

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2700

To require State educational agencies to implement policies prohibiting the use or possession of personal mobile phones by students in public school classrooms during school hours, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 7, 2025

Mr. VINDMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

A BILL

To require State educational agencies to implement policies prohibiting the use or possession of personal mobile phones by students in public school classrooms during school hours, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Utilize No Phones in
5 Learning to Unleash Growth in Grades and Educate Dis-
6 traction-free Act of 2025” or the “UNPLUGGED Act of
7 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

2 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Public education is critical to the economic
4 vitality, national security, and democratic govern-
5 ance of the United States.

6 (2) Disruptions to the educational process di-
7 rectly affect national productivity, civic engagement,
8 and workforce development.

9 (3) The excessive use of mobile phones during
10 school hours significantly impairs the ability of
11 schools to maintain effective educational environ-
12 ments.

13 (4) A growing body of peer-reviewed literature
14 has documented the detrimental effects of mobile
15 phone usage in classrooms on attention, academic
16 performance, and mental health.

17 (5) Studies published in journals such as Com-
18 puters in Human Behavior, Educational Psychology,
19 and the Journal of Adolescent Health have shown
20 that the presence of mobile phones in academic set-
21 tings correlates with reduced focus, lower test
22 scores, increased academic procrastination, and
23 higher levels of anxiety and depression among stu-
24 dents.

25 (6) Social psychologist Jonathan Haidt, in both
26 his academic work and public commentary, has—

1 (A) extensively documented the relation-
2 ship between the rise of smartphone use among
3 adolescents and the decline in mental health in-
4 dicators;

5 (B) produced research pointing to a sharp
6 increase in rates of anxiety, depression, and
7 self-harm beginning around 2012–2013, coin-
8 ciding with widespread smartphone and social
9 media adoption among teenagers; and

10 (C) argued that overexposure to digital de-
11 vices and online platforms undermines the de-
12 velopment of resilience, emotional regulation,
13 and in-person social connection.

14 (7) Limiting in-school phone access is essential
15 to reversing harmful psychological and academic
16 trends in American youth.

17 (8) The presence of mobile phones in edu-
18 cational settings contributes to increased rates of
19 bullying, cyber harassment, academic dishonesty,
20 and classroom distractions, thereby undermining the
21 core mission of public education.

22 (9) These issues are not confined to a single
23 state or region and are national in scope, with simi-
24 lar patterns of disruption and diminished student
25 outcomes reported across state lines.

1 (10) The cumulative effect of diminished edu-
2 cational achievement has a substantial impact on the
3 national economy and workforce preparedness.

4 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
5 gress that each State educational agency, in coordination
6 with each local educational agency served by the State
7 educational agency and in consultation with educators,
8 parents, and students, should establish and enforce a pol-
9 icy that—

10 (1) enables parents to notify students through
11 school officials about forgotten items, changes in
12 pick-up times, and other common issues; and

13 (2) enables schools to communicate with par-
14 ents regarding time-sensitive items.

15 **SEC. 3. PROHIBITION OF STUDENT PHONE POSSESSION IN**
16 **SCHOOLS.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the first school
18 year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act,
19 each State educational agency, in coordination with each
20 local educational agency served by the State educational
21 agency and in consultation with educators, parents, and
22 students, shall establish and enforce a policy that prohibits
23 student possession or use of personal electronic devices,
24 including personal mobile phones, in public schools during
25 school hours.

1 (b) SECURE STORAGE METHODS.—A personal elec-
2 tronic device policy established pursuant to subsection (a)
3 may include a requirement that public schools use secure
4 storage methods, including—

5 (1) lockable lockers;

6 (2) secure lock boxes;

7 (3) magnetic pouches or other signal-blocking
8 storage devices; or

9 (4) other technologies or materials deemed ap-
10 propriate by the State educational agency.

11 (c) EXCEPTIONS.—A personal electronic device policy
12 established pursuant to subsection (a) may permit excep-
13 tions for—

14 (1) students with medical or health conditions
15 that require the use of a mobile phone or other per-
16 sonal electronic device as part of a treatment or
17 monitoring plan, as certified by a licensed healthcare
18 provider;

19 (2) students with disabilities or special needs
20 for whom access to a personal mobile phone or other
21 personal electronic device is—

22 (A) documented as necessary in an individ-
23 ualized education program; or

24 (B) included as part of services or accom-
25 modations provided to the student pursuant to

1 section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
2 (29 U.S.C. 794) (commonly referred to as a
3 “Section 504 plan”);

4 (3) on an individualized basis for students—

5 (A) who are English learners;

6 (B) who have a demonstrated need for a
7 personal electronic device to facilitate instruc-
8 tion; and

9 (C) acquire documentation in support of
10 subparagraph (A) and (B) in accordance with
11 procedures established by the State educational
12 agency; and

13 (4) additional situations as States and local
14 education authorities deem necessary and appro-
15 priate.

16 (d) MINIMUM REQUIREMENT.—The requirements in
17 this Act shall constitute a minimum standard. Nothing in
18 this Act shall be construed to preempt or prevent a State,
19 State educational agency, or local educational agency from
20 enacting more restrictive policies regarding student pos-
21 session or use of mobile phones or other personal elec-
22 tronic devices during school hours, on school grounds, or
23 during school activities.

24 (e) GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Education
2 shall establish a grant program to provide funding
3 to State educational agencies to purchase, imple-
4 ment, or maintain secure storage methods, and re-
5 lated training or infrastructure, in accordance with
6 a personal electronic device policy established by
7 such State educational agency pursuant to sub-
8 section (a).

9 (2) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a
10 grant under this subsection, a State educational
11 agency shall submit to the Secretary an application
12 at such time, in such manner, and containing such
13 information as the Secretary may require.

14 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

15 For purposes of this Act:

16 (1) ESEA TERMS.—The terms “elementary
17 school”, “English learner”, “local educational agen-
18 cy”, “secondary school”, “State”, and “State edu-
19 cational agency” have the meanings given the terms
20 in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary
21 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

22 (2) INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM.—
23 The term “individualized education program” has
24 the meaning given such term in section 602 of the

1 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20
2 U.S.C. 1401).

3 (3) MOBILE PHONE.—The term “mobile phone”
4 means any handheld communication device with cel-
5 lular, Wi-Fi, or Bluetooth capability, including
6 smartphones and similar devices.

7 (4) PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE.—The
8 term “personal electronic device”—

9 (A) includes mobile phones, smartwatches,
10 tablets, and other handheld or wearable devices
11 with communication, internet, or multimedia ca-
12 pabilities; and

13 (B) does not include laptops or tablets that
14 are authorized by the school and used solely for
15 instructional purposes under teacher super-
16 vision so long as such laptops or tablets are re-
17 stricted from accessing social media platforms,
18 personal email, messaging or texting services,
19 and other non-academic applications during in-
20 structional time.

21 (5) PUBLIC SCHOOL.—The term “public
22 school” means—

23 (A) a public elementary school; and

24 (B) a public secondary school.

1 (6) SCHOOL HOURS.—The term “school hours”
2 means the period from the start of the instructional
3 day until the end of the instructional day, as defined
4 by the State educational agency.

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