

Students scoff at a school cellphone ban, until they really begin to think about it

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William Schnider is a 17-year-old high school student. He does not support the cellphone ban in Los Angeles schools, but understands both sides. Photo: Dania Maxwell/Los Angeles Times/TNS Photo: Dania Maxwell/Los Angeles Times/TNS

William Schnider is a high school student in Los Angeles, California. His iPhone is a big part of his life. His phone is always nearby, day or night.

Recently, the Los Angeles Board of Education introduced a new rule. Cellphones will be banned in public schools in the city. William does not like the idea.

"I don't see how it will work," he said. "I don't see how it's fair. Is this necessary?"

The ban will start in January 2025. School leaders want to cut down on distractions in class. They also want to prevent social media addiction. That's when someone is too obsessed with social

media. It can have a negative impact on their mental health. Schools say phone bans are the only way to get students to learn.

Cellphones Can Be Good And Bad

Many students were against the ban at first. But now, some are changing their minds. They realize they are spending too much time on their phones. Maybe all the distractions make school harder, they say. And maybe the constant focus on "likes" is bad for them. Maybe they do need a break.

Angélica Zamora-Reyes is looking forward to the ban. She's a student at Los Angeles' Downtown Magnets High School.

Angélica says cellphones can be a good thing. She uses Instagram to connect with friends. She also watches math video tutorials.

But Angélica also sees the bad side of cellphones. Some people in her school are "obsessed" with social media, she said. They are always comparing themselves to other people online. That can make them feel bad.

Angélica keeps her phone in her backpack during the school day. But she still gets distracted by other students on theirs.

A Distraction During Class

She remembers a distraction that happened last year. During class, the teacher was giving instructions for an assignment. Angélica says she could barely hear the teacher. Two classmates next to her were looking at their phones. They kept laughing loudly.

"It was not just distracting," Angélica said. "It felt disrespectful to the teacher and to any other student." Back then, she wished all classes were like English. Her English teacher had already banned phone use during class.

But Angélica does have questions. Will she be allowed to take photos of friends at lunch? Will she be able to snap shots of the whiteboard instead of taking notes?

Right now, the answer is no. But the rules are still being debated. Students will have a chance to let the school board know what they think.

"It would be good if phones were banned," Angélica said. But, like other students, she also sees the positive uses of cellphones.



Image 1. The Los Angeles Board of Education voted to ban cellphones in schools throughout the city starting in 2025. Photo: Dania Maxwell/Los Angeles Times/TNS

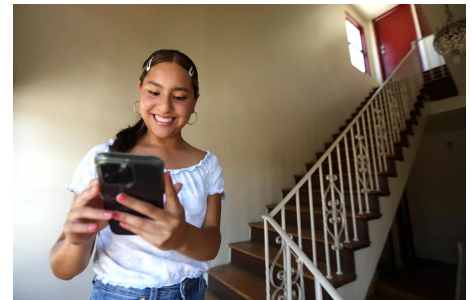


Image 2. Angélica Zamora-Reyes is a 17-year-old student. She supports the upcoming policy to prevent students from using their cellphones during the school day. Photo: Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times/TNS

Quiz

- 1 Which question is answered in the section "A Distraction During Class"?
- (A) Who believes that the cellphone ban is a bad idea?
 - (B) How does the cellphone ban affect students at lunch?
 - (C) What do most teachers think about the cellphone ban?
 - (D) When did the school board introduce the cellphone ban?
- 2 William Schnider said, "I don't see how it will work. I don't see how it's fair. Is this necessary?" How does he feel about the cellphone ban?
- (A) He thinks it is a good idea.
 - (B) He is completely against it.
 - (C) He changed his mind about it.
 - (D) He is unsure if he likes it or not.
- 3 What is Angélica Zamora-Reyes's point of view about cellphones?
- (A) She thinks they cause problems in class but are not all bad.
 - (B) She thinks students should not have them in class or at home.
 - (C) She believes students learn better when they have them in class.
 - (D) She believes it can be a good distraction from class and her friends.
- 4 Which sentence from the introduction [paragraphs 1-4] explains a reason why school leaders support the cellphone ban?
- (A) Recently, the Los Angeles Board of Education introduced a new rule.
 - (B) Cellphones will be banned in public schools in the city.
 - (C) The ban will start in January 2025.
 - (D) They also want to prevent social media addiction.