

1 H.480

2 Representatives McCann of Montpelier and Waszazak of Barre City move
3 that the bill be amended as follows:

4 First: By striking out Secs. 17 and 18 in their entirety and inserting in lieu
5 thereof new Secs. 17 and 18 to read as follows:

6 Sec. 17. 16 V.S.A. chapter 9, subchapter 7 is added to read:

7 Subchapter 7. Cell Phone and Social Media Use in Schools

8 § 581. INTENT

9 It is the intent of the General Assembly for all students in Vermont to
10 access the benefits of a phone- and social media-free school environment,
11 which promotes focus, improved mental health, and increased social cohesion.

12 § 582. DEFINITIONS

13 As used in this subchapter:

14 (1) “Cell phone” means any device capable of using cellular technology
15 to facilitate voice service through a commercial telecommunications company,
16 regardless of whether the device can access internet services and email.

17 (2) “Individualized health care plan” means a written document
18 developed by a school nurse, in collaboration with parents, students, and other
19 relevant professionals, to outline specific health care needs and management
20 strategies tailored to the unique health condition of a student.

1 (3) “Parent” means a parent of a student and includes legal guardians
2 who are legally authorized to make education decisions for the student.

3 (4) “School” means any public school, approved independent school, or
4 career and technical education center located in Vermont.

5 (5) “Student” means an individual currently enrolled in or registered at a
6 school located in Vermont, as defined under subdivision (4) of this section.

7 § 583. STUDENT USE OF CELL PHONES IN SCHOOLS

8 (a) Model policy.

9 (1) The Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Vermont School
10 Boards Association, the Vermont Independent School Association, and a
11 representative from the Vermont Coalition for Phone and Social Media Free
12 Schools, shall develop, and review at least annually, a policy to, subject to the
13 exceptions in subdivision (2) of this subsection, prohibit student use of cell
14 phones from arrival to dismissal.

15 (2) The model policy shall provide exceptions for students to use a cell
16 phone if such use is:

17 (A) required as part of a student’s individualized health care plan,
18 individualized education program, or 504 plan, which shall be documented
19 according to applicable State and federal law; provided, however, that if such
20 use is required to meet an international student’s special education needs or as
21 part of a disability accommodation, and the international student does not have

1 an individualized education program or 504 plan, the need for such use shall be
2 documented in a manner the school deems appropriate;

3 (B) approved by an administrator for an academic, school-sponsored
4 athletic, or cocurricular purpose, for the most limited use reasonably possible;
5 or

6 (C) required for compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless
7 Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 11431–11435.

8 (b) Policy adoption.

9 (1) Beginning with the 2026–2027 school year, each school board shall
10 develop, adopt, ensure the enforcement of, and make available in the manner
11 described under subdivision 563(1) of this title a student cell phone use policy
12 that shall be at least as stringent as the model policy developed by the
13 Secretary. Any school board that fails to adopt a policy shall be presumed to
14 have adopted the most current model policy published by the Secretary.

15 (2) Beginning with the 2026–2027 school year, each approved
16 independent school shall develop, adopt, and ensure the enforcement of a
17 student cell phone use policy that shall be at least as stringent as the model
18 policy developed by the Secretary. Any approved independent school that fails
19 to adopt a policy shall be presumed to have adopted the most current model
20 policy published by the Secretary.

1 § 584. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN EDUCATION

2 Schools, school districts, and supervisory unions shall be prohibited from:

3 (1) utilizing social media for communication with students directly
4 unless the program or platform is approved for such communication by the
5 school district or independent school; provided, however, that any approved
6 communication program or platform shall allow school officials to archive all
7 communications and prevent all communications from being edited or deleted
8 once a communication has been sent; and

9 (2) requiring students to use social media for out-of-school academic
10 work, school sports, extracurricular clubs, or any other out-of-school school-
11 sponsored activities.

12 Sec. 18. CELL PHONE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

13 (a) On or before January 1, 2026, the Agency of Education shall develop
14 and publish a model student cell phone use policy pursuant to Sec. 17 of this
15 act.

16 (b) On or before July 1, 2026, school boards and approved independent
17 schools shall adopt student cell phone use policies as required pursuant to Sec.
18 17 of this act, to be effective in the 2026–2027 school year.

19 Second: By adding one new section to be Sec. 17a to read as follows:

20 Sec. 17a. CELL PHONE USE IN SCHOOLS; FINDINGS

- 1 The General Assembly finds that requiring school staff to police students’
- 2 use of personal electronic devices other than cell phones is legislative
- 3 overreach and places an unnecessary strain on educators and administrators.