

State of Arkansas

As Engrossed: H2/12/25

95th General Assembly

## A Bill

Regular Session, 2025

SENATE BILL 142

By: Senators Dees, Hester, J. Boyd, B. Davis, J. English, Flipppo, Gilmore, K. Hammer, Irvin, B. Johnson,  
M. Johnson, M. McKee, R. Murdock, J. Petty, Stone

By: Representatives Eubanks, Evans, N. Burkes, R. Burkes, Crawford, Duke, Gramlich, Hall, Lundstrum,  
McAlindon, B. McKenzie, Puryear, R. Scott Richardson, Torres, Underwood

### For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE BELL TO BELL, NO CELL ACT; TO  
AMEND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL DISCIPLINE  
POLICIES WITH REGARD TO STUDENT USE OF PERSONAL  
ELECTRONIC DEVICES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

### Subtitle

TO CREATE THE BELL TO BELL, NO CELL ACT;  
AND TO AMEND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC  
SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES WITH REGARD  
TO STUDENT USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC  
DEVICES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Bell to Bell, No Cell  
Act".

SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative findings and intent.

(a) The General Assembly finds:

(1) The rise of cell phone and social media use by young people  
is leading to unintended and, at times, harmful consequences to the academic  
and mental well-being of young people; and

(2) Students, parents, teachers, and education leaders are  
grappling with the tension between protecting students' safety, well-being,



1 and learning experiences while allowing safe and reasonable access to new,  
2 innovative tools for communication.

3 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to offer solutions to the  
4 challenges posed by the use of cell phones and social media by young people  
5 in order to provide safe school environments that are conducive to learning  
6 while also protecting the rights of students and parents to freely and openly  
7 communicate.

8  
9 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-18-515 is amended to read as follows:

10 6-18-515. Use of personal electronic devices – ~~Definition~~ Definitions.

11 (a) As used in this section, ~~“personal electronic device”:~~

12 (1) "Emergency" means a serious, unexpected, and dangerous  
13 situation that requires immediate action, including without limitation:

14 (A) An active fire;

15 (B) An active tornado or earthquake;

16 (C) An active shooter;

17 (D) An evacuation of school grounds; or

18 (E) A medical emergency;

19 (2) "Personal electronic device" means without limitation a:

20 ~~(1)~~(A) Cellular telephone;

21 ~~(2)~~(B) Paging device;

22 ~~(3)~~(C) Beeper;

23 ~~(4)~~(D) Mobile telephone that offers advanced computing and  
24 internet accessibility;

25 ~~(5)~~(E) Digital media player;

26 ~~(6)~~(F) Portable game console;

27 ~~(7)~~(G) Tablet, notebook, or laptop computer;

28 ~~(8)~~(H) Digital camera; ~~and~~

29 ~~(9)~~(I) Digital video or audio recorder;

30 (J) Smart watch; and

31 (K) Device that can connect and transmit data through  
32 Bluetooth technology; and

33 (3) "School day" means from the time students are required to be  
34 at school until the time students are dismissed from school.

35 (b)(1) A By the 2025-2026 school year, each public school district may  
36 and open-enrollment public charter school shall establish a written student

1 ~~discipline~~ policy and exemptions concerning the possession and use by a  
2 student of a personal electronic device during the school day:

3 ~~(1)(A)~~ On school property; and

4 ~~(2) At an after school activity; or~~

5 ~~(3)(B)~~ At a school-related function.

6 (2) Each public school district and open-enrollment public  
7 charter school shall submit its policy and exemptions concerning the  
8 possession and use by a student of a personal electronic device required  
9 under subdivision (b)(1) of this section to the Division of Elementary and  
10 Secondary Education for review and approval or disapproval.

11 (c) The policy ~~may~~ shall, without limitation:

12 (1) ~~Allow or restrict~~ Restrict the possession ~~and use~~ of a  
13 personal electronic device during the school day;

14 (2) ~~Allow the use of a personal electronic device in school for~~  
15 ~~instructional purposes at the discretion of a teacher or administrator~~  
16 Prohibit the use of a personal electronic device during the school day;

17 (3) ~~Limit the times or locations in which a personal electronic~~  
18 ~~device may be used to make telephone calls, send text messages or emails, or~~  
19 ~~engage in other forms of communication;~~

20 ~~(4) Allow or prohibit the use of any photographic, audio, or~~  
21 ~~video recording capabilities of a personal electronic device while in school;~~

22 ~~(5) Exempt the possession or use of a personal electronic device~~  
23 ~~by a student who is required to use such a device for health or another~~  
24 ~~compelling reason~~ reasons;

25 ~~(6)(4) Exempt the possession or use of a personal electronic~~  
26 ~~device after normal a school hours day for extracurricular activities; and~~

27 ~~(7) Include other relevant provisions deemed appropriate and~~  
28 ~~necessary by the school district~~ (5) Exempt the possession or use of a  
29 personal electronic device during an emergency; and

30 (6) Exempt the possession or use of a personal electronic device  
31 during the school day if the personal electronic device is issued to a  
32 student by a public school district or an open-enrollment public charter  
33 school for use during the school day.

34 (d)(1) A policy adopted and implemented under this section may include  
35 an exemption of the possession or use of a personal electronic device by a  
36 student during a special event that occurs during the school day.

1           (2) The division shall promulgate rules defining what  
2           constitutes a special event that occurs during the school day.

3           (e) A policy adopted and implemented under this section shall not  
4           prohibit a student from using a personal electronic device during the school  
5           day if the use of the personal electronic device is: (1) Included in the  
6           student's:

7                   (A) Individualized education program developed under the  
8                   Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., as it  
9                   existed on January 1, 2025; or

10                   (B) Plan developed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act  
11                   of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, as it existed on January 1, 2025; or

12                   (2) Required for a student who is enrolled in an endorsed  
13                   concurrent enrollment course at an institution of higher education in order  
14                   to utilize two-factor authentication to access course work and resources for  
15                   the endorsed concurrent enrollment course.

16           (f) Each public school district and open-enrollment public charter  
17           school shall publish on its website its personal electronic device policy  
18           required under this section before the first day of the school year each  
19           year.

20           (g) A public school district or an open-enrollment public charter  
21           school that fails to adopt or enforce the personal electronic device policy  
22           required under this section, as determined by the division, shall be cited  
23           for a violation of the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools  
24           and School Districts.

25           (h) A public school district or an open-enrollment public charter  
26           school shall not be liable for a personal electronic device that is  
27           confiscated under the public school district's or open-enrollment public  
28           charter school's personal electronic device policy required under this  
29           section if the personal electronic device is lost, stolen, or damaged.

30           (i) The division shall promulgate rules necessary to implement this  
31           section, including without limitation rules that:

32                   (1) Govern the process for monitoring compliance with this  
33                   section; and

34                   (2) Establish the process for approving or disapproving a policy  
35                   submitted to the division by a public school district or an open-enrollment  
36                   public charter school as required under subdivision (b)(2) of this section.

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**APPROVED: 2/20/25**