

By: Troxclair

H.B. No. 515

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to public school policies regarding student use of personal electronic devices.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 38, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 38.028 to read as follows:

Sec. 38.028. RESTRICTIONS ON STUDENT USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES. (a) In this section:

(1) "Lockable container" means a reusable secure case, pouch, or bag that has a locking mechanism and can be used to securely store a personal electronic device.

(2) "Personal electronic device" means a device carried on the person that is capable of displaying, delivering, producing, or otherwise providing access in a digital format to text, audio, images, or videos. The term does not apply to a device issued for educational purposes by a school district.

(b) The board of trustees of a school district shall adopt a written policy prohibiting students from using a personal electronic device during the school day.

(c) A policy adopted under this section must:

(1) require each student to place immediately on arriving at a district campus during regular school hours, or before the beginning of the regular school day if the student arrives at a district campus before regular school hours, each of

1 the student's personal electronic devices in a secure location or
2 storage device, such as a lockable container, provided by the
3 district that:

4 (A) prevents the student from viewing or using
5 the device during the regular school day; and

6 (B) is made accessible for the student to
7 retrieve the device at the end of the school day;

8 (2) include enforcement provisions to ensure strict
9 compliance with the policy by students and district employees;

10 (3) provide that a student may contact the student's
11 parent or caregiver during the school day if needed by using a
12 telephone made available to the student in a manner and location
13 designated by the district; and

14 (4) authorize a student to access a personal
15 electronic device during the school day if a medical professional
16 provides written documentation indicating that the student's
17 access to the device is necessary to manage or treat a medical
18 condition diagnosed by the professional.

19 (d) The commissioner shall adopt rules to implement this
20 section, including rules to ensure the collection by the agency and
21 uniform reporting by school districts to the agency of data
22 regarding the effectiveness of policies adopted under this section.

23 (e) The agency annually until 2030 shall post a report on
24 the agency's Internet website regarding the data collected under
25 Subsection (d). The report must contain data that measures:

26 (1) the effects of policies adopted under this section
27 on student behavior, mental health, and disciplinary incidents; and

1 (2) opinions of students and district employees
2 regarding the policies.

3 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2025-2026
4 school year.

5 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
6 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
7 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
8 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
9 Act takes effect September 1, 2025.