

How does the new Fulton County device policy affect students?

The American School system is known for being systematically the same for the last two centuries. While the core of the school system remains the same, rules can still be added as the world changes around it. On June 29th, 2007, the first iPhone was released. As these “phones” were integrated into society, they were also embedded in the lives of teenagers. For the last 18 years, phones have been completely allowed in educational settings. It has always been a suggestion not to be able to use phones. Until now...

As of August 2025, all middle schools and high schools in Fulton County, Georgia, are affected by the new *Georgia Distraction-Free Education Act*. For middle schools, all personal devices are completely banned from the building. While for high school, any personal devices must be kept in your backpack and are prohibited during instructional time. Parents are expected to contact the school's front office to reach their child.

Many people are outraged by this new policy because it can have negative effects. Johns Creek student **Alex Schulte (twelfth grader)** states, “We have to put our phones in a box every day now. What if something happens at the school and I have to reach out to my parents, but the teacher won’t let me?” Some teachers are affected by this bill negatively because sometimes phones are integrated into the curriculum. Classes like the newspaper require interviews from your phone... What about AVTF (audio video technology film) when you have to film something before you learn how to use the cameras? Another example, what if you have to take a photo of your math homework and need to transfer it to a school computer? All of these completely innocent examples improve learning and quality of life during school hours. This law doesn’t just apply to phones but also to all personal devices. **Charlie Cox (twelfth grader)** states, “I think it’s stupid that they banned earbuds because they help me focus when I’m listening to music.”

While many people despise this new phone law, not everyone believes that it's all negative. Teacher Admin Assistant, **Mr. White**, states, “I think overall it’s been a positive change. I have seen students paying attention more in class, engagement and participation are up in class, and I have seen a decrease in behavior issues associated with phones. In an article on the Georgia county cell phone ban by **Domonique King** states that “students have quickly found ways to circumvent bans, which highlights the difficulty in definitively proving a decrease in cheating.”

The new Fulton County personal device ban is a heated new rule that can be debated over and over and over again. However, we won’t know if this new bill is actually a net positive or net negative until we see the full aftermath of what happens. Whether it is students being

prohibited from listening to music, highly affected class curriculums, increased student engagement, or a reduced rate in cheating, only time will tell if this was a good idea or not.



*Students at Liberty County High School putting up their phone in a Yondr pouch.
(Courtesy of Liberty County School System)*

Citations:

How a Georgia County School System's Cell Phone Ban Is Going One Year Later,
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