



# Québec's Cellphone Ban in Elementary and High Schools



**Author**

**Abril Rivera Soto**

**Date published**

**September 2025**

**Copyright © 2025. Y4Y Québec.**

*Material from this publication may be reproduced for training, teaching or other noncommercial purposes as long as Y4Y Québec is fully acknowledged. This publication may also be distributed and/or accessible from your website provided that Y4Y Québec is fully acknowledged as the source. No part of this publication may be reproduced for any commercial purpose without the prior express permission of the copyright holders.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>CONTEXT</b>	.....	<b>4</b>
<b>COMMUNITY REACTIONS</b>	.....	<b>4</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	.....	<b>5</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	.....	<b>5</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	.....	<b>6</b>

## CONTEXT

Beginning in Fall 2025, the province of Québec will ban through regulation all personal electronic devices, primarily cellphones, from school property for the entire day. Both public and private elementary and high schools will be covered by the ban (Gélinas, 2025). This is an extension of a previous regulation which saw, in January 2024, the initial banning of phones in classrooms only. The provincial government's goal is to encourage concentration, prevent bullying, and boost social well-being. Québec's Minister of Education at the time, Bernard Drainville, emphasized the government's intended benefits: "[more] socialization, less intimidation, better focus" (The Canadian Press, 2025).

## COMMUNITY REACTIONS

There have been mixed reactions on the part of parents, teachers, and students. Among 14- to 17-year-olds, only 15% stated that they would support the ban, according to the Québec government's prior online consultations (CTV News Montreal, 2025). By contrast, during the same consultation process, the majority of parents (around 78%) and teachers (roughly 76%) expressed strong support for a full ban. Teachers expressed concern about being responsible for enforcement without the necessary tools or preparation (Assemblée nationale du Québec, 2025).

On May 9, 2025, students across Québec staged informal walkouts in response to youth-led TikTok calls ("Grève [...] pour le telephone") to protest at lunchtime, or skip school entirely. In Terrebonne, for example, around 50 students gathered outside Armand-Corbeil High School in the morning before returning to class. In Pointe-aux-Trembles, furthermore, dozens chanted and filmed near Daniel Johnson High School during lunchtime. Participation was mixed: while those demonstrations that occurred were lively, traction was overall limited across the province (News Staff, 2025).

Despite limited mobilization, however, students critical of the ban have continued to articulate their objections. Rodrigo Rivera Soto, a 16-years old student at French-speaking majority École Saint-Luc high school in Montréal, shares that "[...] the cellphone ban will not get rid of cyberbullying because [this] actually happens outside of school." Julien Escobar, a 16-years old student at English-speaking majority Lakeside Academy in Montréal, for his part, tells us that "[...] my phone is a source of comfort when I am under stress. I use it to communicate with my friends or listen to music [in those moments]."

Groups representing parents and students, such as the English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA), have voiced concerns that banning phones acts more as a punitive measure and fails to address the underlying problem of phone dependence (CityNews, 2025). Research findings on the impact of bans are mixed: a study from the UK showed that banning phones in schools by itself does not improve students' mental health or grades. Instead, their results claim, having emotional support at school, and teaching students how to use technology wisely, is what makes a difference (Weaver, 2025).

While the provincial government frames the ban as a step toward improving student well-be-

ing, with a majority of consulted parents and teachers onside, some youth and advocacy groups argue that a more balanced approach, one that acknowledges both the risks and benefits of phone use, would be more effective in addressing students' needs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To support student well-being while responding to concerns, we offer the following three recommendations aimed at strengthening the policy's impact and fairness.

- **Invest in digital literacy:** The provincial government offer funding for groups like *Le Centre pour l'intelligence émotionnelle en ligne* (C.I.E.L.) that teach students how to use technology responsibly.
- **Establish a monitoring committee:** A committee composed of students, parents, educators, and mental health professionals is recommended to monitor the policy's impacts and suggest any necessary adjustments.
- **Provide safe storage and emergency access protocols:** If the committee finds that the policy is not functioning as intended, or is negatively impacting students, elementary and high schools should consider implementing secure phone storage systems and clear emergency access protocols, helping students feel secure knowing they can reach loved ones if needed.

## CONCLUSION

While the province-wide regulatory ban on personal electronic devices aims to promote focus and connection, its success will depend on how well it reflects the varied experiences of students. With certain adjustments, such as investing in digital literacy, ensuring inclusive oversight, and, if needed, introducing secure storage and emergency access protocols, this policy can become a meaningful tool for promoting students' well-being and responsible use of technology.

## REFERENCES

CityNews. (2025, May 1). *Cellphones will be banned in Quebec schools*. CityNews.

<https://montreal.citynews.ca/2025/05/01/cellphones-banned-quebec-schools>

Colley, A. (2025). *The screen generation: Report on youth mental health and screen time*. Québec Youth Committee on Digital Health.

CTV News Montreal. (2025, April 22). *Committee recommends complete ban on cellphones in Quebec schools by fall 2025*. CTV News.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/montreal/article/cellphones-to-be-banned-from-quebec-schools/>

Gélinas, M. (2025, May 23). *Quebec students walk out in protest of cellphone ban*. West Quebec Post.

<https://www.westquebecpost.com/the-new-regulation-banning-cell-phone-use-in-schools-is-causing-discontent-among-quebec-students>

MacDonald, T. (2023, August 23). *Cellphone ban coming to Quebec elementary and high school classrooms*. Global News.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/9914211/quebec-schools-cellphone-ban/>

The Canadian Press. (2025, April 16). *Quebec expands cellphone ban in schools to entire day, including recess*. CBC News.

<https://montreal.citynews.ca/2025/05/07/strike-quebec-schools-cell-phone-ban/>

Weaver, M. (2025, February 5). *School phone bans alone do not improve grades or wellbeing, says UK study*. The Guardian.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2025/feb/05/school-ban-phones-not-improve-grades-health-uk-study>



5165 Sherbrooke Street West,  
Suite 107  
Montréal, QC H4A 1T6



[info@y4yquebec.org](mailto:info@y4yquebec.org)



514-612-2895



[www.y4yquebec.org](http://www.y4yquebec.org)