

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2025 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 192 (Delegate Mangione)  
Ways and Means

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**County Boards of Education - Student Cellular Phone Use Policy - Established  
(No Distracted Learning Act)**

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This bill requires each local board of education to adopt a policy prohibiting students from using a cellular phone during school hours as specified. The bill also specifies certain disciplinary actions for a violation of the policy. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill pertains to local boards of education.

**Local Effect:** Local boards of education can adopt cellular phone use policies as specified with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** For elementary, middle and high school students, the policy must prohibit the use or display of a cellular phone during instructional time, which includes any time during the school day, excluding a student's lunch period, and if applicable, a passing period before and between classes when students walk through the school building or school grounds to move from one class to another. For middle and elementary school students only, the policy must also prohibit the use or display of a cellular phone during the student's lunch period.

A student in violation of a policy required by the bill is subject to a warning on first violation, confiscation of the cellular phone on a second violation, and disciplinary

action established by the county board on any subsequent violations. Phones confiscated after a second offense must be retrieved by the student's parent or guardian, unless the parent or guardian notifies the school that the parent or guardian is unable to retrieve the confiscated cellular phone, in which case the school must return the cellular phone to the student at the end of the day.

**Current Law:** Many local school systems have policies governing the use of cellular phones in schools or on school grounds, which are aligned with local codes of discipline. According to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), at least 19 of Maryland's 24 local school systems have recently updated or adopted new student cellular phone use policies as of September 2024. Additional local school systems are in the process of reviewing and updating policies. Policies vary across systems and schools and typically cover definitions, guidelines, compliance procedures, and consequences for violations. They also generally cover procedures for notifying parents and staff, and the responsibilities of school administrators and may provide differing levels of flexibility for elementary, middle, and high school students.

MSDE advises that the agency is in the process of convening the Task Force on Student Cell Phone Use in Schools. Comprising teachers, administrators, parents, students, superintendents, and other educational experts across all grade bands, the task force will review current policies across the State on allowable student use of cellular phones in schools. MSDE anticipates the task force will generate a set of policy recommendations to support school districts in addressing student cellular phone use by April 2025. In December 2024, the U.S. Department of Education released [Planning Together: A Playbook for Student Personal Device Policies](#) to help school district and school leaders develop policies on the use of personal devices in schools.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** Local boards of education can develop and adopt new policies or modify existing policies in accordance with the bill's requirements using existing resources. The local school systems in Baltimore City and Anne Arundle, Montgomery, Prince George's, and St. Mary's counties advise that they already have policies governing the use of cellular phones in schools.

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### **Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See SB 112 of 2024.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Center for School Safety; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Baltimore City Public Schools; Frederick County Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Prince George's County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 26, 2025  
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Analysis by: Michael E. Sousane

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510