



# 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

1 Enrolled, An Act,

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3 Relating to public K-12 education; to establish the Freeing  
4 our Classrooms of Unnecessary Screens for Safety (FOCUS) Act;  
5 to prohibit the use, operation, and possession of wireless  
6 communication devices on certain public school properties; to  
7 require local boards of education to adopt an Internet safety  
8 policy; to add Section 16-40-13 to the Code of Alabama 1975,  
9 to require students to complete a social media safety course  
10 prior to entering the eighth grade; and to repeal Section  
11 16-1-27, Code of Alabama 1975, providing for the use of  
12 electronic communication devices on school property.

13 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

14 Section 1. The Legislature finds and declares the  
15 following:

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

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

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

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



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

29 (1) INSTRUCTIONAL DAY. The period of time during which a  
30 public elementary or secondary school is open and in session  
31 for purpose of meeting the minimum number of instructional  
32 days or hours pursuant to Section 16-13-231, Code of Alabama  
33 1975. The term also includes class transitions, lunch,  
34 non-instructional times, and any other time specified in a  
35 wireless communication device policy.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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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.



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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.



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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  
House Bill No. 160

SPONSOR

Hulse

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. 160  
YEAS 81 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: 4/24/78 20 78  
RD 1 RFD \_\_\_\_\_

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 78.  
[Signature], Chair

DATE: 5-1 20 78  
RF [Signature] 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)