

1 S.284

2 An act relating to student use of cell phones and other personal electronic
3 devices in schools

4 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

5 Sec. 1. CELL PHONE USE IN SCHOOLS; MODEL POLICY

6 (a) On or before December 31, 2024, the Secretary of Education shall
7 develop a model policy and accompanying guidance regarding student use of
8 cell phones and other personal electronic devices in schools. The guidance
9 shall address, at a minimum, the following:

10 (1) the specific circumstances or time periods during which students are
11 permitted to use cell phones or personal electronic devices, which shall include
12 use of such devices for approved academic purposes;

13 (2) the specific circumstances or time periods during which students are
14 prohibited from using cell phones or personal electronic devices;

15 (3) acceptable locations for cell phone and personal electronic device
16 storage during times when their use by students is prohibited;

17 (4) consequences for violation of the model policy, including options for
18 educators and staff to collect a cell phone or personal electronic device if a
19 student is found violating the policy; and

20 (5) a process for parents or guardians to get messages to students during
21 times when cell phone or personal electronic device use is prohibited.

1 (b) On or before January 15, 2026, the Agency of Education shall submit a
2 written report to the Senate and House Committees on Education regarding the
3 prevalence and substance of cell phone use policies adopted by school districts
4 after the development of the Agency’s model policy pursuant to subsection (a)
5 of this section. The report shall include the following:

6 (1) information on how many school districts have adopted cell phone or
7 personal electronic device use policies, whether and how those policies differ
8 from the Agency’s model policy and guidance, and qualitative information
9 regarding the effectiveness of those policies, including:

10 (A) information regarding student compliance;

11 (B) information regarding whether such polices are being enforced,
12 including information on the effort required on the part of educators to ensure
13 student compliance; and

14 (C) information regarding parent, student, and educator satisfaction
15 with such policies;

16 (2) information on how many school districts do not have a cell phone
17 or personal electronic device use policy and any information as to why such a
18 policy has not been adopted at the time of the report; and

19 (3) in consultation with the Department of Mental Health and the
20 Department of Health, recommendations for:

1 (A) further legislative action regarding cell phone or personal
2 electronic device use in schools; and
3 (B) age-appropriate educational opportunities regarding media
4 literacy and the safe and appropriate use of cell phones or personal electronic
5 devices.

6 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

7 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.