

# THE STUDY ACT

## An Act Promoting Safe Technology Use and Distraction-free Education for Youth

Sponsored by Senator Julian Cyr, Representative Alice Hanlon Peish, and Representative Kate Lipper-Garabedian. (S.335 / H.666)

The STUDY Act seeks to implement a “bell-to-bell” restriction on the use of cell phones and personal electronic devices during the school day to improve learning environments. The STUDY Act also proposes standards for social media companies to promote safe and responsible use to protect our kids’ mental health.

### WHAT THE STUDY ACT MEANS FOR SCHOOLS:


As more and more schools adopt policies to restrict cell phone use in class, the STUDY Act would require all public schools to create a formal policy regarding the use of cell phones, tablets, and other personal electronic devices on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities.

- The policy must include a prohibition on physical access to a personal electronic device by students during the school day.
- Exemptions to the policy would exist in circumstances to accommodate a student’s needs as indicated by their individualized education program or health plan and in cases of emergencies.
- Schools would be required to have a policy educating students on the social, emotional, and physical risks of social media use.


### HOW THE STUDY ACT HOLDS SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANIES ACCOUNTABLE:

Recognizing that social media companies have an immense responsibility to keep users safe, the bill calls on the companies to implement procedures including, but not limited to:

- Age verification system to determine whether a user meets age requirements under law and keep any information about a user’s age confidential from third-party use
- Default settings for a minor user to ensure privacy and limit prolonged engagement by disabling features like notifications between certain hours, autoplay, and continuous scrolling
- Features for a user to flag unwanted or harmful content and regular surveys for the user to indicate to the company that they don’t want this type of content on their feed
- Regular warnings from social media platforms to the user on the negative effects of social media use on social, emotional and physical health



72% of high school teachers cite cell phone use as a major problem in classrooms.<sup>1</sup>



Phone use in schools can lead to distractions in learning, shortened attention span, increased anxiety, negative peer interactions and increases in cyberbullying, harassment and hate incidents.<sup>3</sup>

1: Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. public K-12 teachers conducted Oct. 17-Nov 14, 2023. 2: Social Media and Youth Mental Health — The U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory (2023)  
3: The effect of cellphones on attention and learning: The influences of time, distraction, and nomophobia, Computers in Human Behavior, Volume 86 (2018)