

Update on Mobile Communication Devices Policy

April 15, 2026



Purpose

Provide an update on the implementation of CVUSD Board Policy 5131.8
“Mobile Communication Devices,” including key background and feedback.



Background: New Law

California Assembly Bill 3216 amended Education Code 48901.7 to read:

“The governing body of a school district, a county office of education, or a charter school shall, no later than July 1, 2026, develop and adopt, and shall update every five years, a policy to limit or prohibit the use by its pupils of smartphones while the pupils are at a schoolsite or while the pupils are under the supervision and control of an employee or employees of that school district, county office of education, or charter school. The goal of the policy shall be to promote evidence-based use of smartphone practices to support pupil learning and well-being. The development of the policy shall involve significant stakeholder participation in order to ensure that the policies are responsive to the unique needs and desires of pupils, parents, and educators in each community.”



Background: Timeline & Process

On **September 4, 2024**, the CVUSD Board of Education had a preliminary discussion regarding this matter and, in accordance with amendments to Education Code 48901.7, requested additional feedback and input from educational partners.

On **February 5, 2025**, the CVUSD Board of Education received feedback gathered from the following groups: Unified Association of Conejo Teachers (UACT), Student District Advisory Committee (SDAC), and survey input from school site administrators, school counselors, psychologists, mental health staff, and members of CVUSD parent district advisory councils and committees. The Board of Education then made revisions, through consensus, to CVUSD Board Policy 5131.8 “Mobile Communications Devices”.



Background: Timeline & Process

On **February 19, 2025**, the amended board policy was brought forward again as an Information/Discussion agenda item for further review, discussion, and amendments through board consensus.

On **March 5, 2025**, the CVUSD Board of Education took action to approve amendments to CVUSD Board Policy 5131.8 “Mobile Communication Devices” effective the start of the 2025-26 school year and requested a future review of the implementation of this amended policy in Spring 2026.



Highlights of Updated Board Policy 5131.8

All Students:

Mobile communication devices shall be turned off and/or on silent mode and put away during instructional time.

Preschool to 8th Grade:

Students in grades Preschool through 8th grade shall not use cell phones, smart watches, pagers, or other mobile communication devices on campus during instructional and non-instructional time (e.g. recess, passing periods, nutrition, lunch).

9th Grade to Post-Secondary:

Students in Grades 9 through Post-Secondary may use cell phones, smart watches, pagers, or other mobile communication devices on campus during non-instructional time (e.g. passing periods, nutrition, lunch) as long as the device is utilized in accordance with law and any rules that individual school sites may impose.



Highlights of Updated Board Policy 5131.8

All students preschool to post-secondary shall not be prohibited from possessing or using a mobile communication device under any of the following circumstances: (Education Code 48901.5, 48901.7)

1. In the case of an emergency, or in response to a perceived threat of danger
2. When a teacher or administrator grants permission to the student to possess or use a mobile communication device, subject to any reasonable limitation imposed by that teacher or administrator.

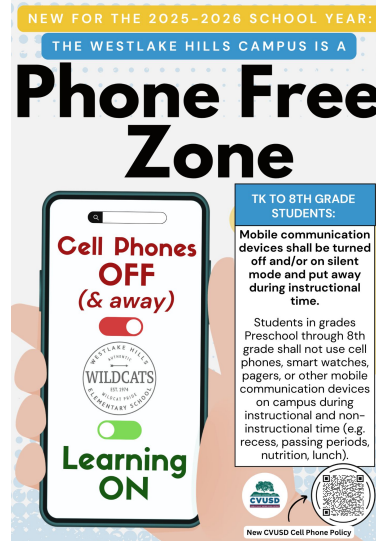
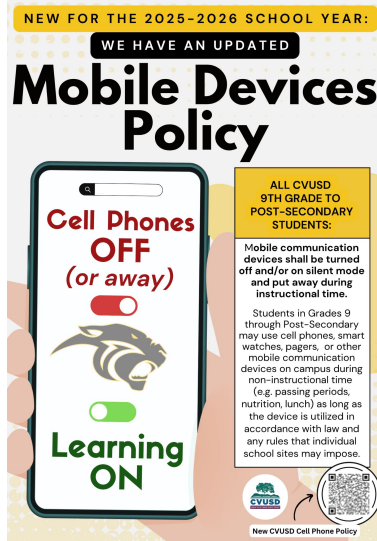
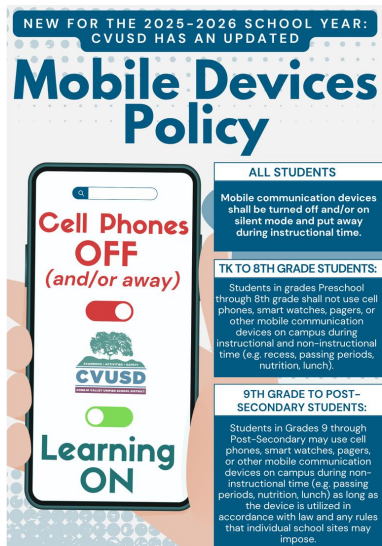
The Board of Education strongly encourages teachers to consistently limit the use of mobile communication devices in the classroom.

3. When a licensed physician or surgeon determines that the possession or use is necessary for the student's health and well-being
4. When the possession or use is required by the student's individualized education program



Informing The Community

Information on the updated 2025-26 mobile device policy was shared via districtwide and school site messaging in Spring 2025 and at the start of the school year. Updated policies were included in student handbooks and reviewed with staff and students at the beginning of the year. Secondary schools have signage about the policy throughout the school.





Teacher Survey: Consistent School Implementation

Teachers report overall consistency, with variation at high school.

<i>(Select One)</i>	Grades TK-12 n = 420	Grades TK-5 n = 182	Grades 6-8 n = 82	Grades 9-12 n = 156
Fully consistent	74.3%	95.6%	82.9%	44.9%
Mostly consistent	17.6%	2.7%	14.6%	37.2%
Somewhat consistent	1.2%	0.5%	0.0%	2.6%
Difficult to implement consistently	6.9%	1.6%	2.4%	15.4%



Teacher Survey: Impact of Policy

Teachers report positive impacts, particularly in secondary, with more limited impact in elementary.

<i>(Select All That Apply)</i>	Grades TK-12 n = 420	Grades TK-5 n = 182	Grades 6-8 n = 82	Grades 9-12 n = 156
Positive impact on student engagement	40.5%	15.4%	63.4%	57.7%
Positive impact on classroom management	30.7%	9.3%	57.3%	41.7%
Fewer distractions	35.7%	11.0%	56.1%	53.8%
No noticeable change	40.5%	66.5%	23.2%	19.2%

Teachers could select multiple responses; percentages reflect the percent of teachers selecting each option.



Teacher Survey: Improvements

Teacher perspectives are mixed, with many supporting current policy and others favoring increased structure.

<i>(Select One)</i>	Grades TK-12 n = 420	Grades TK-5 n = 182	Grades 6-8 n = 82	Grades 9-12 n = 156
Make policy more strict	43.8%	27.5%	53.7%	57.7%
Keep policy as is	40.2%	43.4%	42.7%	35.3%
Make policy less strict	1.9%	1.1%	1.2%	3.2%
Unsure	14.0%	28.0%	2.4%	3.8%



Teacher Feedback

Support for Reducing Distractions

“Phones were a major distraction before—this has helped significantly.”

“Students are much more focused without phones constantly out.”

“This has been one of the most positive changes we’ve made for instruction.”

Desire for Increased Consistency

“Students take advantage when expectations are different from class to class.”

“It only works if everyone is enforcing it the same way.”

“Students still try to use phones when they think they can get away with it.”

Enforcement Challenges

“It can be difficult to enforce consistently at the high school level.”

“Enforcement takes time away from instruction at times.”

“It’s more challenging with older students who are more resistant.”



Student District Advisory Committee (SDAC) Feedback

“I think this policy is very good, as I have noticed it allows students to be more attentive and focused during class, and not on their phones.”

“It would benefit more for students to have a more lax cell phone policy... By using cellphones as an incentive for completing work/tasks and not demonizing their use in the district, you could increase productivity and overall student engagement and happiness.

“I like the cell phone policy, and I think it's good that the school has something. I also think this helps teachers, because some don't mind and so do, so it gives them the flexibility to set standards in their class based off what they feel is best.”



Questions, Discussion