

Good evening members of the Board.

My name is Ryan Cross, and I am a resident of Fernley. I have also been an employee of LCSD for 26 years, and a site administrator for 23 years. I'm submitting a comment today because I'm concerned about the proposal to ban 9-12 student cell phone use during unstructured times, such as lunch and passing periods.

I want to be clear: I understand and support the goal of reducing distractions in the classroom. But this proposal extends far beyond that. Restricting student device use during *non-instructional* time feels like government overreach. Some members of this board ran on a platform of "giving parents a voice". Parents, not the school district, made the decision to provide their child with a cell phone. Parents weighed the pros and cons of putting a device in the hands of their child, and those that chose to do so did it with purpose and intent. Is it the board's intent to make parental-level decisions for every student in this district? Is the board better informed than parents regarding what is best for these kids? I don't think so, and neither did anyone that spoke at the September meeting in Fernley.

The article cited supporting this proposal is produced by the Manhattan Institute, which is funded and supported by corporations and political ideologists. For years, The Manhattan Institute has made efforts to divert public funds to private and charter schools. This policy will push kids out of our public schools. I am not speaking hyperbolically when I say there are students and parents who will choose to leave LCSD rather than abide by this policy. Is that our goal?

Unstructured time, by its very definition, belongs to students. It's when they reset, connect with friends, and manage personal needs. It has a purpose, and it is important. Regulating every minute of their day sends a message that they can't be trusted to make basic choices for themselves. It sends a message to parents, AKA **voters**, that you know what's best for their child, not them.

I'm also concerned about feasibility. Enforcing a blanket ban during lunch and passing periods is unrealistic. Staff would be put in the position of policing hundreds, if not thousands, of small interactions, creating unnecessary conflict and inconsistency. Rules that cannot be reasonably enforced don't foster respect—they foster resentment and rebellion. They also take valuable time and attention away from the *real* priorities of educators.

Instead of another top-down restriction, I encourage the Board to consider this: Is the current policy not working? Has anyone "in the trenches" supported this? Clear

expectations in the classroom make sense. But overregulating unstructured time is not the answer.

I urge you to reconsider this proposal and find a more balanced approach that respects students' autonomy and doesn't burden staff with an impossible enforcement task. Thank you for your time.

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