



## Board of Trustees Agenda Item

Date	July 17, 2025
Agenda Item	Discussion of House Bill 1481
Policy Reference	FNCE, FO
Strategic Goal	Student Success
Department	Administrative Services

**Recommendation:** This item is for information only. The Administrative Services Department will present information on House Bill 1481, and share information on BISD Board policy implications.

**Summary:** During the 89<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, House Bill 1481 was passed into law. HB 1481 mandates that Texas public schools implement policies prohibiting student use of personal communication devices (like cell phones and smartwatches) during the school day on school grounds. Key pieces of the bill include:

- **Policy Requirement:** The board of trustees of a school district or the governing body of an open-enrollment charter school shall adopt, implement, and ensure the district or school complies with a written policy prohibiting a student from using a personal communication device while on school property during the school day.
- **Disciplinary Measures:** The policy must establish disciplinary measures to be imposed for violation of the prohibition and may provide for confiscation of the personal communication device.
- **Definitions:** "personal communication device" means a telephone, cell phone such as a smartphone or flip phone, tablet, smartwatch, radio device, paging device, or any other electronic devices capable of telecommunication or digital communication. The term does not include an electronic device provided to a student by a school district.
- **Exceptions:** Exceptions must be made for students with support needs who rely upon their phones for support as a part of a Section 504 plan or an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

For BISD, many elementary and middle school students were already abiding by these rules because of changes we made ahead of the 2024-25 school year.

- These measures were extremely successful in keeping our students focused and engaged.
- BISD's 24-25 Student Handbook prohibited student cell phone use for elementary students and middle school students for the school day except as allowed by a classroom teacher for instruction purposes.
- For high school, the 24-25 Student Handbook permitted student cell phone use during lunch and passing periods.

To prepare for the adjustments mandated by House Bill 1481, we are soliciting feedback from principals and teachers and working to draft procedures that are in compliance with the new law. Our aim is to have the new procedures published in the 25-26 Student Handbook and to train staff prior to the start of the school year.

**Rationale:** This presentation is meant to keep the BISD Board members apprised on possible changes resulting from the passage of House Bill 1481 in the 89<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session.

**Recommended by:** Dr. John O'Hare, Chief Administrative Officer

**Submitted by:** Dr. John O'Hare, Chief Administrative Officer

**Suggested Motion:** Information Only