

**I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
RESOLUTIONS**

Resolution No.	Sponsor	Title	Date Intro	Date of Presentation	Date Adopted	Date Referred	Referred to	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	DATE AUTHORS REPORT FILED	NOTES
126-38 (COR)	Sabina Flores Perez Shelly V. Calvo Chris Barnett Vincent A.V. Borja Frank F. Blas, Jr. V. Anthony Ada Therese M. Terlaje William A. Parkinson Tina Rose Muña-Barnes	Relative to empowering the Guam Department of Education to expand anti-drug education and prevention campaigns, enforce a comprehensive cell phone use policy, strengthen student wellness and safe learning environments, and increase access to mental health supports for students across all grade levels.	12/15/25 12:01 p.m.		3/27/26	12/19/25	Author	2/20/26 2:00 p.m.	3/5/26 As Amended.	



COPY

I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
Thirty-Eighth Guam Legislature

March 27, 2026

The Honorable Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero
I Maga'hågan Guåhan
Ufisinan I Maga'håga
Hagåtña, Guam 96910

Dear *Maga'håga* Leon Guerrero:

Transmitted herewith is **Resolution No. 126-38 (COR)**, “Relative to empowering the Guam Department of Education to expand anti-drug education and prevention campaigns, enforce a comprehensive cell phone use policy, strengthen student wellness and safe learning environments, and increase access to mental health supports for students across all grade levels,” which was duly and regularly adopted by *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* on March 27, 2026.

Sincerely,

Senator Sabrina Salas Matanane
Legislative Secretary

POTI Susie J. Castro

3.27.26, 3:24pm

Enclosure (1)



I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2025 (FIRST) Regular Session

Resolution No. 126-38 (COR)

As amended by the Author;
and further amended on the Floor.

Introduced by:

Sabina Flores Perez
Shelly V. Calvo
Chris Barnett
Vincent A.V. Borja
Frank F. Blas, Jr.
V. Anthony Ada
Therese M. Terlaje
William A. Parkinson
Tina Rose Muña-Barnes
Sabrina Salas Matanane
Jesse A. Lujan
Joe S. San Agustin
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao
Christopher M. Dueñas
Telo T. Taitague

Relative to empowering the Guam Department of Education to expand anti-drug education and prevention campaigns, enforce a comprehensive cell phone use policy, strengthen student wellness and safe learning environments, and increase access to mental health supports for students across all grade levels.

1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY *I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN***
2 ***GUÅHAN*:**

3 **WHEREAS**, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that one in
4 five adolescents experiences a diagnosable mental health condition, but fewer than half
5 receive adequate treatment; and

1 **WHEREAS**, the Guam Department of Education (GDOE) is responsible for
2 ensuring that Guam’s public schools provide safe, equitable, and supportive
3 learning environments for all students, consistent with the mandates of Public Law
4 26-26, The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and the State Strategic Plan; and

5 **WHEREAS**, in recent years, GDOE educators and administrators have
6 identified increased classroom distractions, social conflicts, and mental health
7 concerns linked to excessive or inappropriate use of cell phones and social media
8 during school hours; and

9 **WHEREAS**, global research in developmental psychology identifies the
10 period between 2010 and 2015 as a turning point in adolescent well-being,
11 sometimes referred to as the “Great Rewiring of Childhood,” during which the rapid shift
12 from play-based, face-to-face socialization to phone-based interaction coincided with a
13 dramatic rise in adolescent anxiety, depression, and self-harm; and

14 **WHEREAS**, psychologists and neuroscientists attribute this shift to a set of
15 foundational harms caused by unregulated smartphone use among youth, including
16 social deprivation, sleep disruption, attention fragmentation, and digital addiction, all
17 of which impede learning, focus, and emotional stability; and

18 **WHEREAS**, adolescent brain research further shows that the reward-seeking
19 centers of the brain mature earlier than self-regulatory systems, making young
20 people particularly vulnerable to the addictive design of digital platforms that
21 amplify peer comparison and social anxiety; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the Guam Education Board has recognized this concern by
23 reviewing and updating Board Policy 406, “Student Cell Phone Use on School
24 Campus,” to clarify expectations for both instructional and non-instructional time, but
25 enforcement remains inconsistent across campuses; and

1 **WHEREAS**, research from the National Center for Education Statistics and
2 United Nations Children’s Fund indicates that limiting phone use during instructional
3 hours improves academic focus, reduces cyberbullying, and supports positive peer
4 interactions, while overuse is associated with increased anxiety, sleep disturbance, and
5 reduced attention spans among youth; and

6 **WHEREAS**, leading child-development experts caution that modern youth are
7 often overprotected in the real world and underprotected in the virtual world,
8 underscoring the need for balanced school policies that both limit harmful digital
9 exposure and teach healthy digital citizenship; and

10 **WHEREAS**, the Government of Guam’s own Guam Behavioral Health
11 and Wellness Center (GBHWC) has reported growing concerns about early exposure
12 to substance use, social media–related mental health issues, and the resurgence of
13 nicotine, alcohol, and illicit substance use among minors, particularly in the wake
14 of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

15 **WHEREAS**, GDOE has partnered with GBHWC, the Department of Public
16 Health and Social Services, and community coalitions to implement Red Ribbon
17 Week and other prevention initiatives, yet ongoing challenges such as fentanyl
18 exposure, vaping, and prescription drug misuse demonstrate the urgent need for
19 year-round, curriculum-integrated prevention programs; and

20 **WHEREAS**, the 2021 Guam’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey continues to
21 show elevated rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation among students,
22 highlighting the need to strengthen school-based counseling capacity, crisis response
23 training, and peer-support programs; and

24 **WHEREAS**, promoting student wellness through comprehensive mental
25 health services, anti-drug education, and responsible technology use aligns with the
26 Government of Guam’s strategic vision for a “Healthy Guam,” and supports the

1 objectives of the 2025–2030 GDOE Strategic Plan emphasizing student engagement,
2 academic recovery, and socio-emotional well-being; now therefore, be it

3 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on
4 behalf of the People of Guam, empower the Guam Department of Education to
5 uniformly enforce its updated policy on student cell phone use, requiring phone-free
6 instructional time, secure storage of devices during class, and annual reporting on
7 disciplinary incidents and learning outcomes associated with policy implementation; and
8 be it further

9 **RESOLVED**, that *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* empowers the Guam Department of
10 Education to explore phone-free-school models consistent with global child-
11 development research identifying such environments as effective, low-cost strategies to
12 improve student focus, academic performance, and well-being; and be it further

13 **RESOLVED**, that *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* urges the Guam Department of
14 Education, in coordination with the Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center and
15 the Department of Public Health and Social Services, to expand anti-drug education
16 and awareness programs in all schools, to include fentanyl and vaping prevention,
17 parent engagement, and partnerships with village mayors for community-level
18 prevention initiatives; and be it further

19 **RESOLVED**, that *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* urges the Guam Department of
20 Education to strengthen mental health supports by increasing the number of school
21 counselors, social workers, and psychologists; by incorporating evidence-based
22 social-emotional learning (SEL) curricula; and by ensuring access to crisis response and
23 referral pathways for students in distress; and be it further

24 **RESOLVED**, that *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* supports the creation of a “Student
25 Wellness Task Force” within GDOE, comprised of representatives from GBHWC,
26 DPHSS, parent organizations, and student councils, to develop a coordinated plan

1 addressing behavioral health, drug prevention, and technology use policies in
2 Guam's schools; and be it further

3 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the
4 adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to Dr. Judith
5 Guthertz, Chairperson of the Guam Education Board; Dr. Judith Won Pat,
6 Superintendent of Education; Carissa E. Pangelinan, Director of the Guam Behavioral
7 Health and Wellness Center; and Theresa C. Arriola, Director of the Guam
8 Department of Public Health and Social Services; and to the Honorable Lourdes A.
9 Leon Guerrero, *I Maga'hågan Guåhan*.

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA
LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE 27TH DAY OF MARCH 2026.**



Frank F. Blas, Jr.
Speaker



Sabrina Salas Matanane
Legislative Secretary