



**HB0755 - COUNTY BOARDS OF EDUCATION - STUDENT PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE
POLICY - ESTABLISHMENT (PHONES AWAY FOR THE SCHOOL DAY ACT)**

February 18, 2026
WAYS AND MEANS

OPPOSE

Grace Wilson, Director of Legislation & Policy (410.440.1758)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB0755 - County Boards of Education - Student Personal Electronic Device Use Policy - Establishment (Phones Away for the School Day Act)**. This bill requires each county board to develop and implement a policy prohibiting the use of a personal electronic device by a student and requiring a student to store these devices during school hours no later than the 2026-2027 school year. The policy must permit the student to use a personal electronic device for any purpose documented in the student's individualized education plan or 504 Plan. Additionally, each school is required to designate one or more telephones in the school to be used by students to contact a student's parent or legal guardian or other responsible adult during school day hours if necessary. Finally, policies required by the county board must include appropriate disciplinary measures for violations of the policy; this disciplinary action may not be suspension or expulsion.

AACPS opposes this bill which would infringe upon local control of educational policy regarding student use of cell phones. Local governance by boards of education is essential to a comprehensive system of public education. Retaining local board authority allows for collaboration and cooperative planning within the local community rather than through top-down decisions from the State. In fact, Section 4-101 of the Education Law Article states, "educational matters that affect the counties shall be under the control of a county board of education," and that local boards of education, "determine, with the advice of the county Superintendent, the educational policies of the county school system." Local boards of education receive and rely on public input to best address local needs. The relationship between the community and local public schools encourages participation by parents/guardians and other community members in the educational process so that everyone has responsibility for and ownership of public education. Retaining decision-making authority at the local level allows local boards of education to best balance educational practices, available resources to implement those practices, public input, and accountability.

Furthermore, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County and the Superintendent have already adopted a policy and regulation governing student use of cell phones, Policy JCO and Regulation JCO-RA – Use of Personal Electronic Communication devices by Students. In addition to this policy and regulation, AACPS has adopted student cell phone guidelines which further restrict student cell phone use.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB0755.