

In 2025, Governor Hobbs signed HB 2484 requiring school districts implement policies to restrict the use of cell phones during instructional time. School districts have the option of going even further, to create a phone free school environment, often called “bell to bell” which has demonstrated strong benefits for students. These more rigorous policies are supported by teachers and parents in Arizona and the nation.

Academic Benefits:

- The further away the cell phone, the higher the GPA
- Schools that have implemented full bans, including lunch and passing periods have reported:
 - enhanced student interactions,
 - improved academic outcomes,
 - increased attention spans and student engagement in class
 - improved overall safety for students, including during emergencies
- Bell to bell bans support positive relationship building between students, parents, and teachers

Polling:

- 77% of Arizona parents support a full bell to bell ban when told about academic and school safety benefits
- 81% of Arizonans support a full bell to bell ban
- 83% of teachers nationwide support a full bell to bell ban

School Safety:

- According to the National Association of School Resource Officers, students are in more danger during an emergency if they have their phones
 - The light and sound of the phone makes them a target
 - They need to pay attention to instructions from their teacher, not their phones
 - Using bandwidth prevents teachers from communicating with first responders
 - Slows down response from first responders

Implementation:

- Best practices prohibit students from using their cell phone from bell to bell, including lunch and passing periods
- Schools use many options—lock boxes, pouches, lockers, backpacks, or total ban on bringing phones

Future Benefits:

- The willpower to stay off social media and engage with coursework and classmates is an indicator of future success.
- Arizona Council for Education and Economic Development graduate profile notes that a key foundation of education success is attention.