

Lincoln Fillmore proposes the following substitute bill:

**School Device Revisions**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Lincoln Fillmore**

House Sponsor: Doug Welton

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill establishes the default standard device use from prohibited during instructional time to prohibited during the school day.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- establishes the default standard device use from prohibited during instructional time to prohibited during the school day; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

This bill provides a special effective date.

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**53G-7-227**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 9

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

Section 1. Section **53G-7-227** is amended to read:

**53G-7-227 . Cellular device prohibition.**

(1) As used in this section:

(a)(i) "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:

- [(i)] (A) a cellular network;
- [(ii)] (B) a satellite network; or
- [(iii)] (C) any other wireless technology.

- 30            ~~[(b)]~~ (ii) "Cellphone" includes:
- 31                    ~~[(i)]~~ (A) a smartphone;
- 32                    ~~[(ii)]~~ (B) a feature phone;
- 33                    ~~[(iii)]~~ (C) a mobile phone;
- 34                    ~~[(iv)]~~ (D) a satellite phone; or
- 35                    ~~[(v)]~~ (E) a personal digital assistant that incorporates capabilities similar to a
- 36                    smartphone, feature phone, mobile phone, or satellite phone.
- 37            [(e) "Classroom hours" means:]
- 38                    ~~[(i) time during which a student receives scheduled, teacher-supervised instruction~~
- 39                    ~~that occurs:]~~
- 40                    ~~[(A) in a physical or virtual classroom setting;]~~
- 41                    ~~[(B) during regular school operating hours; and]~~
- 42                    ~~[(C) as part of an approved educational curriculum.]~~
- 43            [(ii) "Classroom hours" does not include:]
- 44                    ~~[(A) lunch periods;]~~
- 45                    ~~[(B) recess;]~~
- 46                    ~~[(C) transit time between classes;]~~
- 47                    ~~[(D) study halls unless directly supervised by a qualified instructor;]~~
- 48                    ~~[(E) after-school activities unless part of an approved extended learning program;~~
- 49                    ~~or]~~
- 50                    ~~[(F) independent study time occurring outside scheduled instruction.]~~
- 51            ~~[(d)]~~ (b)(i) "Emerging technology" means any other device that has or will be able to
- 52                    act in place of or as an extension of an individual's cellphone.
- 53                    (ii) "Emerging technology" does not include school provided or required devices.
- 54            (c) "School hours" means the time from the beginning of the school day, as designated
- 55                    by the school's bell schedule, until the end of the school day, as designated by the
- 56                    school's bell schedule, including all instructional time, lunch periods, recess, and
- 57                    transition times between classes.
- 58            ~~[(e)]~~ (d) "Smart watch" means a wearable computing device that closely resembles a
- 59                    wristwatch or other time-keeping device with the capacity to act in place of or as an
- 60                    extension of an individual's cellphone.
- 61            ~~[(f)]~~ (e) "Smart watch" does not include a wearable device that can only:
- 62                    (i) tell time;
- 63                    (ii) monitor an individual's health informatics;

- 64 (iii) receive and display notifications or information without the capability to  
 65 respond; or  
 66 (iv) track the individual's physical location.
- 67 (2) Except as provided in Subsection (3), a student may not use a cellphone, smart watch, or  
 68 emerging technology at a school during school hours.
- 69 [(2)] (3)(a) ~~An~~ Notwithstanding this section, an LEA:
- 70 (i) shall establish a policy that allows a student to use a cellphone, smart watch, or  
 71 emerging technology:  
 72 (A) to respond to an imminent threat to the health or safety of an individual;  
 73 (B) to respond to a school-wide emergency;  
 74 (C) to use the SafeUT Crisis Line described in Section 53H-4-210;  
 75 (D) for a student's IEP or Section 504 accommodation plan; or  
 76 (E) to address a medical necessity; and
- 77 (ii) in addition to the exceptions described in Subsection (3)(a)(i) ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> ~~may~~ <sup>shall</sup>  
 77a ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> ~~may~~ <sup>shall</sup> establish a  
 78 policy that provides for other circumstances when a student may use a  
 78a cellphone,  
 79 smart watch, or emerging technology ~~during the school day~~ <sup>during the school day</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> ~~may~~ <sup>shall</sup>  
 79a **(B) shall establish a policy that allows a parent to request an accommodation**  
 79b **for the parent's student to briefly use a cellphone, smart watch, or emerging**  
 79c **technology in a specified area the school designates during non-instructional**  
 79d **time.** ~~it~~
- 80 (b) An LEA may establish policies that:
- 81 (i) extend restrictions on student use of cellphones, smart watches, or emerging  
 82 technologies to non-[classroom] school hours ~~during the school day~~, including~~ing~~  
 83 ~~[(A) lunch periods;]~~  
 84 ~~[(B) transition times between classes; and]~~  
 85 ~~[(C) other] school-supervised activities; and~~
- 86 (ii) impose additional limitations on the use of cellphones, smart watches, or  
 87 emerging technologies beyond those required by this section.
- 88 [(3) ~~Except as provided in Subsection (2), a student may not use a cellphone, smart watch,~~  
 89 ~~or emerging technology at a school during classroom hours.~~]
- 90 (4) The state board may create one or more model policies regarding when a student may  
 91 use a student's cellphone, smart watch, or emerging technology in a school during [

92 classroom] school hours consistent with this section.

93 Section 2. **Effective Date.**

94 This bill takes effect on July 1, 2026.