



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 402

February Session, 2026

Substitute House Bill No. 5035

House of Representatives, April 7, 2026

The Committee on Education reported through REP. LEEPER of the 132nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT REQUIRING SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO BAN CELLULAR PHONES IN THE CLASSROOM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2027*) (a) As used in this section:
- 2 (1) "Wireless communication device" means any portable wireless
3 device that has the capability to provide voice, messaging or other data
4 communication between two or more parties, including, but not limited
5 to, a (A) cellular phone, (B) tablet, (C) computer, (D) gaming device, or
6 (E) smart watch. "Wireless communication device" does not include any
7 technology provided by the school district for instructional purposes;
- 8 (2) "School day" means the time between the scheduled start and end
9 times of the days in the local or regional board of education's academic
10 calendar for grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive; and
- 11 (3) "Access" means viewing, wearing or otherwise using a wireless
12 communication device for the purpose of communication, accessing the

13 Internet, gaming or any other function commonly associated with a
14 wireless communication device.

15 (b) (1) Except as otherwise provided in subdivision (2) of this
16 subsection, no student in a public school in the state shall be permitted
17 to access such student's wireless communication device on school
18 property during the school day unless such access is authorized for
19 instructional purposes. All such devices shall be powered off and stored
20 in a manner prescribed by the local or regional board of education,
21 including, but not limited to, in a student's locker or in a specified
22 location.

23 (2) A student in a public school in the state may use or access a
24 wireless communication device during the school day if (A) such use or
25 access is required under such student's individualized education
26 program, in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education
27 Improvement Act of 2004 and sections 10-76a to 10-76ooo, inclusive, of
28 the general statutes, or is necessary to implement the provisions of an
29 accommodations plan for such student pursuant to Section 504 of the
30 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended from time to time, for such
31 student, or (B) a licensed physician, physician assistant or advanced
32 practice registered nurse determines that such use or access is necessary
33 for the health and well-being of such student.

34 (c) No student in a public school in the state may access any social
35 media platforms through the use of the Internet provided by the school
36 during the school day, except such access to a social media platform may
37 be permitted when such access is for instructional purposes.

38 (d) Each local and regional board of education shall develop policies
39 and procedures for the implementation of the provisions of this section.
40 Such policies and procedures shall include, but need not be limited to,
41 procedures for communicating between boards of education and
42 parents and guardians of students in the event of an emergency that
43 occurs during the school day and disciplinary procedures for violations
44 of the provisions of subsection (b) or (c) of this section.

45 (e) Each local and regional board of education shall annually notify
 46 the parents and guardians of students regarding the policies and
 47 procedures described in subsection (d) of this section and include such
 48 policies and procedures in the student handbooks for the school district.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2027	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Subsec. (c), "shall be permitted to" was changed to "may" for clarity.

ED Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill has no fiscal impact. It requires local and regional boards of education (BOEs) to develop policies to ensure student use of cell phones, other mobile devices, and social media is restricted during the regular school day except in certain circumstances. It is anticipated that BOEs can meet the requirements of the bill with existing resources.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**HB 5035*****AN ACT REQUIRING SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO BAN CELLULAR PHONES IN THE CLASSROOM.*****SUMMARY**

This bill bans public school students from accessing their wireless communication devices on school property during the school day, with certain exceptions. It also prohibits these students from accessing social media using the school's Internet during the school day, unless doing so is permitted for instructional purposes.

Under the bill, students' devices must be turned off and stored in the way the local or regional board of education ("school board") determines, such as in a student's locker or a specified location. School boards must develop policies to implement the bill's prohibitions and notify parents and students about the policy.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2027

SCOPE OF BAN

The bill prohibits viewing, wearing, or otherwise using "wireless communication devices" to communicate, access the Internet, or play games, or for any other function commonly associated with the devices. It applies to portable, wireless devices capable of providing data communication between two or more parties, including cell phones, tablets, computers, gaming devices, and smart watches.

The bill's restrictions apply during school days, meaning the period between the scheduled start and end times of the days listed in the school board's academic calendar.

Exceptions to the Ban

Under the bill, the ban does not apply to any technology the school district provides to students for instructional purposes. It also does not apply when:

1. students are permitted to use personal devices for instructional purposes;
2. a student requires access to a device under an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 plan; or
3. the device is necessary for a student’s health or well-being, as determined by a physician, physician’s assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse.

BOARD POLICIES

The bill requires school boards to develop policies and procedures implementing the bill’s requirements. These must include procedures for (1) communication between school boards and students’ parents and guardians in the event of an emergency that happens during the school day and (2) discipline for violating the bill’s ban on accessing devices or social media.

Under the bill, school boards must annually notify students’ parents and guardians about these policies and procedures as well as include them in the school district’s student handbook.

BACKGROUND

Related Bill

sHB 5149, favorably reported by the Education Committee, similarly bans students from using mobile electronic devices during the school day.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable
 Yea 29 Nay 16 (03/16/2026)