
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the excessive use of
2 cell phones in public schools hinders students' learning,
3 contributes to disciplinary challenges, and adversely affects
4 students' mental health. Research shows that unregulated cell
5 phone use can lead to increased anxiety, defiance, and
6 addiction-like behaviors, creating distractions in classrooms
7 and impeding students' ability to focus. Educators across
8 Hawaii have expressed concerns about the lack of consistent
9 policies, leaving schools to address this pervasive issue
10 independently.

11 The purpose of this Act is to establish a statewide policy
12 for cell phone use in all Hawaii department of education schools
13 to ensure clear and enforceable guidelines and foster an
14 environment conducive to learning.

15 SECTION 2. Section 302A-101, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by adding new definitions to be appropriately inserted
17 and to read as follows:



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1 "Cell phone" refers to any mobile communication device,
2 including but not limited to smartphones, tablets, and wearable
3 communication devices.

4 "School hours" refers to the period from the start of the
5 first class to the end of the last class on any instructional
6 day. "

7 SECTION 3. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
8 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
9 and to read as follows:

10 "§302A- Establishment of a cell phone use policy. (a)

11 The department shall develop and implement a statewide policy
12 governing cell phone use during school hours. Each department
13 school shall adapt the statewide policy to fit its specific
14 needs and resources, provided the adaptations are consistent
15 with department guidelines. This policy shall include, but not
16 be limited to:

- 17 (1) Guidelines for when and how cell phones may be used,
18 such as during emergencies or for educational purposes
19 explicitly approved by the teacher;



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1 (2) Restrictions on personal use, social media, gaming,
2 and other non-educational activities during
3 instructional time; and

4 (3) Identification of specific areas where cell phone use
5 is permitted, such as designated breaks or before and
6 after school.

7 (b) The policy shall establish clear and consistent
8 enforcement measures, including but not limited to:

9 (1) Progressive disciplinary actions for students who
10 violate the cell phone policy;

11 (2) Mechanisms for parental involvement in cases of
12 repeated violations, including required meetings or
13 interventions; and

14 (3) A system for educators to report and address
15 noncompliance while ensuring accountability and mutual
16 respect between students and teachers.

17 (c) The department shall solicit input from parents,
18 educators, and community stakeholders to ensure that the policy
19 reflects diverse perspectives and addresses the unique needs of
20 each department school.



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1 (d) The policy shall include a reporting mechanism for
2 schools to track incidents related to cell phone use, which the
3 department shall review annually.

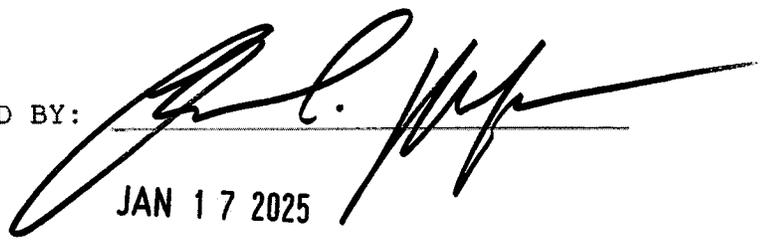
4 (e) The policy shall inform parents at the start of each
5 school year and acknowledge receipt of the policy in writing.

6 (f) The policy shall include a component on student
7 education on responsible digital device use, emphasizing the
8 importance of focus, respect, and the benefits of reduced screen
9 time."

10 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

11 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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INTRODUCED BY:


JAN 17 2025



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Report Title:

DOE; Cell Phone Use Policy; Accountability; Reporting

Description:

Establishes a Department of Education statewide policy for cell phone use in all department schools to ensure clear and enforceable guidelines and foster an environment conducive to learning.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

