

## **SUBJECT: STUDENT CELL PHONE USE IN SCHOOL**

While cell phones have become a common item for many students, their use during school hours can be distracting, and, therefore, their use during school hours is considered inappropriate. At the same time, it is recognized that such items can represent a significant purchase for students/parents, and students should be able to properly safeguard their phones. Therefore, students will be allowed to possess a cell phone while on school premises during school hours, **BUT they MUST understand this is a privilege, and the following rules will be in effect:**

- a) Cell phones are to be turned off and put away; their use will not be allowed during instructional time except as specified later in this policy. Examples of cell phone use include, but are not limited to, using the phone to make a phone call, texting, sending pictures, looking up information on the internet, and/or accessing social media. School hours regarding cell phone use will be established and clearly published in the Student Agenda at the beginning of each school year.
- b) Generally speaking, students in all grade levels are required to secure their phones to prevent distraction during instructional time. Students in GR 6-9 are required to secure their phones in their locked locker at all times and may not carry their phone around the building. One exception to this rule: students in GR 9 may possess their phone in the lunch period/cafeteria. Students in GR 10-12 may carry their phone with them, including lunch, but must keep the device out of sight or secured in a designated location in each instructional classroom. Additional guidelines to facilitate these expectations will be published annually in the student handbook and code of conduct.
- c) Inappropriate use will result in progressive consequences as follows:
  1. First Offense
    - (a) The cell phone will be confiscated and turned into the office.
    - (b) The student will be allowed to take the battery out of the phone.
    - (c) The student will be allowed to pick up the phone at the end of the school day.
  2. Second Offense
    - (a) The cell phone will be confiscated and turned into the office.
    - (b) The student will be allowed to take the battery out of the phone.
    - (c) The student's parent **must** pick up the phone OR the student will be assigned to two after school detentions. Office staff/administration will **not** be obligated to notify parents that the cell phone is in the office; the student will have to tell his or her parents.

3. Third Offense

- (a) The cell phone will be confiscated and turned into the office.
  - (b) The student will be allowed to take the battery out of the phone.
  - (c) The student's parent **must** pick up the phone AND the student will be assigned to two after school detentions. Office staff/administration will **not** be obligated to notify parents that the cell phone is in the office; the student will have to tell his or her parents.
  - (e) Privilege to possess a cell phone on campus will be evaluated for repeat offenders on a case by case basis.
- d) If a student refuses to turn in his or her cell phone immediately when asked to do so by a staff member, he or she will be considered insubordinate and, at the least, will be assigned one day of in-school suspension. Repeat offenders will face additional, stiffer consequences.
- e) Students MUST realize that if they use their cell phone to engage in bullying, intimidation or harassment of others, their phone, and its contents, may be subject to confiscation and review by school administration, in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act and NYS Law. If it is determined that the phone has been used for activities that are illegal or criminal, it may be turned over to the police.
- f) A student may use his or her phone to make an emergency call/text in either the school office or nurse's office provided he or she has obtained appropriate permission.
- g) A teacher may grant permission to use cell phones and/or ear buds in a classroom for a specific lesson. In such cases, permission needs to be requested to administration in writing.
- h) Students will NOT be dismissed from school without communication with a guardian/parent. Students are responsible for visiting the nurse and moving through appropriate channels to be dismissed from school and are NOT to contact parents directly for dismissal without duly communicating with school personnel.