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It's June—State Budget Season is Here

As the days get warmer, state budget negotiations will heat up between the Governor and legislative leaders in the General Assembly. There will be recurring disagreements over spending levels, use of the Rainy Day Fund, and prioritizing funding increases. In a statewide election year, both sides will want wins to campaign on which means a give and take process to reach a final agreement (as it always does).

Meanwhile, with both chambers scheduled for voting sessions for the rest of the month, floor activity will increase as the caucuses move legislation that can be signed into law with the budget. Last week the House sent a school cell phone ban bill to the House in the form of House Bill 1814 (you can read it here: <https://www.palegis.us/legislation/bills/text/PDF/2025/0/HB1814/PN3372>). The legislation received bi-partisan support (consequently bi-partisan opposition) in a 126-75 with some of the debate focusing on whether schools should be able to adopt their own cell phone policies rather than be subject to a state mandate. You can read more about the floor debate here: Pa. House passes school cellphone ban • Pennsylvania Capital-Star. You can see how your representative voted here: House Roll Call Vote Summary #1074 | 2025-2026 Regular Session - PA House of Representatives

House Bill 1814 bans the use of cell phones during the school day on school property. Students can be in possession of a cell phone, but not use it subject to limited exceptions such as translation for English language learners and medical necessity. The effective date is the 2006-07 school year. A similar cell phone ban passed the Senate in February.