

1 State of Arkansas

As Engrossed: H2/12/25

2 95th General Assembly

A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2025

SENATE BILL 142

4

5 By: Senators Dees, Hester, J. Boyd, B. Davis, J. English, Flippo, Gilmore, K. Hammer, Irvin, B. Johnson,

6 M. Johnson, M. McKee, R. Murdock, J. Petty, Stone

7 By: Representatives Eubanks, Evans, N. Burkes, R. Burkes, Crawford, Duke, Gramlich, Hall, Lundstrum,

8 McAlindon, B. McKenzie, Puryear, R. Scott Richardson, Torres, Underwood

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For An Act To Be Entitled

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AN ACT TO CREATE THE BELL TO BELL, NO CELL ACT; TO

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AMEND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

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POLICIES WITH REGARD TO STUDENT USE OF PERSONAL

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ELECTRONIC DEVICES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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Subtitle

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TO CREATE THE BELL TO BELL, NO CELL ACT;

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AND TO AMEND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC

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SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES WITH REGARD

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TO STUDENT USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC

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DEVICES.

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Title.

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This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Bell to Bell, No Cell

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Act".

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SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative findings and intent.

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(a) The General Assembly finds:

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(1) The rise of cell phone and social media use by young people

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is leading to unintended and, at times, harmful consequences to the academic

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and mental well-being of young people; and

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(2) Students, parents, teachers, and education leaders are

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grappling with the tension between protecting students' safety, well-being,



1 and learning experiences while allowing safe and reasonable access to new,
2 innovative tools for communication.

3 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to offer solutions to the
4 challenges posed by the use of cell phones and social media by young people
5 in order to provide safe school environments that are conducive to learning
6 while also protecting the rights of students and parents to freely and openly
7 communicate.

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9 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-18-515 is amended to read as follows:

10 6-18-515. Use of personal electronic devices – ~~Definition~~ Definitions.

11 (a) As used in this section, ~~“personal electronic device”:~~

12 (1) "Emergency" means a serious, unexpected, and dangerous
13 situation that requires immediate action, including without limitation:

- 14 (A) An active fire;
- 15 (B) An active tornado or earthquake;
- 16 (C) An active shooter;
- 17 (D) An evacuation of school grounds; or
- 18 (E) A medical emergency;

19 (2) "Personal electronic device" means without limitation a:

- 20 ~~(1)~~(A) Cellular telephone;
- 21 ~~(2)~~(B) Paging device;
- 22 ~~(3)~~(C) Beeper;
- 23 ~~(4)~~(D) Mobile telephone that offers advanced computing and
24 internet accessibility;
- 25 ~~(5)~~(E) Digital media player;
- 26 ~~(6)~~(F) Portable game console;
- 27 ~~(7)~~(G) Tablet, notebook, or laptop computer;
- 28 ~~(8)~~(H) Digital camera; and
- 29 ~~(9)~~(I) Digital video or audio recorder;
- 30 (J) Smart watch; and
- 31 (K) Device that can connect and transmit data through
32 Bluetooth technology; and

33 (3) "School day" means from the time students are required to be
34 at school until the time students are dismissed from school.

35 (b)(1) A By the 2025-2026 school year, each public school district may
36 and open-enrollment public charter school shall establish a written student

1 ~~discipline~~ policy and exemptions concerning the possession and use by a
2 student of a personal electronic device during the school day:

3 ~~(1)(A)~~ On school property; and

4 ~~(2) At an after school activity; or~~

5 ~~(3)(B)~~ At a school-related function.

6 (2) Each public school district and open-enrollment public
7 charter school shall submit its policy and exemptions concerning the
8 possession and use by a student of a personal electronic device required
9 under subdivision (b)(1) of this section to the Division of Elementary and
10 Secondary Education for review and approval or disapproval.

11 (c) The policy ~~may~~ shall, without limitation:

12 (1) ~~Allow or restrict~~ Restrict the possession ~~and use~~ of a
13 personal electronic device during the school day;

14 (2) ~~Allow the use of a personal electronic device in school for~~
15 ~~instructional purposes at the discretion of a teacher or administrator~~
16 Prohibit the use of a personal electronic device during the school day;

17 (3) ~~Limit the times or locations in which a personal electronic~~
18 ~~device may be used to make telephone calls, send text messages or emails, or~~
19 ~~engage in other forms of communication;~~

20 (4) ~~Allow or prohibit the use of any photographic, audio, or~~
21 ~~video recording capabilities of a personal electronic device while in school;~~

22 (5) Exempt the possession or use of a personal electronic device
23 by a student who is required to use such a device for health ~~or another~~
24 ~~compelling reason~~ reasons;

25 (6) ~~(4)~~ Exempt the possession or use of a personal electronic
26 device after ~~normal~~ a school hours day for extracurricular activities; ~~and~~

27 (7) ~~Include other relevant provisions deemed appropriate and~~
28 ~~necessary by the school district~~ (5) Exempt the possession or use of a
29 personal electronic device during an emergency; and

30 (6) Exempt the possession or use of a personal electronic device
31 during the school day if the personal electronic device is issued to a
32 student by a public school district or an open-enrollment public charter
33 school for use during the school day.

34 (d)(1) A policy adopted and implemented under this section may include
35 an exemption of the possession or use of a personal electronic device by a
36 student during a special event that occurs during the school day.

1 (2) The division shall promulgate rules defining what
2 constitutes a special event that occurs during the school day.

3 (e) A policy adopted and implemented under this section shall not
4 prohibit a student from using a personal electronic device during the school
5 day if the use of the personal electronic device is: (1) Included in the
6 student's:

7 (A) Individualized education program developed under the
8 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., as it
9 existed on January 1, 2025; or

10 (B) Plan developed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
11 of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, as it existed on January 1, 2025; or

12 (2) Required for a student who is enrolled in an endorsed
13 concurrent enrollment course at an institution of higher education in order
14 to utilize two-factor authentication to access course work and resources for
15 the endorsed concurrent enrollment course.

16 (f) Each public school district and open-enrollment public charter
17 school shall publish on its website its personal electronic device policy
18 required under this section before the first day of the school year each
19 year.

20 (g) A public school district or an open-enrollment public charter
21 school that fails to adopt or enforce the personal electronic device policy
22 required under this section, as determined by the division, shall be cited
23 for a violation of the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools
24 and School Districts.

25 (h) A public school district or an open-enrollment public charter
26 school shall not be liable for a personal electronic device that is
27 confiscated under the public school district's or open-enrollment public
28 charter school's personal electronic device policy required under this
29 section if the personal electronic device is lost, stolen, or damaged.

30 (i) The division shall promulgate rules necessary to implement this
31 section, including without limitation rules that:

32 (1) Govern the process for monitoring compliance with this
33 section; and

34 (2) Establish the process for approving or disapproving a policy
35 submitted to the division by a public school district or an open-enrollment
36 public charter school as required under subdivision (b)(2) of this section.

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/s/Dees

APPROVED: 2/20/25