


Massachusetts School Phone Policy Overview

- **Policy:** [H4745](#)
- **Status:** Bi-Partisan Support – Moving through legislative process
- **Effective:** Current
- **Applies to:** Public school districts and public school academies (charter schools)

 Beginning in September each district shall have a policy regarding the prohibition of personal electronic devices on school grounds during the school day and during school-sponsored activities during the school day to reduce distractions, maintain environments focused on learning and protect the privacy and safety of students and staff.

 **There are two sections of this document:**

(1) Key Points highlights key aspects of H4745

(2) Aligning with The Commons App shares how The Commons supports compliance with H4745

Key Points: Sec. 1 & Sec. 2

Governing Body Policy Mandate

1

1. The department shall provide guidance, recommendations and a model policy to assist schools and districts with developing and implementing effective policies regarding the prohibition of the use of personal electronic devices on school grounds during the school day
2. Beginning in September: Each district shall have a policy regarding the prohibition of personal electronic devices on school grounds during the school day and during school-sponsored activities during the school day

Exceptions for Limited Use

2

The policy must provide exceptions for devices necessary for:

- Medical use
- Exceptions for devices included in an individualized education program for a student with a disability
- Accommodations under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Emergencies

Implementation Supports

3

The policy... (a) shall specify the method by which the district prohibits student access to personal electronic devices. The following methods are deemed sufficient methods of prohibiting student access to personal electronic devices: (i) secure storage of personal electronic devices during the school day; (ii) the use of technology that renders the personal electronic device inoperable, or (iii) other methods which shall require approval by the department.

Timeline

4

Each district shall file its school personal electronic device use policy with the department by September 1, 2026. If no policy is approved by the school district or charter school district by September 1, 2026, the department's model policy shall go into effect until such time as a local policy is approved.

Aligning with The Commons App

Below are the sections of H4745 parsed out to show how The Commons aligns with each mandate.

Governing Body Policy Mandate


1. The department shall provide guidance, recommendations and a model policy to assist schools and districts with developing and implementing effective policies regarding the prohibition of the use of personal electronic devices on school grounds during the school day
- 1 2. Beginning in September: Each district shall have a policy regarding the prohibition of personal electronic devices on school grounds during the school day and during school-sponsored activities during the school day *and schools to comply with HF2516*

 Review The Commons [sample policy template](#) tailored for MA schools to comply with H4745

Exceptions for Limited Use

The policy must provide exceptions for devices necessary for:


- 2
 - Medical use
 - Exceptions for devices included in an individualized education program for a student with a disability
 - Emergencies

 The Commons blocks distractions from all apps besides those a school whitelists inline with approved use academic, medical and emergency use cases.

Review commonly used applications for academic, medical and emergency use cases:
<https://policyhub.the-commons.app/use-cases-in-schools>

Implementation Supports

- 3 The policy... (a) shall specify the method by which the district prohibits student access to personal electronic devices. The following methods are deemed sufficient methods of prohibiting student access to personal electronic devices: **(ii) the use of technology that renders the personal electronic device inoperable**

 H4745 specifically allows for apps such as The Commons to support implementation of your school cellphone policy

Timeline

- 4 Each district shall file its school personal electronic device use policy with the department by September 1, 2026. If no policy is approved by the school district or charter school district by September 1, 2026, the department's model policy shall go into effect until such time as a local policy is approved.

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 Learn more about The Commons and how it helps comply with state mandates while supporting students in building healthier digital habits for life: <https://www.the-commons.app/resources>