

SB928 - County Boards of Education - Student Electronic Communication Device Use Policy - Establishment (Maryland Phone-Free Schools Act)
Written Testimony (Favorable)
Submitted By: Jeremy Joseph, MCPS Parent

Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

This is MUST-PASS legislation for our kids and the economic future of the state. Away-all-day policies for all K-12 schools during the full instructional day (away and inaccessible ALL day, including lunch and passing time and free periods) with limited exceptions for kids that actually need phones (IEPs, 504s, medical needs, language tools, caregivers).

I am a parent of two children in the MCPS system, including one child in high school. I have seen firsthand on visits to my kids' school the negative impacts on learning, behavior, and socialization that having smartphones anywhere in the school during the school day has on their learning and experience. Children sit in class with earbuds in, fully 20% of the classroom time I attended at the high school (10 minutes out of 45 minutes) was taken up dealing with phones (placing them in pouches, retrieving them, policing them). The only solution is having a law that the phones must be away and inaccessible all day, including during passing time, free periods, and lunch.

The funding that is budget to schools is being wasted on kids who are online and not paying attention or making new friends or connections at school.

Thank you!

Jeremy Joseph
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