

# SENATE BILL 928

F1  
SB 368/25 – EEE

6lr2736  
CF HB 525

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By: Senators Harris, Charles, A. Washington, ~~and Carozza~~ Carozza, Attar, Benson, Brooks, Hester, ~~and Kagan~~ Kagan, West, Ferguson, Jennings, Jackson, Augustine, Love, Ready, and Salling

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted with floor amendments

Read second time: March 3, 2026

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **County Boards of Education – Student Electronic Communication Device Use**  
3 **Policy – Establishment**  
4 **(Maryland Phone-Free Schools Act)**

5 FOR the purpose of requiring each county board of education to develop and implement,  
6 not later than a certain school year, a policy ~~limiting~~ prohibiting the use of an  
7 electronic communication device by a student during the school day except under  
8 certain circumstances; and generally relating to county boards of education and a  
9 student electronic communication device use policy.

10 BY adding to  
11 Article – Education  
12 Section 7–137  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
16 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article – Education**

18 **7–137.**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
2 INDICATED.

3 (2) "ACADEMIC SCHOOL DAY" MEANS ANY STRUCTURED OR  
4 UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING EXPERIENCE THAT OCCURS FROM WHEN THE FIRST  
5 BELL RINGS AT THE START OF THE SCHOOL DAY UNTIL THE DISMISSAL BELL RINGS  
6 AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY, INCLUDING INSTRUCTIONAL PERIODS, LUNCH,  
7 RECESS, PASSING PERIODS, AND TRANSITIONAL PERIODS.

8 (3) (I) "ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE" MEANS ANY  
9 PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICE CARRIED OR TRANSPORTED BY A STUDENT TO  
10 RECEIVE, SEND, OR RECORD VOICE, IMAGE, OR TEXT CONTENT, INCLUDING CELL  
11 PHONES, TABLETS, LAPTOPS, SMART WATCHES, WIRELESS EARBUDS OR  
12 HEADPHONES, GEOLOCATION DEVICES, AND ANY OTHER DEVICE WITH  
13 COMMUNICATION FUNCTIONS.

14 (II) "ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE" DOES NOT  
15 INCLUDE AN ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE PROVIDED BY A COUNTY BOARD  
16 FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES.

17 (4) "SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM" MEANS AN INTERNET-BASED  
18 APPLICATION, WEBSITE, OR DIGITAL SERVICE THAT ENABLES USERS TO CREATE,  
19 SHARE, OR VIEW CONTENT OR TO INTERACT WITH OTHER USERS THROUGH  
20 PROFILES, ACCOUNTS, FEEDS, MESSAGING, COMMENTS, REACTIONS, OR SIMILAR  
21 SOCIAL FEATURES, AND THAT IS PRIMARILY DESIGNED TO FACILITATE SOCIAL  
22 INTERACTION, USER-GENERATED CONTENT, OR CONTENT DISTRIBUTION TO A  
23 BROAD OR SEMI-PUBLIC AUDIENCE.

24 ~~(4) (5) "STORE" MEANS TO SECURE IN A MANNER DETERMINED BY~~  
25 ~~THE COUNTY BOARD TO ENSURE THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE IS NOT~~  
26 ~~CARRIED ON THE STUDENT'S PERSON DURING THE ACADEMIC SCHOOL DAY.~~

27 (B) NOT LATER THAN THE 2027-2028 SCHOOL YEAR, EACH COUNTY BOARD  
28 SHALL DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A POLICY TO ~~LIMIT~~ PROHIBIT THE USE OF  
29 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES BY STUDENTS DURING THE ACADEMIC  
30 SCHOOL DAY.

31 (C) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, THE  
32 POLICY DEVELOPED UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL:

33 (1) PROHIBIT A STUDENT FROM USING AN ELECTRONIC  
34 COMMUNICATION DEVICE DURING THE ACADEMIC SCHOOL DAY;

1           **(2) REQUIRE A STUDENT TO STORE THE STUDENT'S ELECTRONIC**  
2 **COMMUNICATION DEVICE DURING THE ACADEMIC SCHOOL DAY;**

3           **(3) PROHIBIT A STUDENT FROM ~~USING THE SOCIAL MEDIA~~**  
4 **~~APPLICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA WEBSITES DETERMINED BY THE COUNTY BOARD~~**  
5 **ACCESSING OR USING A SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM DURING THE ACADEMIC SCHOOL**  
6 **DAY; AND**

7           **(4) REQUIRE ADMINISTRATOR APPROVAL FOR THE USE OF A**  
8 **PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES**  
9 **WHEN A SCHOOL-ISSUED ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE IS UNAVAILABLE.**

10          **(D) THE POLICY DEVELOPED UNDER THIS SECTION MAY NOT PROHIBIT A**  
11 **STUDENT FROM USING AN ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE:**

12           **(1) FOR ANY PURPOSE DOCUMENTED IN THE STUDENT'S**  
13 **INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM OR 504 PLAN;**

14           **(2) TO MONITOR OR ADDRESS A STUDENT'S DOCUMENTED HEALTH**  
15 **ISSUE;**

16           **~~(3) DURING AN EMERGENCY EVENT, IF EXPRESSLY AUTHORIZED BY~~**  
17 **~~AN ADMINISTRATOR;~~**

18           **~~(4) WHEN DIRECTED BY AN ADMINISTRATOR FOR EDUCATIONAL~~**  
19 **~~PURPOSES;~~**

20           **~~(5)~~ (3) TO ACCESS LANGUAGE TRANSLATION TOOLS TO ENSURE**  
21 **EDUCATIONAL EQUITY FOR MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS WHEN SCHOOL-ISSUED**  
22 **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES ARE NOT AVAILABLE OR SUFFICIENT FOR**  
23 **THIS PURPOSE; OR**

24           **~~(6)~~ (4) FOR THE PURPOSE OF MEETING CAREGIVING**  
25 **RESPONSIBILITIES, AS APPROVED BY A PRINCIPAL.**

26          **(E) EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL:**

27           **(1) ENGAGE PARENTS, STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND COMMUNITY**  
28 **STAKEHOLDERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND REVISION OF THE POLICY, INCLUDING**  
29 **DETERMINING ENFORCEMENT OF THE POLICY; AND**

1           **(2) PUBLISH AND MAKE THE POLICY AVAILABLE IN MULTIPLE**  
 2 **LANGUAGES IN STUDENT HANDBOOKS, ON THE SCHOOL'S AND COUNTY BOARD'S**  
 3 **WEBSITES, AND AT SCHOOL EVENTS.**

4           **(F) (1) A POLICY DEVELOPED UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL INCLUDE**  
 5 **APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE POLICY.**

6           **(2) THE DISCIPLINARY MEASURES ADOPTED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)**  
 7 **OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE TIERED DISCIPLINARY MEASURES ENFORCED BY AN**  
 8 **ADMINISTRATOR.**

9           **(3) A DISCIPLINARY MEASURE ADOPTED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF**  
 10 **THIS SUBSECTION MAY NOT INCLUDE SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION SOLELY FOR A**  
 11 **VIOLATION OF THE POLICY.**

12           **(G) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2027, ~~AND EACH SEPTEMBER 1 UNTIL~~**  
 13 **~~SEPTEMBER 1, 2032,~~ EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL SUBMIT ~~A REPORT~~ TO THE**  
 14 **~~DEPARTMENT ON THE IMPACTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION~~ A COPY OF THE**  
 15 **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE POLICY IN THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM**  
 16 **IMPLEMENTED UNDER THIS SECTION, INCLUDING:**

17           **~~(1) A COPY OF THE CURRENT ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE~~**  
 18 **POLICY THAT DESCRIBES: DESCRIPTION OF THE POLICY'S:**

19                   **(I) STORAGE AND SECURITY REQUIREMENTS AND ANY**  
 20 **RELATED GRADE-LEVEL DIFFERENTIATIONS ESTABLISHED IN THE POLICY;**

21                   **(II) ~~GRADE-LEVEL DIFFERENTIATION~~ DISCIPLINE MEASURES**  
 22 **AND ANY RELATED GRADE-LEVEL DIFFERENTIATIONS ESTABLISHED IN THE**  
 23 **POLICY;**

24                   **(III) INSTRUCTIONAL USE PROTOCOLS; AND**

25                   **(IV) EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION PLANS; AND**

26           **(2) DOCUMENTATION OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT; IN THE**  
 27 **DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLICY.**

28           **~~(3) COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT DATA, INCLUDING:~~**

29                   **~~(i) RELATED DISCIPLINARY REFERRALS, DISAGGREGATED BY~~**  
 30 **~~STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS; AND~~**

1                   ~~(H) THE USE OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES AS A DISCIPLINARY~~  
2 ~~MEASURE, IF USED;~~

3                   ~~(4) DESCRIPTION OF THE IMPACTS ON THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT,~~  
4 ~~IF ANY, INCLUDING SURVEY DATA FROM STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND PARENTS ON~~  
5 ~~FOCUS, WELL-BEING, AND SATISFACTION FOLLOWING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION;~~

6                   ~~(5) EQUITY AND ACCOMMODATION DATA, INCLUDING THE NUMBER~~  
7 ~~AND TYPE OF EXEMPTIONS TO THE POLICY GRANTED BY A SCHOOL; AND~~

8                   ~~(6) ANTICIPATED POLICY REVISIONS FOR THE UPCOMING SCHOOL~~  
9 ~~YEAR, IF ANY.~~

10           (H) ON OR BEFORE ~~JULY~~ DECEMBER 1, 2028, ~~AND EACH JULY 1 UNTIL JULY~~  
11 ~~1, 2033~~, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PUBLISH ON THE DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE A  
12 REPORT THAT COMPILES ~~AND SUMMARIZES THE REPORTS OF THE COUNTY BOARDS~~  
13 ~~ON THE IMPACTS OF IMPLEMENTING THE~~ ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE  
14 POLICIES OF EACH COUNTY BOARD SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT UNDER  
15 SUBSECTION (G) OF THIS SECTION, INCLUDING:

16                   ~~(1) THE DATA SUBMITTED BY THE COUNTY BOARDS TO THE~~  
17 ~~DEPARTMENT;~~

18                   ~~(2) ENFORCEMENT CHALLENGES; AND~~

19                   ~~(3) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND MODEL POLICIES.~~

20           (I) (1) EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL SEND TO THE DEPARTMENT AN  
21 UPDATED COPY OF THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE POLICY DEVELOPED  
22 AND IMPLEMENTED UNDER THIS SECTION.

23                   (2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PUBLISH ON ITS WEBSITE A COPY OF  
24 EACH COUNTY BOARD'S ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE POLICY SUBMITTED  
25 UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

26           (J) (1) ON OR BEFORE JULY 30, 2028, AND EACH JULY 30 UNTIL JULY  
27 30, 2033, EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT ON  
28 THE IMPACTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION  
29 DEVICE POLICY, INCLUDING:

30                   (I) COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT DATA, INCLUDING  
31 RELATED DISCIPLINARY REFERRALS DISAGGREGATED BY STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC  
32 SUBGROUPS; AND

1                    **(II) EQUITY AND ACCOMMODATION DATA, INCLUDING THE**  
2 **NUMBER AND TYPES OF EXEMPTIONS TO THE POLICY GRANTED BY SCHOOLS IN THE**  
3 **COUNTY.**

4                    **(2) THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL SCHOOL**  
5 **SYSTEMS, SHALL DETERMINE THE BEST METHOD TO SUBMIT THE INFORMATION**  
6 **REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION TO THE DEPARTMENT,**  
7 **INCLUDING WITHIN EXISTING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**

8                    **(K) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE**  
9 **REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION.**

10                    SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
11 1, 2026.

Approved:

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Governor.

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President of the Senate.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.