

**Lisa Cataldi**

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**From:** Amy Vadney <amy.vadney@warwickschools.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 21, 2025 12:37 PM  
**To:** Rep. Phillips, Robert D.; Rep. Perez, Ramon A.; Rep. Giraldo, Joshua J.; Rep. Donovan, Susan R; Rep. Cotter, Megan L.; Rep. Casimiro, Julie A.; Rep. Biah, Nathan W.; Rep. Kislak, Rebecca M.; Rep. Noret, Thomas E.; Rep. McNamara, Joseph M.  
**Subject:** Proposal to Consider Limiting Student Access to Cell Phones in Rhode Island Schools

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing to you as an **educator** in Rhode Island to respectfully suggest that the committee consider policies aimed at limiting student access to cell phones during school hours. As discussions around student well-being and academic performance continue, I believe this topic warrants thoughtful examination to ensure the best possible learning environment for our students.

In recent years, cell phones have become ubiquitous in classrooms, there is growing evidence that unrestricted access can lead to distractions, reduced focus on lessons, and potential negative impacts on mental health and social interactions. For instance, studies have shown that excessive screen time during school can hinder concentration and interpersonal skills, while policies in other states and districts that restrict phone use have reported improvements in student engagement and overall classroom dynamics. In Rhode Island, where we strive to provide equitable and effective education, implementing reasonable limitations, such as designated phone-free periods or secure storage options, could help address these challenges without infringing on students' rights.

I understand that any such policy would need to balance educational goals with practical considerations, including parental communication in emergencies and varying school needs across districts. I encourage the committee to explore this issue through public hearings, stakeholder input from educators, parents, and students, and a review of relevant data from Rhode Island schools. This approach could lead to evidence-based recommendations that support our students' success.

Thank you for your dedication to improving education in Rhode Island and for considering this important matter. I would appreciate any updates on related discussions or opportunities for public input. Please feel free to contact me at [your email address] if you need further information.

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*"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it into our children's bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on to them for them to do the same." Ronald Reagan*

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