OH School Phone Policy Overview

- **Policy:** Ohio law requires each school district, community school, and STEM school to adopt a policy prohibiting cell phone use by students during the instructional day
- **Status:** Passed
- **Effective:** Jan 1, 2026
- **Applies to:** Public school districts and public school academies (charter schools)
- **Source:** https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/School-Wellness/Cell-Phones-in-Ohio-Schools

Districts and schools that adopt a cell phone policy after Sept. 30, 2025 must do so at a public meeting of the board. Each district board must make their cell phone policy publicly available and post the policy prominently on its publicly accessible website, if it has one.

There are two sections of this document:

(1) Key Points highlights key aspects of Ohio's new student cellphone policy

(2) Aligning with The Commons App shares how The Commons supports compliance with the new policy

Key Points:

- https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/School-Wellness/Cell-Phones-in-Ohio-Schools

1

Governing Body Policy Mandate

By January 1, 2026 Ohio law requires each school district, community school, and STEM school to adopt a policy prohibiting cell phone use by students during the instructional day. This policy should list exceptions and disciplinary actions for violations.

2

Exceptions for Limited Use

Exceptions for allowable phone use include:

- the student's individualized education program developed under Ohio law pertaining to the education of children with disabilities
- the student's plan developed under section 504 of the "Rehabilitation Act of 1973," 29 U.S.C. 794;
- student learning;
- monitoring or addressing health concerns; or
- an active threat or emergency as detailed in the building's comprehensive emergency management plan adopted under Ohio law.

Aligning with The Commons App

Below are the sections of the new cellphone policy mandate parsed out to show how The Commons aligns with each section.

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*Review The Commons **sample policy template** tailored for OH Bell-to-Bell Policy*

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The Commons blocks distractions from all apps besides those a school whitelists inline with approved use cases 1-5. Here is a list commonly used medical, emergency and academic apps: **https://policyhub.the-commons.app/use-cases-in-schools**

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