

Lincoln Fillmore proposes the following substitute bill:

**Devices in Public Schools**

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Lincoln Fillmore**

House Sponsor:

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill addresses the use of cellphones, smart watches, or emerging technologies during classroom hours.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- defines terms;
- prohibits a student from using a cellphone, smart watch, or emerging technology during classroom hours;
- allows a local education agency to create exemptions to the prohibition; and
- permits the State Board of Education to create model policies.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

This bill provides a special effective date.

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

ENACTS:

**53G-7-226**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **53G-7-226** is enacted to read:

**53G-7-226 . Cellular device prohibition.**

(1) As used in this section:

- (a) "Cellphone" means a handheld, portable electronic device that is designed to be operated using one or both hands and is capable of transmitting and receiving voice, data, or text communication by means of:

- 29           (i) a cellular network;  
30           (ii) a satellite network; or  
31           (iii) any other wireless technology.
- 32       (b) "Cellphone" includes:  
33           (i) a smartphone;  
34           (ii) a feature phone;  
35           (iii) a mobile phone;  
36           (iv) a satellite phone; or  
37           (v) a personal digital assistant that incorporates capabilities similar to a smartphone,  
38               feature phone, mobile phone, or satellite phone.
- 39       (c) "Classroom hours" means:  
40           (i) time during which a student receives scheduled, teacher-supervised instruction  
41               that occurs:  
42                (A) in a physical or virtual classroom setting;  
43                (B) during regular school operating hours; and  
44                (C) as part of an approved educational curriculum.
- 45           (ii) "Classroom hours" does not include:  
46                (A) lunch periods;  
47                (B) recess;  
48                (C) transit time between classes;  
49                (D) study halls unless directly supervised by a qualified instructor;  
50                (E) after-school activities unless part of an approved extended learning program; or  
51                (F) independent study time occurring outside scheduled instruction.
- 52       (d)(i) "Emerging technology" means any other device that has or will be able to act in  
53               place of or as an extension of an individual's cellphone.
- 54           (ii) "Emerging technology" does not include school provided or required devices.
- 55       (e) "Smart watch" means a wearable computing device that closely resembles a  
56               wristwatch or other time-keeping device with the capacity to act in place of or as an  
57               extension of an individual's cellphone.
- 58       (f) "Smart watch" does not include a wearable device that can only:  
59           (i) tell time;  
60           (ii) monitor an individual's health informatics;  
61           (iii) receive and display notifications or information without the capability to  
62               respond; or

(iv) track the individual's physical location.

(2)(a) An LEA:

(i) shall establish a policy that allows a student to use a cellphone, smart watch, or emerging technology:

(A) to respond to an imminent threat to the health or safety of an individual;

(B) to respond to a school-wide emergency;

(C) to use the SafeUT Crisis Line described in Title 53B, Chapter 17, Part 12, SafeUT Crisis Line;

(D) for a student's IEP or Section 504 accommodation plan; or

(E) to address a medical necessity; and

(ii) may establish a policy that provides for other circumstances when a student may use a cellphone, smart watch, or emerging technology.

(b) An LEA may establish policies that:

(i) extend restrictions on student use of cellphones, smart watches, or emerging technologies to non-classroom hours during the school day, including:

(A) lunch periods;

(B) transition times between classes; and

(C) other school-supervised activities; and

(ii) impose additional limitations on the use of cellphones, smart watches, or emerging technologies beyond those required by this section.

(3) Except as provided in Subsection (2), a student may not use a cellphone, smart watch, or emerging technology at a school during classroom hours.

(4) The state board may create one or more model policies regarding when a student may use a student's cellphone, smart watch, or emerging technology in a school during classroom hours consistent with this section.

Section 1. **Effective Date.**

This bill takes effect on July 1, 2025.