

HB 2251 A -A5, -A6 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

Prepared By: Lisa Gezelter, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 5/12, 5/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure modifies state law relating to the use of personal electronic devices in schools. It defines personal electronic device to exclude laptop computers. It requires school district boards to adopt policies that prohibit the use of personal electronic devices by students during the regular school day. It requires policies to provide for the use of devices if medically necessary or part of a student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan. It requires policies to provide consequences for student violations and requires school districts to make the policy available to school district personnel, students, and parents or guardians. The measure makes school districts' standard status contingent on compliance.

Minimal fiscal impact (A-engrossed).

No revenue impact (A-engrossed).

House vote: Passed. Ayes, 36; Nays, 21.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Current challenges with cell phone use in schools
- Impact on children's mental and behavioral health
- Learning environments
- Social media use
- Potential opposition among parents

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-A5 The amendment makes adoption of a policy by district school boards optional. It also removes the provisions that allow for a district to be declared nonstandard for not adopting a policy.

-A6 The amendment excludes off-site lunch time from the required ban on cell phone use. It also allows for written exemptions for individual students by school administrators. The amendment requires that district-adopted policies must provide direction to school personnel regarding consequences for violations but bars any loss of instructional time, including suspension or expulsion. It also removes provisions establishing bans on student cell phone use as part of Oregon's Division 22 standards for school districts.

BACKGROUND:

According to the [National Conference of State Legislatures](#), nine states enacted measures banning cell phone use in schools by the start of the 2024-2025 school year, while 27 states had introduced legislation to do so. In at least 11 states, the executive branch has taken action to ban cell phone use via administrative rule or guidance while four governors have issued executive orders on the topic.