



The Act 42 Operational Launchpad

Co-Designing Focused Environments to Balance Statutory Compliance with Post-Secondary Autonomy

Executive Directive: Wisconsin Act 42 mandates cell phone restrictions starting in the 26/27 school year. Transitioning successfully requires moving past basic passive monitoring and implementing structures that build genuine student buy-in. This toolkit operationalizes an alignment framework that honors student-voiced independence, explicitly positioning focus and self-regulation as core preparation for adult environments.

1. The Student Leadership Stakeholder & Collaboration Framework

Instead of handing down top-down mandates, school leaders must utilize this strategic consultation protocol with student leaders, council bodies, and focus groups to elicit actionable feedback and foster a culture of shared adult readiness. In a listening session with student leaders you can utilize the following framework to help your policy development.

Phase A: Establishing Transparent Statutory Context

Administrative Talk-Track: "Wisconsin Act 42 is a state law that requires every school district to implement cell phone restriction policies beginning in the 26/27 school year. The legal mandate is fixed—but how we build our environment around it is completely up to us. Our primary objective is to protect your learning environment while explicitly honoring your growth toward independence. We want your help to engineer a transition that prepares you for the autonomy expected in college, and the workforce, rather than making you feel restricted."

Phase B: Core Qualitative Feedback Elicitation Prompts

- **Classroom Delivery Diagnostics:** "From your perspective as student leaders, what do classroom teachers and building administrators need to keep top-of-mind when implementing this policy daily? How can adults address device management in a way that respects your intelligence rather than generating unnecessary confrontation?"
- **Operational Risk & Concern Mapping:** "What are the points of friction you anticipate with this policy rollout? What unexpected roadblocks might arise for students, and how can the system proactively solve for them while maintaining focus boundaries?"
- **Strategic Communication & Publicizing:** "How can school leadership roll out and market this policy to the wider student body so that it resonates as a transition toward adulthood and independence? What communication channels, or student-led messaging would be the most effective to foster immediate understanding and buy-in?"
- **Continuous Collaborative Engagement Strategy:** "To ensure we are honoring student voice long-term, how can building administrators best collaborate with the broader student population throughout the year? What structured progress checks should we establish so we can continue to get student input on the implementation of this policy?"

2. The Student Panel Professional Development Framework

Prior to the start of the academic year, leadership should facilitate a 45-minute student-led feedback panel during staff collaborative days to support educators in shifting from monitoring to professional coaching:

- **Panel Structure:** 4–6 high school (or middle school) student leaders (representing diverse academic and behavioral backgrounds) positioned as advisors, facilitated by a Building Administrator or Site Coordinator.
- **Core Objective:** Provide educators with direct insights on how repetitive micro-corrections disrupt student engagement, and highlight the positive impact of teachers who treat device management as an executive career habit.
- **Panel Discussion Starters:**
 1. 'How does a classroom focused on cell phone policy compliance look and feel different than one focused on preparing you as an adult learner?'
 2. 'When an adult initiates a public confrontation regarding a device, how does that impact your willingness to

collaborate with them moving forward?'

3. 'What specific environmental supports can our staff implement to help you build focus, stamina and prepare for post-secondary independence?'

3. Frontline Staff Lesson Plan & Proactive Support Script Matrix

The Classroom-Level Shared Focus Agreement Protocol

To weave peer-led buy-in directly into the instruction area, teachers will lead a 20-minute facilitation circle during the first week of school to generate a signed classroom contract. This localized data serves as the specific leverage point for all future behavioral corrections:

- 1. **Anchor to Student Leadership Panel:** Show or read the overarching themes designed by the building's central student panel to ground the rule in peer authority. (e.g., 'Our student leaders helped design an adult-readiness blueprint to help us transition into distraction-free environments. Today we are setting the rules for this specific room.')
- 2. **Localized Elicitation Prompts:** The teacher guides a structured 10-minute lesson to lock in classroom specific variables:
 - **Prompt 1:** 'During direct instruction and collaborative work what distinct boundaries do we need to agree upon to ensure our group focus remains unbroken?'
 - **Prompt 2:** 'If someone does use their device, what is a respectful, non-confrontational way for me to prompt a reset without disrupting others' learning?'
- 3. **Formal Integration & Reference Strategy:** The resulting commitments are captured on a single sheet, signed by the class, and posted visibly. When an individual phone violation occurs later in the semester, the teacher references this contract verbatim to instantly remove personal friction and enforce group accountability.

The Enforcement Trap (Avoid This)	The Autonomy Script (Execute This)
"Put that phone in the bin right now or you are going to the office for defiance." Context: Initiates an unconstructive classroom confrontation over compliance, turning a simple correction into an immediate, reactive disciplinary escalation.	"[Student Name], during week one, this class co-designed an agreement on exactly when devices are out of sight and how we protect our focus blocks. Let's honor that shared contract. Please slide your phone out of sight or place it in the self-management dock." Context: Leverages the explicit language and accountability variables co-designed by the students during Prompt 1 and Prompt 2. It removes adult confrontation by strictly referencing the group's pre-signed commitments.

4. Administrative Progress-Monitoring & Implementation Fidelity Tool

Principals and District Directors should utilize this matrix during routine instructional walkthroughs to monitor implementation consistency and support constructive classroom environments:

Look-For Indicator	Tier 1: Reactive Monitoring	Tier 2: Basic Compliance	Tier 3: Systemic Autonomy
Visual Environment & Classroom Threshold	[] Devices are unmanaged across learning areas; staff responses are inconsistent or rely on reactive corrections.	[] Devices are consistently stowed away in backpacks or organizers. The basic statutory requirement is fully met.	[] Co-designed focus visual cues guide the environment. Students self-manage and stow devices seamlessly upon entry.

Instructional Continuity & Micro-Interventions	[] Instruction is frequently interrupted to address individual device usage, leading to classroom friction.	[] Staff utilize non-verbal prompts or physical proximity to ensure devices remain stowed. Instructional pauses are minimal.	[] Staff deploy autonomy coaching scripts in under 5 seconds. Academic focus is protected; corrections are objective and non-emotional.
Administrative Alignment & Support Pipeline	[] Elevated rate of office discipline referrals for non-compliance, stemming primarily from classroom device disputes.	[] Low referral rates; device boundaries are maintained internally but require heavy, ongoing staff monitoring cycles.	[] Zero administrative intervention required for devices. Breakdowns in focus lead to localized, student-logged skill restoration.

5. Progressive Tiers of Intensive Autonomy Support (MTSS Alignment)

When a segment of the student population (estimated at 10%–15%) exhibits persistent difficulty self-managing device boundaries under universal Tier 1 structures, teams must deploy targeted support plans. The goal is to avoid exclusionary discipline and intentionally coach the underlying executive functioning skills required for post-secondary independence.

Tier 2: Targeted Skill Restoration (10% – 15% of Student Population)

- **Structural Paradigm Shift:** Transition the student from unstructured environment tracking to Collaborative Action Planning.
- **Intervention Mechanics:** The assigned counselor, advisor, or student services coordinator facilitates a brief, non-punitive 1:1 collaborative goal-setting session.
- **The Autonomy Contract Framework:**
 - Micro-Goal Identification: Target the specific instructional blocks where attention-regulation fractures most frequently.
 - The Structural Anchor: Deploy a localized self-management dock at the instructor's desk solely for those high-stimulus blocks.
 - Formative Progress Check: Maintain a brief weekly review loop with an adult mentor. Upon completing a two-week cycle of sustained focus, the student automatically transitions back to standard Tier 1 autonomy status.

Tier 3: Intensive Structural Scaffolding (1% – 5% of Student Population)

- **Structural Paradigm Shift:** Transition the student to Individualized Environmental Modification.
- **Intervention Mechanics:** Managed directly via the Student Support Team (SST), IEP teams, or 504 coordinators for students demonstrating high-level attention deficits or situational barriers.
- **The Individualized Focus Plan Protocol:**
 - Alternative Environmental Storage: Remove the proximity device trigger entirely by arranging a secure, non-punitive device check-in at the start of the academic day within a designated support hub.
 - Secure Family Communication Bridge: Establish an explicit district-routed messaging line directly to the support desk to eliminate family-contact anxieties.
 - Direct Executive Coaching: Provide explicit instruction during intervention periods focused on sensory reduction habits, focus self-monitoring, and adult digital wellness boundaries.

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