

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB2251

I am a teacher who has been advocating for smartphone-free district-wide for several years now. Although I think districts should go phone-free regardless of whether or not the house bill passes, it seems that many superintendents and school boards are waiting for Oregon to pass a law to force the policy statewide.

As a teacher at a high school I see every day how smartphones are negatively affecting the learning environment at school. First, the addictive nature of the apps are pulling our students' attention away from their peers and their learning, while limiting the amount of time they are able to focus on a task. Also, smartphones are creating feelings of anxiety, loneliness and depression, while also providing students with the constant temptation to cheat or find easy answers without having to critically think. Teachers are tired of having to police a "keep phones away and out of sight" policy that fails to take into account brain science and the fact that these apps were designed to be extremely addicting. We can't simply ask students to please keep them away. They are getting over 200 notifications a day. They are spending hours and hours scrolling and watching TikTok videos. They are addicted and afraid of missing out. We need to give our students the gift of a smartphone-free school day. They deserve to go to school without fear of their peers posting unflattering pictures of them eating. They deserve to go to school without fear of someone posting a video of them doing something embarrassing. They deserve to go to a school where students are able to focus on their work without constant distractions. Please pass this bill and get smartphones out of our school so we can get back to teaching and students can get back to learning.