Template for emailing individual School Board Members
(updated 6-21-24)

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(Note: It is **not** recommended to email school.board@apsva.us because only a summary on your topic will reach Members.)

**Letter Template:**

Dear [enter name of school board member],

I am writing today to urge the School Board to adopt an “Away For The Day” mobile device policy across all APS schools effective August 26, 2024. Away for the Day means personal smart devices must be off and put away outside the classroom throughout the school day. It is critical for this policy to be in place at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.

U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy stated in a New York Times op-ed Monday, June 17 that “Schools should ensure that classroom learning and social time are phone-free experiences" and referred to the mental health crisis facing youth in our country as an “emergency.”

Emergencies don’t always allow for standard timelines to be followed. Allowing individual school-by-school policies in the interim will only make district-wide implementation more challenging. It also puts principals in a difficult position with parents who have opposing viewpoints.

I trust you to make the hard decisions and take actions to help our kids learn and grow. We don’t need to wait another 6 months or a year. We need urgent action to address mental health and achievement gaps. Removing cell phones district-wide in a consistent manner effective August 26, 2024 will immediately help students be more successful at school--both interpersonally and academically.

Enacting such a policy needs to take place at the start of the school year. Taking phones away from kids once they’ve established the habit of having them, will make it even more difficult for students. A new school year is the perfect opportunity to make this change for our community.

Thank you,

[name]