

Updating DUSD Mobile Communication Policy

Aligning with AB 3216 – The Phone-Free Schools Act

Presented by: Dr. Roger Brossmer, Deputy Superintendent

June 10, 2025

Purpose of Presentation



INFORM THE BOARD OF
EDUCATION ABOUT AB 3216
REQUIREMENTS



SUMMARIZE CURRENT DUSD
MOBILE COMMUNICATION
POLICIES



PRESENT STAKEHOLDER
INPUT RESULTS



- DISCUSS POLICY UPDATES
FOR ADOPTION

Governor's Directive

- In August 2024, Governor Newsom urged school districts to act immediately to restrict smartphone use on campuses to promote student well-being and focus.



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

August 13, 2024

Dear School Leaders,

As we strive to create the best learning environment for all students this new academic year, I write today to raise an urgent issue that affects their well-being: the pervasive use of smartphones in schools.

Governor Newsom
signs legislation to
limit the use of
smartphones during
school hours



The Phone-Free School Act

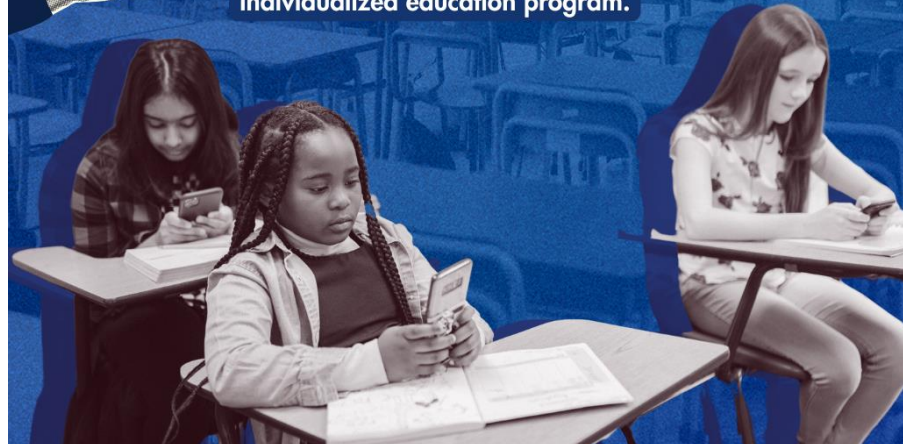
Excessive smartphone use among youth is linked to increased anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues.



What you need to know: Governor Gavin Newsom today signed Assembly Bill 3216, the Phone-Free School Act, to require every school district, charter school and county office of education to develop a policy limiting the use of smartphones by July 1, 2026.



NOTE: Parents and educators and must allow students to use their phones in the case of an emergency, or in response to a perceived threat of danger, or as allowed by a teacher, administrator, doctor or the student's individualized education program.



AB 3216 Requirement

- Requires, no later than July 1, 2026, the governing body of a school district, a COE, or a charter school to adopt a policy to limit or prohibit the use by its pupils of smartphones while the pupils are at a schoolsite or while the pupils are under the supervision and control of an employee or employees of that school district, COE, or charter school

AB 3216 Exemptions

Requires a pupil to not be prohibited not be prohibited from possessing or using a smartphone under any of the following circumstances:

- a) In the case of an emergency, or in response to a perceived threat of danger;
- b) When a teacher or administrator of the school district, COE, or charter school grants permission to a pupil to possess or use a smartphone, subject to any reasonable limitation imposed by that teacher or administrator;
- c) When a licensed physician and surgeon determines that the possession or use of a smartphone is necessary for the health or well-being of the pupil; and
- d) When the possession or use of a smartphone is required in a pupil's individualized education program. (Education Code (EC) 48901.7)

Key Points of AB 3216



Signed into law:
September 2024



Compliance deadline:
July 1, 2026



Requires stakeholder
engagement



Allows different
policies by grade
level



Mandates exceptions
(emergencies, IEP,
medical)

Stakeholder Engagement - Student

Superintendent Student Advisory Committee (SSAC)

Over the course of two meetings, SSAC students engaged in a thorough review of AB 3216, provided feedback on the secondary student survey, and examined draft mobile communication policies from various districts representing a range of approaches.

The process culminated in student groups developing and presenting their own draft mobile device policies to Dr. Garcia.

The consensus among students was that mobile devices should not be accessible to TK–8 students, supporting an “Away for the Day” policy at both the elementary and middle school levels. For high school students, the group agreed devices should be allowed during non-instructional times.

Notably, students shared that during the school day, they receive more texts from their parents than from their peers.

Stakeholder Engagement - Parent

Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Council and Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) for parent input

In both meetings, we reviewed the details of AB 3216 and gathered feedback on the parent survey. While SSAC-generated student policy drafts were shared for context, PTA and PAC participants were not asked to create their own. Their responses provided unexpected insights:

Many parents felt mobile phone restrictions should be targeted—applying only to students with academic, attendance, or behavioral challenges.

Several asked whether an app could be used to limit student phone usage during the school day.

There was significant disagreement about what qualifies as an "emergency" that would justify phone access, highlighting the need for clear policy definitions.

Stakeholder Engagement - Teacher

Downey Education Association (DEA) Rep Council for teacher input



This group also reviewed AB 3216 and previewed the teacher survey. Key themes that emerged from the discussion included:



Concerns about whether the policy would apply equally to teachers' own mobile device use.



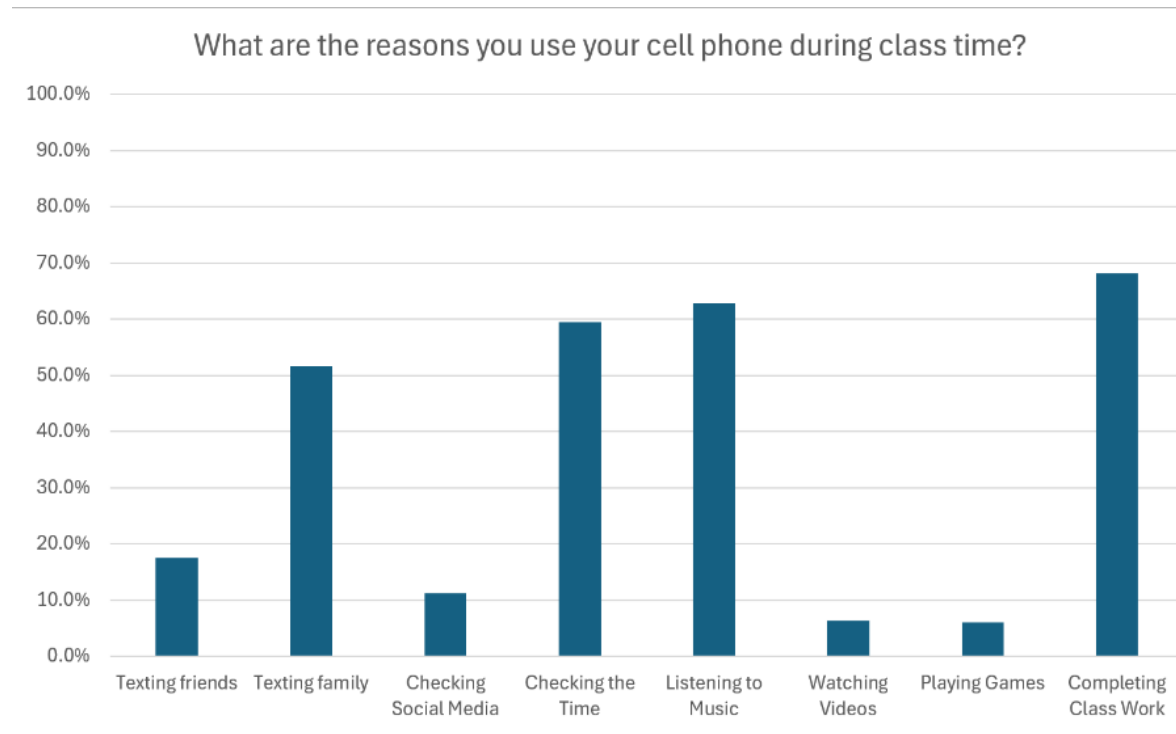
Questions regarding the legal and financial liability teachers might face if asked to confiscate student devices.



Worries about how enforcing the policy could affect instructional time and potentially strain student-teacher relationships

Stakeholder Survey Results

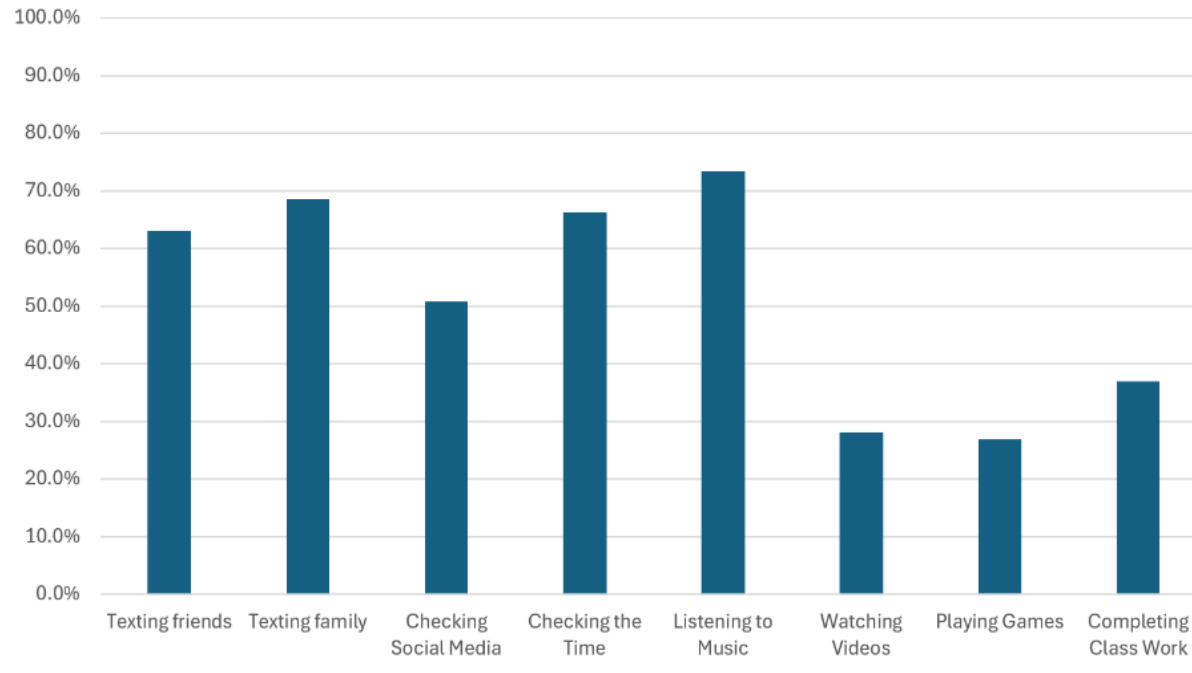
	Community Surveys	Student Surveys	Staff Surverys
Total Surveys	4711	3327	627
High School	2244	1737	250
Middle School	1840	1561	166
Elementary School	2094	0	197



**What are the reasons you use your cell phone during class time
(including in the classroom, in the halls, and in the bathrooms)?**

Texting friends	17.5%
Texting family	51.7%
Checking Social Media	11.2%
Checking the Time	59.4%
Listening to Music	62.9%
Watching Videos	6.3%
Playing Games	6.0%
Completing Class Work	68.2%

What are the reasons you use your cell phone outside class time?



What are the reasons you use your cell phone outside class time (including in the classroom, in the halls, and in the bathrooms)?

Texting friends	63.1%
Texting family	68.6%
Checking Social Media	50.8%
Checking the Time	66.3%
Listening to Music	73.5%
Watching Videos	28.2%
Playing Games	26.9%
Completing Class Work	37.0%

Neighboring District Mobile Communication Policies

– Highlighted Indicate Alignment with AB 3216

School District	Avg. HS size	NO USE DURING NON-INSTRUCTIONAL TIME	ALLOWS USE DURING NON-INSTRUCTIONAL TIME	Last Revised
ABC	1,553		X	2024/2025
Bellflower	2,260		X	3/27/2025
Brea-Olinda	1,710		X	8/10/2023
Claremont	2,182		X	8/11/2024
Compton	1,376		X	1/24/2025
Fullerton Joint	2,040		X	6/11/2024
Irvine	2,242		X	5/02/2023
LAUSD	2,085	X		2024/2025
Los Alamitos	3,005		X	2024/2025
Lynwood	1,732		X	3/1/2025
Montebello	2,095		X	2024/2025
Norwalk-La Mirada	1,558		X	2/12/2009
Orange Lutheran	1,394		X	2024/2025
Santa Monica-Malibu	2,573			2025
Paramount	3,737		X	09/14/2020

Current DUSD Policies Overview

- BP 5131.8: Allows devices during noninstructional time
- BP 5131: Prohibits unauthorized use during instruction
- BP 6163.4 E(1): Personal devices restricted in class
- Parent Handbook: Site-based decisions
- Middle School & Elementary School: Prohibited – “Away for the day”
- High School: Allowed during non-instructional times

Board Consideration: Elementary and Middle School

Currently policies for elementary and middle schools prohibit use of mobile communication devices during the school day; “Away for the day”.

Current policies are in alignment with AB 3216. Based on all inputs, staff recommendation is to not change current policies

Board Consideration - High School

Current policies are high schools allow students to access their mobile communication devices during non-instructional times.

While this policy aligns with AB3216 the board has the option to be more restrictive.

CSBA Policy Update – High School Options

Option 1: Off during instruction, allowed during breaks

Option 2: Prohibit use during school day with legal exceptions

Board Questions, Discussion, and Direction to Staff