

Text N°8: France Bans Smartphones in Schools

France has voted to ban smartphones and personal tablets from schools. Lawmakers voted overwhelmingly by 62-1 on Monday to prohibit students aged between 3 and 15 from even bringing their devices to school. The ban is part of a campaign to reduce addiction to electronics. It fulfills a campaign promise made by French President Emmanuel Macron in 2017. French  
5 Minister of National Education Jean-Michel Blanquer also campaigned for the ban saying devices were harmful to children's development. He called mobile devices a public health crisis and said the law protects children from the "phenomenon of screen addiction and the phenomenon of bad mobile phone use."

The new ban extends a previous law made in 2010 that meant students could not use their  
10 devices in lessons. There are exceptions to the ban for students with disabilities and for using devices in the classroom for extra-curricular activities. Many lawmakers do not believe the ban is enough to bring about change. They believe the ban is little more than a publicity stunt. Application of the ban to students aged 15 and older will depend on the policy of individual schools. Experts have found that the increased use of mobile devices causes cyber-addiction,  
15 sleep disruption and bullying. Opponents of the ban say it is a backward step and will not lead to an increase in learning.

Sean Banville, [www.breakingnewsenglish.com](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com), 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2018.