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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
and Drafting

Legislative Budget
Office

H.B. 485
135th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Young and Plummer

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SUMMARY

- Requires each public school to adopt an internet safety policy for students who use internet access provided by the school.
- Requires each public school to include instruction in the social, emotional, and physical effects of social media to students in grades 6 through 12.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

School internet safety policy

The bill requires each school district, community school, STEM school, and college-preparatory boarding school to adopt an internet safety policy for students who use internet access provided by the district or school, which includes wireless internet. The district or school is required to file the policy by the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year. The policy must:

1. Limit access by students to only age-appropriate subject matter and materials on the internet;
2. Protect the safety and security of students when using email, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communication;
3. Prohibit unauthorized access to data or information in a system or computer, and other unlawful online activities;
4. Prevent access to websites, web applications, or software that does not protect against the disclosure, use, or dissemination of students' personal information;
5. Prohibit and prevent students from accessing social media platforms through the use of internet access provided by the district or school, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes;
6. Prohibit the use of the TikTok platform or any successor platform on district- or school-owned devices, through internet access provided by the district or school, or

- as a platform to communicate or promote any school, school-sponsored club, extracurricular organization, or interscholastic athletic team;
7. Establish specific consequences for a student who violates the policy or who violates the prohibition against the use of personal devices during instructional time; and
 8. Establish exceptions to the requirements and prohibitions listed in the policy, as determined necessary by the district board or school governing authority.¹

The bill requires the Department of Education and Workforce to adopt rules to administer the internet safety policy.²

Under the bill, districts and schools are prohibited from permitting a student to use a personal wireless communication device during instructional time, unless:

1. A teacher permits the student to use their device for educational purposes during instructional time;
2. The student uses a device in the event of an emergency or to manage the student's healthcare; or
3. The student's use of a device during instructional time is included in the student's individualized education program (IEP) or plan developed under section 504 of the "Rehabilitation Act of 1973," 29 United States Code 794.³

Under the bill a "personal wireless communication device" is any portable wireless device that has the capability to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two or more parties, including:

- A cellular telephone;
- A tablet computer;
- A laptop computer;
- A gaming device;
- A smart watch; and
- Headphones.

A "personal wireless communication device" does not include a device provided to a student by a district or school.⁴

¹ R.C. 3313.6030(B). The bill's provisions apply to community schools, STEM schools, and college-preparatory boarding schools through cross references in R.C. 3314.03(A)(11)(d), 3326.11, and 3328.24, respectively.

² R.C. 3313.6030(C).

³ R.C. 3313.6030(D).

⁴ R.C. 3313.6030(A).

Social media curriculum requirements

The bill requires each district or school to provide instruction in the social, emotional, and physical effects of social media to students in grades 6 through 12. The curriculum must include:

1. The negative effects of social media on mental health, including addiction;
2. The distribution of misinformation on social media;
3. How social media manipulates behavior;
4. The permanency of sharing materials online;
5. How to maintain personal security and identify cyberbullying, predatory behavior, and human trafficking on the internet; and
6. How to report suspicious behavior encountered on the internet.

The Department must make the instructional materials for the curriculum available online, and each district or school must notify parents of its availability.⁵

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	04-10-24

ANHB0485IN-135/ks

⁵ R.C. 3313.60 and 3313.6031.