166 Enrolled

110 the local superintendent of education, local board of
111 education, and the State Board of Education for publication on
112 the website of the State Department of Education.

113 Section 6. Section 16-40-13 is added to the Code of
114 Alabama to read as follows:

115 §16-40-13 .

116 (a) No later than July 1, 2025, the State Department of
117 Education shall develop and approve an asynchronous, digitally
118 delivered course that addresses the risks of using social
119 media and how to use social media safely.

120 (b) At a minimum, the course shall include the following
121 topics:

122 (1) The benefits of safely using age-appropriate social
123 media platforms, including career and resume building for
124 future academic or employment opportunities; sharing
125 information with family and friends; and safely connecting
126 with other users with similar interests.

127 (2) The risks of social media use including its negative
128 effects on mental health, including addiction; the
129 distribution of misinformation on social media; how social
130 media manipulates behavior; and the permanency of sharing
131 materials online.

132 (3) Safe practices for using social media including how
133 to report suspicious behavior; how to identify cyberbullying,
134 phishing and scam communications, predatory behavior, and
135 human trafficking; and maintaining personal security and
136 preventing oversharing of personal information.



HB166 Enrolled

137 (c) The State Department of Education shall make the
138 course available online and each local board of education
139 shall reasonably notify parents of its availability. Each
140 local board of education shall deliver the course to all
141 students prior to entering the eighth grade and shall make the
142 course available to students in grades eight through 12 who
143 transfer to the school district or who otherwise have not
144 completed the course.

145 (d) The State Board of Education may adopt rules to
146 implement this section.

147 Section 7. Section 16-1-27, Code of Alabama 1975,
148 providing for the use of electronic communications devices on
149 school property, is repealed.

150 Section 8. This act shall become effective immediately.



HB166 Enrolled

Speaker of the House of Representatives

President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

House of Representatives

I hereby certify that the within Act originated in and was passed by the House 03-Apr-25.

John Treadwell
Clerk

Senate

07-May-25

Passed

APPROVED

5-14-2025

TIME

9:00 am

GOVERNOR

Alabama Secretary Of State

Act Num....: 2025-386
Bill Num....: H-166

Recv'd 05/14/25 01:00pmKCW

ENGROSSED

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

166

SPONSOR

Hulsey

CO-SPONSORS

Collins

Baker

Faulkner

DuBose

HOUSE ACTION

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE
RESOLUTION AS REQUIRED IN
SECTION C OF ACT NO. 81-889
WAS ADOPTED AND IS ATTACHED
TO THE BILL, H.B. 166
YEAS 61 NAYS 7

JOHN TREADWELL, Clerk

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE
NOTICE & PROOF IS ATTACHED
TO THE BILL, H.B. _____
AS REQUIRED IN THE GENERAL
ACTS OF ALABAMA, 1975 ACT NO.
919.

JOHN TREADWELL, Clerk

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

House Conferees _____

SENATE ACTION

DATE: 4-24-75 20 25
RD 1 RFD 3-17-75

This Bill was referred to the Standing Committee
of the Senate on

ED Policy

and was acted upon by such Committee in
session and is by order of the Committee
returned therefrom with a favorable report
w/amend(s) _____ w/sub _____ by a vote of
yeas 4 nays 0 abstain _____
this 30 day of April, 20 25
[Signature], Chair

DATE: 5-1 20 25
RF 7-12-75 RD 2 CAL

DATE: _____ 20 _____

RE-REFERRED ☐ RE-COMMITTED ☐
Committee _____

I hereby certify that the Resolution as
required in Section C of Act No. 81-889
was adopted and is attached to the Bill,
HB _____

YEAS _____ NAYS _____

PATRICK HARRIS,
Secretary

FURTHER SENATE ACTION (OVER)