

Dear Parents and Students,

Jefferson High School will be implementing a new cell phone policy that will require all cell phones to be left in a car or shut off in their lockers during the school day. Our duty is to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment that offers each student the best opportunity to succeed. The decision is made in the best interest of our students, school, and community as a whole and driven to maximize student engagement in learning and in interactions with others.

Updated Cell Phone Policy

Effective January 6, 2020

Students are prohibited from having cellular telephones or other communication devices on their person during the school day. Student cell phones must remain in the student's car or turned off and in the locker during the school day. (8:10 AM - 2:57 PM). Cell phones that are visible, in use during school hours, or not in the designated areas listed above violate the policy. Students violating the policy will have cell phones confiscated by school personnel. Failure to comply will be considered insubordination and proper discipline will be enacted. Cell phones in lockers that are activated and disrupt learning by ringing or pinging are subject to confiscation.

- 1st Offense** Student pick-up at the end of the day from Principal's office
- 2nd Offense** Detention plus parent/guardian pick-up of device(s).
- 3rd Offense** Saturday School plus parent/guardian pick-up

The administration reserves the right to exercise flexibility of all disciplinary actions regarding cell phones. Depending on the severity of violations, the administration may deny the student the privilege of bringing a cell phone on school property.

Parents/guardians are strongly discouraged from texting or calling their students cell phones to pass along messages. If a parent needs to get a message to a student, we request that parents call the high school office. The office will be happy to deliver the message or have the student return the call in order to prevent your student from violating this policy.

I understand and respect that not all students and parents fully agree with the new policy. We will evaluate implementation data at the end of the year and make proper adjustments. Attached are some articles that provide answers and studies on some concerns that you may have. Thank you for the supporting Delphos Jefferson.

Sincerely

Mr Chad Brinkman

EVIDENCE AND ARTICLES REGARDING CELL PHONE USE AND EDUCATION

Away For The Day cites various academic studies that point to potential negative outcomes of classroom phone use. In one such study, 75 percent of teachers reported that the attention spans of students have decreased. In another study, students regularly interrupted by text messages had test scores that were 10.6 percent lower. The author believes that putting the phones away can improve a child's emotional well-being in school and help with their focus in and out of the classroom. The author also dismisses the safety argument. She pointed to an NPR report in which security experts have said that letting a kid have a phone in the classroom during a lockdown makes them less safe, not more. When students should be quiet, for example, a ringing or vibrating phone might alert an assailant where kids are hiding. Parents trying to reach youngsters in an emergency might jam communications and interfere with first responders. And the kids might miss instructions from the authorities
<https://www.awayfortheday.org/take-action/>

Ontario's list of pros and cons and their decision to ban cell phones in schools (April 2019) Students check their phones in the classroom an average of more than 11 times a day. That can add up to a lot of time spent distracted from schoolwork. And when students are distracted, it's a recipe for extra stress, frustration, and catch-up time for everyone. With students spending up to 20% of their in-class time texting, emailing, and checking social media, it's no wonder the debate about cell phones exists.
<https://www.oxfordlearning.com/should-cell-phones-be-allowed-classrooms/>

District Administrator cites last September, school districts across the US also banned cell phones in the classroom in an effort to reduce distractions. . Teachers, parents and students say that since the ban went into effect, students are more focused in class and even talk to one another at lunchtime.
<https://districtadministration.com/the-great-smartphone-debate/>

Rutgers Study Many dedicated students think they can divide their attention in the classroom without harming their academic success – but we found an insidious effect on exam performance and final grades,” said lead [Arnold Glass](#), a professor of psychology at Rutgers–New Brunswick’s [School of Arts and Sciences](#). “To help manage the use of devices in the classroom, teachers should explain to students the damaging effect of distractions on retention – not only on themselves, but for the whole class.”
<https://news.rutgers.edu/cellphone-distraction-classroom-can-lead-lower-grades-rutgers-study-finds/20180723>

Educational Psychology (2019) Scholarly article *Dividing attention in the classroom reduces exam performance*
Arnold L. Glass & Mengxue Kang (2019)
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01443410.2018.1489046?needAccess=true>

Ed Scope reports students are often getting around cell phone restrictions or bans by carefully hiding their use through cordless earbuds, smart watches, Bluetooth speakers, or long hair paired with a hoodie. They are also using positional strategies such as putting their head in their hands, rummaging through their backpacks and using the restroom break as an opportunity to text.
<https://edscoop.com/how-should-teachers-manage-smartphones-distractions-in-the-classroom/>

National School Safety and Security Services

Key points: 1)Cell Phones Disruptive of School Environment 2)Cell Phone Use During a Crisis Can Create Less Safe School Emergency Response 3)Cell Phones and Text Messaging in Schools Contribute to School Rumors and Fear 4)Cell Phone Policies and Practices in Schools Must Meet the Times But Be Clear and Enforced, 5) Emergency Guidelines and Crisis Communications Plans Must Be Strong
<https://www.schoolsecurity.org/trends/cell-phones-and-text-messaging-in-schools/>

Edutopia (using this clip at orientations)

Taken together, there's increasing evidence that the presence and usage of cell phone in the classroom—while not necessarily detrimental in all contexts—should be carefully monitored, intentionally structured, and even restricted in some cases. <https://www.edutopia.org/video/theres-cell-phone-your-students-head>