

Testimony before the  
Senate Education Committee  
On  
SB 302  
Requiring school districts to prohibit the use of personal electronic communication  
devices during instructional time.  
by  
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Chair Erickson and members of the Senate Education committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present opposition testimony on SB 302. USA Kansas appears neutral on this legislation. Nearly all educators are in support of some type of banning of cell phone use by students during instructional time. There is research and a great deal of person observation that reduced distractions in class could improve students' attention and learning outcomes. Most educators feel phones disrupt learning and attention in class. Removing phones could help students engage more with peers and teachers. Many teachers and administrators feel that less time policing phone use could allow educators to concentrate on instruction.

There are also concerns on a ban of cell phones in schools. Some include: Parents wanting to reach students quickly during school will not be able to do so. Concerns have also been raised about how schools would enforce the ban, including issues around storage security, and potential liability if devices were lost or stolen. There is also the concern of consistent enforcement and the burden on school staff. Students also need the opportunity to learn digital responsibility.

The primary issue that needs to be addressed is that of local control. Many districts already have cell phone policies and that one-size-fits-all statewide approach would override locally created strategies. For these reason United School Administrators supports the issue of banning cells in schools. However, the particular way it should be done should be left up to the local school district and school board to tailor policies to their schools and district.