

**First Regular Session
Seventy-Seventh General Assembly
STATE OF SAN ANDREAS**

ENGROSSED

LLS NO. 26-0719.02 Payton Gibson x2365

HOUSE BILL 26-014

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Stimpson

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Mitchell, Morton

House Committees

Education (K-12)

Senate Committees

Not assigned

A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING THE USE OF PERSONAL DEVICES IN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <https://saleg.uscgov.com>)

This bill prohibits the use of personal electronic devices by students during the school day in compulsory education settings, beginning in the 2026–2027 academic year. The bill is intended to reduce classroom distractions, improve student engagement, and support effective instructional environments by limiting the use of personal devices such as cellular phones and smart watches during instructional time.

**Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.**

Under the bill, students enrolled in compulsory education may not use personal electronic devices while on school grounds or participating in school-sponsored instructional activities. Devices must be powered off and stored in accordance with school district policies during instructional hours. Schools retain authority to determine storage procedures and enforcement methods consistent with statewide requirements.

The legislation allows for several exceptions, including the use of school-issued or authorized devices for educational purposes, accommodations required under individualized education programs or medical needs, and limited use authorized by teachers or administrators. Emergency use for safety purposes is also permitted.

The Department of Education is directed to provide implementation guidance to school districts, which must adopt or update local policies prior to the start of the 2026–2027 academic year.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of San*
2 *Andreas:*
3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.** This bill shall be known and cited
4 as the “Device-Free Learning Act.” **SECTION 2. LEGISLATIVE**
5 **FINDINGS AND INTENT.** (a) The General Assembly finds that
6 excessive use of personal electronic devices in educational
7 settings has been shown to disrupt instruction, reduce student
8 engagement, and negatively impact academic outcomes. (b)
9 Teachers and school administrators require clear and consistent
10 policies to maintain effective classroom environments free from
11 unnecessary distractions. (c) Personal electronic devices,
12 including cellular phones and similar communication devices,
13 may interfere with student learning and social development during
14 instructional time. (d) Schools retain responsibility to provide
15 appropriate educational technology necessary for instruction. (e)
16 It is the intent of the General Assembly to prohibit the use of
17 personal electronic devices by students during the school day in
18 compulsory education settings while permitting devices provided

1 or authorized for educational purposes. **SECTION 3.**
2 **DEFINITIONS.** For purposes of this Act, unless the context
3 otherwise requires: (a) “Department” means the Department of
4 Education. (b) “Compulsory education” means public education
5 provided to students required by law to attend school. (c)
6 “Personal electronic device” means any privately owned
7 electronic device capable of communication, internet access,
8 recording, or entertainment, including but not limited to cellular
9 phones, smart watches, tablets, and personal gaming devices. (d)
10 “Educational device” means a device issued, approved, or
11 authorized by a school or school district for instructional
12 purposes. **SECTION 4. PROHIBITION ON PERSONAL**
13 **ELECTRONIC DEVICES.** (a) Beginning with the 2026–2027
14 academic year, students enrolled in compulsory education shall
15 not use personal electronic devices during instructional time while
16 on school grounds or participating in school-sponsored
17 instructional activities, except as otherwise provided in this Act.
18 (b) Personal electronic devices shall be powered off and stored in
19 accordance with school or district policy during instructional
20 hours. (c) School districts shall adopt policies governing storage
21 procedures and enforcement consistent with this Act. (d)
22 Enforcement policies adopted pursuant to this Act shall
23 emphasize progressive discipline and shall not result in
24 suspension, expulsion, or referral to law enforcement solely for
25 violation of personal electronic device restrictions. **SECTION 5.**
26 **PERMITTED USES AND EXCEPTIONS.** (a) This Act shall not
27 prohibit: (I) The use of educational devices provided or authorized
28 by the school for instructional purposes; (II) Use of personal
29 devices as part of an approved individualized education program
30 (IEP), Section 504 plan, or documented medical accommodation;
31 (III) Use authorized by a teacher or administrator for a specific
32 educational purpose; (IV) Emergency use when reasonably
33 necessary to ensure student health, safety, or communication

1 during an emergency situation, including school safety incidents
2 or medical emergencies; (V) Reasonable communication between
3 a student and parent or guardian outside instructional time. (b)
4 School districts may establish limited exceptions for
5 extracurricular or non-instructional periods consistent with
6 maintaining an effective learning environment. (c) School districts
7 may permit limited use of personal electronic devices during
8 non-instructional periods, including lunch, passing periods, or
9 before and after the instructional day, provided such use does not
10 disrupt school operations or student safety. (d) Enforcement
11 policies adopted pursuant to this Act shall emphasize progressive
12 discipline and shall not result in suspension, expulsion, or referral
13 to law enforcement solely for violation of personal electronic
14 device restrictions. (d) Nothing in this Act shall limit the authority
15 of a classroom teacher to authorize temporary use of a personal
16 electronic device for instructional, research, translation,
17 accessibility, or classroom management purposes. **SECTION 6.**
18 **IMPLEMENTATION.** (a) The Department of Education shall
19 provide guidance to school districts regarding implementation and
20 best practices for device-free instructional environments. (b)
21 School districts shall adopt or update local policies prior to the
22 start of the 2026–2027 academic year. (c) Nothing in this Act
23 shall require schools to purchase additional devices beyond those
24 already necessary for instructional purposes. (d) School district
25 policies implemented under this Act shall be applied in a manner
26 that does not disproportionately impact students based on
27 disability status, socioeconomic background, or documented
28 educational needs. (e) Implementation guidance issued by the
29 Department shall include recommended practices for secure
30 storage of personal electronic devices that minimize loss, theft, or
31 damage and avoid financial liability for school districts.
32 **SECTION 7. RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.** The Department of
33 Education may promulgate rules necessary to implement this Act.

1 **SECTION 7.5. PROGRAM REVIEW.** (a) On or before January
2 15, 2028, the Department shall submit a report to the Governor
3 and the General Assembly evaluating: (I) Effects on classroom
4 engagement and academic performance; (II) Student behavioral
5 outcomes; (III) Implementation challenges faced by school
6 districts; and (IV) Recommendations for statutory modification if
7 necessary. **SECTION 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.** This Act shall take
8 effect July 1, 2026.