



**Policy Committee**  
March 25, 2025

District draft personal wireless  
communication device policy  
discussion



# Agenda

## Time

## Item

5 min

**Introduction**

10 min

Draft Policy | Aims, Timeline, and Context

40 min

Committee discussion around focus areas of text

5 min

Next Steps

# Our Aims

- To discuss and gather board feedback on a draft personal wireless communication device policy and focus on particular components/decision points within the policy.



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# Proposed Timeline

- March 25** Discussion of Draft Policy at Policy Committee
- April 22** Work Session
- April 29** Policy Committee
- May 6** First Read Vote

*\*The frequency of meetings should allow for time to discuss and for staff to respond to board deliberative needs. All meetings may not be necessary if the board is moving toward consensus quickly.*

## Select Takeaways From Feedback:



### Cell Phones/Personal Devices

- **Current Practices - Cell Phones are not allowed during instructional time.**
  - Elementary School and Middle School practices are similar with cell phones being significantly restricted during the school day (98% of principals asked at elementary schools are largely disallowing cell phones to be accessed throughout the day; 85% of middle schools are doing something similar)
  - High Schools are generally allowing more flexibility (85% of principals asked allow devices to be used for certain purposes ex. transitions, lunch, breaks, instructional use/teacher discretion) but cell phones are not permitted to be out during instructional time unless the teacher allows.
- **Cell Phones are a distraction and concern for families and educators**
  - 81% of families said that instructional time is lost due to cell phone use during class.
  - 85% of families said that cell phones are a distraction during class.
  - 88% of educators said that instructional time is lost due to cell phone use during class.
  - 93% of educators said that cell phones are a distraction during class.

## Select Takeaways From Feedback:



### Cell Phones/Personal Devices

- **Cell Phones distraction is less of a concern to students, but they do recognize challenges**
  - 38% of students said instructional time is lost due to cell phone use during class.
  - Only 10% of students indicate that their phones are a distraction for themselves.

### **My biggest concern(s) with students using cell phones in school is/are (select all that apply).**

High School and Middle School Students

Answer Choices	Responses
Distraction from learning	44.26%
Used for inappropriate content	32.69%
Used for social media apps during class time	32.90%
Used for texting during class time	26.21%
Impacts on social-emotional/mental health	27.94%
Bullying or other student conflict	41.14%

## Select Takeaways From Feedback:



### Cell Phones/Personal Devices

- **Bringing Devices to school is generally supported**
  - 80% of students said they should be allowed to bring their cell phones to school.
  - 72% of families said students should be able to bring their cell phones to school.
  - 69% of educators said students should be allowed to bring their cell phones to school.
- **Most stakeholders believe that emergency situations should allow for cell phones access**
  - 89% of families, 96% of students and 79% of educators indicated that emergencies are a reason for students to have access to phones.
  - Medical needs and coordinating pickup and drop off were all supported by majorities of students, families and educators as reasons students could have access to phones.

## Select Takeaways From Feedback:



### Student Focus Groups

- **Inconsistent enforcement:** Some students feel enforcement is inconsistent or unfair, particularly when phones are taken from pockets rather than active use
- **Following rules:** Some students find it easy to follow phone rules when devices are out of sight, making them easier to forget. Others struggle with restrictions, citing the need to contact family, feeling disconnected, and the temptation of notifications or social media.
- **Distractions in class:** Many students struggle to part with their phones, leading to distractions. Notifications, social media, and smartwatches create constant urges to check devices, particularly when there is downtime in class.

## Select Takeaways From Feedback:



### Family Focus groups

- **Need for Clear and Consistent Policies:** Emphasize the necessity of clear, consistently enforced school policies regarding personal device use to create a structured learning environment and minimize distractions.
- **Social-Emotional Well-being:** Families express concern about the negative impact of constant device use on students' social-emotional well-being, including increased anxiety, decreased face-to-face interaction, and the prevalence of cyberbullying and harmful online comparisons.
- **Distraction and Engagement:** Families observe that excessive device use, particularly phones, significantly distracts students, hindering their engagement in learning activities and requiring increased teacher effort to maintain focus.

## Select Takeaways From Feedback:



### Educator Focus groups

- **Instructional Distraction:** Educators agree that cell phones are a significant source of distraction during instructional time, hindering student engagement and learning.
- **Consistency is Key:** Educators emphasize the importance of consistent cell phone policies to avoid confusion and frustration for parents and students.
- **Consequences for Violations:** Educators discuss the need for clear and consistent consequences for students who repeatedly violate cell phone policies, including guidance on how to address repeat offenses.

## Proposed Regulation of Student Wireless Device Use (Senate Bill 55)



### Student Wireless Device Use in School

#### Key Provisions:

- *Definition of Wireless Devices:* Includes cell phones, tablets, laptops, gaming devices, and two-way radios
- *Policy Requirement:* Public schools must establish a wireless communication policy
- *General Rule:* Students cannot use, display, or have wireless devices turned on during instructional time

#### Exceptions:

- Teacher authorization for educational purposes or emergencies
- Required by an IEP or Section 504 plan
- Necessary for managing a medical condition

**Enforcement:** Schools determine consequences, which may include confiscation and disciplinary action

#### Reporting Requirements:

- Schools must submit policies to the Department of Public Instruction by Sept. 1
- DPI reports compliance to the legislature by Oct. 1 annually

**Effective Date:** 2025-2026 school year

# Draft Policy Sections

Section	Components
<b>Introduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family focus (P1)</li> <li>• Board Educational Purpose (P2,3)</li> <li>• Definitions (P4)</li> </ul>
<b>Authorized Use</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Elementary and Middle Schools</li> <li>2) High Schools</li> <li>3) Buses</li> </ol>
<b>Consequences for Unauthorized Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linking to Current Code of Students Conduct (P1)</li> <li>• Confiscation (P2)</li> </ul>
<b>Search of Wireless Communication Devices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment to 4342 (P1)</li> </ul>
<b>Liability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Responsibility (P1)</li> </ul>
<b>Annual Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular Review (P1)</li> </ul>



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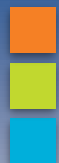
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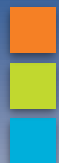
5 min Next Steps

# Draft Policy Sections



Section	Components	Discussion and Considerations
<b>Instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family focus (P1)</li> <li>• Board Educational Purpose (P2,3)</li> <li>• Definitions (P3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are family needs centered clearly?</li> <li>• Does the rationale in paragraph 2 and 3 align with our intentions? Do we need to say more about reasons?</li> <li>• What thoughts, concerns or questions do board members have about this section?</li> </ul>
<b>Authorized Use</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Elementary and Middle Schools</li> <li>2) High Schools</li> <li>3) Buses</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are we balancing creating a clear policy that protects instructional time from distraction while allowing principals and educators to make choices that are right for their students?</li> <li>• Off versus airplane mode/silent mode?</li> <li>• Are the differentiators between Elementary/Middle and High School appropriate?</li> <li>• What thoughts, concerns or questions do board members have about this section?</li> </ul>

# Draft Policy Sections



Section	Components	Discussion and Considerations
<b>Consequences for Unauthorized Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linking to Current Code of Students Conduct (P1)</li> <li>• Confiscation (P2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do the consequence balance clear enforcement with the ability of schools to make appropriate decisions?</li> <li>• How explicit should we be about confiscation processes and procedures?</li> <li>• What thoughts, concerns or questions do board members have about this section?</li> </ul>
<b>Search of Wireless Communication Devices, Liability and Annual Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment to 4342 (P1)</li> <li>• Personal Responsibility (P1)</li> <li>• Regular Review (P1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What thoughts, concerns or questions do board members have about this section?</li> <li>• Should we review it annually or ongoing?</li> </ul>



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