



MEDIA ADVISORY

SEN. LISA REYNOLDS

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For immediate release

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Lawmakers to Host Bipartisan Round Table on Phone-Free Schools

Sen. Lisa Reynolds, MD, Rep. Kim Wallan, Rep. April Dobson, and Rep. Emerson Levy will discuss Gov. Tina Kotek's executive order banning phones in Oregon's schools

SALEM, Ore. - On Tuesday, **Sen. Lisa Reynolds, MD (D-Portland)**, who worked with Governor Tina Kotek on her recent executive order creating phone-free schools, will convene lawmakers and community leaders in a round table discussion on how to make the new rule work best for student success and wellbeing.

DATE: Tuesday, September 30

TIME: 5:30 p.m.

ONLINE LOCATION: Zoom; join the discussion [here](https://bit.ly/Cell-EO-RT) (bit.ly/Cell-EO-RT)

FOR: Students, families, and school communities

Senator Reynolds and bipartisan colleagues **Rep. Kim Wallan (R-Medford)**, **Rep. April Dobson (D-Happy Valley)**, and **Rep. Emerson Levy (D-Bend)** crafted bills in the 2025 legislative session to confront the distraction of cell phones in schools (House Bill 2251 and Senate Bill 1212). In Tuesday's roundtable, they will draw on that knowledge to lead a discussion on:

- the value for students and families in the Governor's executive order
- the keys for successfully carrying out the order inside Oregon schools

Advocates and stakeholders will participate in the discussion, giving students and families in the virtual audience their informed perspectives on what it will take to keep children safe, happy, healthy, and well-educated in the cell phone age. Those at the table will include:

- Representatives from Oregon's Department of Education
- Jen Doty, a researcher from the University of Oregon

- Sergeant James Kinsella of the Bend Police Department

The lawmakers will take questions from parents, students, teachers, school staff, or community members about the fresh changes in school cell phone policies.

Some early insights:

“As a pediatrician, I see every day how phones are affecting the mental health of our students and interfering with their learning,” Sen. Reynolds said. “This executive order puts students and teachers first. Every Oregon student deserves a distraction-free, harassment-free learning environment that fosters curiosity and community.”

Sergeant Kinsella, who works as a student resource officer for the Bend-La Pine School District, noted that this cell phone ban helps keep students safe in a time of crisis.

“Our job as first responders is to protect lives. Phones in the middle of an emergency can interfere with that mission,” Sergeant Kinsella said. “Clear school safety plans, not constant cell phone access, are what give students, school officials, and law enforcement the best opportunity to keep everyone safe in a critical incident.”

“Having witnessed the benefits of this policy in my own community, it’s inspiring to see districts across Oregon experiencing the same results: teachers can concentrate on teaching, and students are once again filling lunchrooms with laughter and conversation,” Representative Dobson said.

Background on Oregon’s new policy:

Oregon now is one of 31 states with similar classroom phone usage restrictions. Community leaders, teachers, mental health experts, and scientists have consistently called for restrictions to be placed on phone usage during the school day. Now, Oregon legislators are focused on ensuring that our schools are set up for success as they implement this change.

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About Senator Lisa Reynolds:

Senator Lisa Reynolds, MD, is a state lawmaker, a mom, and a pediatrician serving children and families in the Portland Area. Her pediatric practice grounds her work and informs everything she does in the legislature. She serves as Chair of the Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health, and her pediatric practice grounds her work and informs everything she does in the legislature.