# OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# OUSD Cell Phone Policy

## OUSD Board Meeting, June 24, 2026

**Presented by Nelson Alegria, Executive Director, Safety**

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
*Community Schools, Thriving Students*

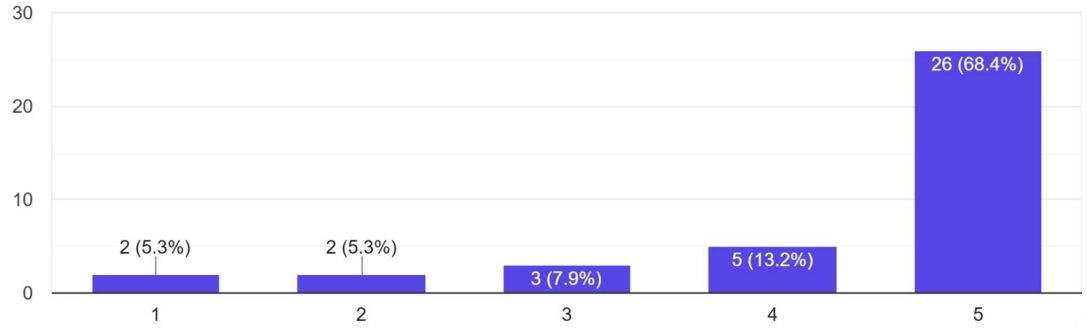
# Ask of the Board

- Review data requested from Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting on April 21, 2026; and
- Adopt the proposed OUSD Cell Phone Policy.

# Administration Feedback Update

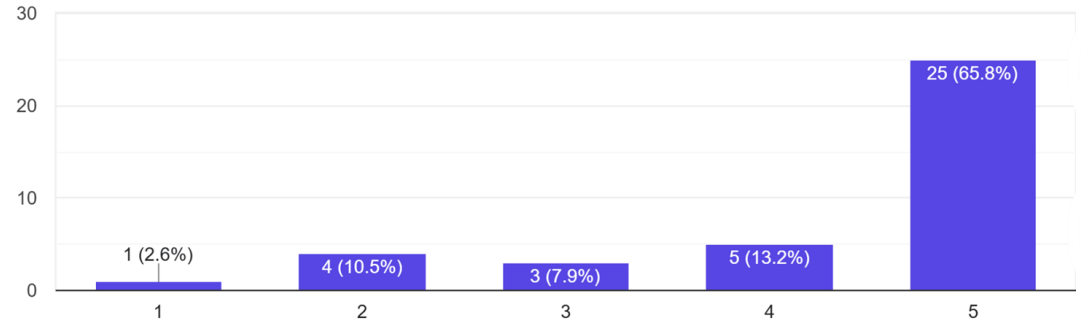
Overall, to what extent do you support a bell-to-bell cell phone ban?

38 responses



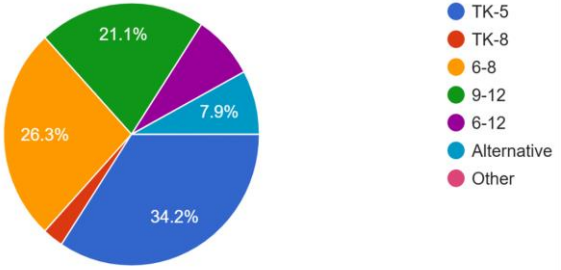

To what extent do you believe a full ban is more effective than a partial restriction?

38 responses




Grade Level

38 responses




**Need for clear districtwide enforcement expectations**

**Need for family communication and outreach**

**Need for implementation guidance**

# Community Lead Outreach

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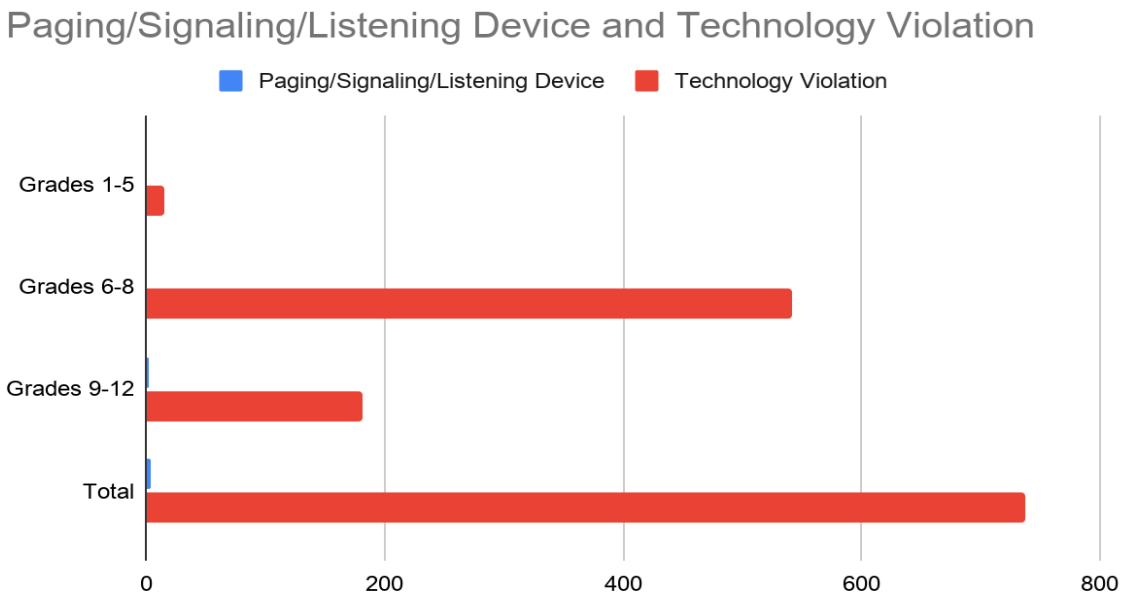
## 336 Respondents

on a petition in favor of a phone-free school day

| 240 | 47 | 11 |
|---|---|---|
| **Parents** | **Teachers** | **Other Staff** |

*The petitions showed a strong interest from families in reducing distractions from cell phones during the school day and setting stronger expectations across the District*

# Cell Phone Discipline Data




**August 2025 - June 2026**

| | Grades 1-5 | Grades 6-8 | Grades 9-12 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Paging/Signaling/Listening Device | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Technology Violation | 16 | 541 | 181 | 738 |

# Timeline

| June 24th, 2026 | July 1st, 2026 | July - August | August |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School Board Meeting** | **Law Goes Into Effect** | **Implementation and Parent Notifications** | **Discipline Matrix Update** |
| Staff will present the recommendation from the Teaching & Learning Committee | Law will go into effect for the 26-27 school year. | Parent handbook will be updated and school sites will work on implementation for the school year | Safety Department will bring the updated Discipline Matrix to the Teaching & Learning Committee to discuss all changes and updates made. |

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# OUSD Cell Phone Policy 26-27

## Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting, April 21, 2026

Presented by Nelson Alegria,
Executive Director of Safety

# Purpose

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Present proposed district-wide cell phone policy

Share rationale and expected outcomes

Request Board approval

# Why a Cell Phone Ban Now?

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- Increased classroom disruption linked to device use
- Growth in student conflicts driven by social media during school hours
- Inconsistent expectations across classrooms and schools
- Need for a clear, systemwide approach
- Align with Ed. Code requirements by July 1st

**Goal: Balance learning, safety, and student well-being.**

# AB 3216 (Phone-Free School Act)

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California law allows districts to **limit or prohibit** student use of mobile phones during the school day.

School districts must have a plan by **July 1, 2026**

**Mandatory Use Situations:**

- Emergencies
- Health needs
- IEP accommodations
- Staff permission

# Policy Overview

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**Reducing academic disruptions while maintaining safety.**

## Framework:

- Bell-to-bell phone-free school day
- Applies to all students (TK–12)
- Limits use of smartphones and personal devices during the instructional day
- Devices must be off/silent, out of sight, and securely stored

# Why Full Ban vs Partial Ban

## Bell-to-Bell (Full Ban)

- Consistent expectations across all grades
- Eliminates distractions throughout the entire day
- Supports **focus, learning, and mental engagement**
- Promotes **face-to-face interaction and school connectedness**

## Partial Ban (Classroom Time Only)

- Inconsistent expectations across settings
- Phones still used during lunch/passing periods (safety)
- Students remain mentally preoccupied ("cognitive residue")
- Reduces effectiveness of instructional time
- Requires constant teacher enforcement

# Impact on Safety

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### Emergency Response

Reduces misinformation during emergencies; supporting coordinated response.

### Accurate Flow

Allows staff to provide accurate communication flow during incidents.

### Conflict Prevention

Prevents escalation through group messaging and social media.

# Data Tracking

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## 1. Discipline Data

Suspension and referral rates related to defiance/disruption

Suspensions involving fights, harassment, or bullying

Disproportionate suspension rates amongst vulnerable populations

## 2. School Climate & Safety

Total incident reports (Intake Log data)

Campus safety events and escalation trends

Reports of cyberbullying/bullying occurring during the school day

# Implementation Considerations

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### Staff & Policy

Training and alignment with district policies.

### Communication

Clear outreach to students and families.

### Monitoring

Ongoing support and system oversight.

### Fiscal Impact

Investment in site-based storage systems.

**"This is a culture shift, not just a rule change"**

End slide with changeable photo. Please adjust opaque box **as best fits the photo**. This example below shows 35% white. Delete this box!

# *Community Schools, Thriving Students*

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