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REMSEN CENTRAL SCHOOL

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August 12, 2025

Dear Remsen Families,

I hope that this message finds you enjoying a great summer vacation. We miss seeing all of you each day and look forward to kicking off the new school year at our annual *Welcome Back to School* night on Wednesday, September 3rd.

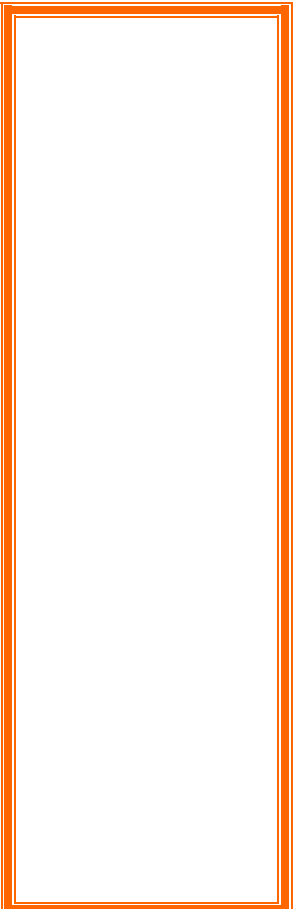
The start of the new school year will look much different for our students in grades 7-12 as they will no longer be allowed to keep their smart phones/devices with them during the school day per the recent New York State legislation based on growing concerns regarding students' mental health, wellness, and academic focus. We understand that this dramatic change will be a challenge for some of our high school students but we are hopeful that students may be less distracted and more present throughout each day while improving academically, socially, emotionally, and behaviorally. This new law is not a change for the elementary students as this has always been the requirement here at Remsen.

Thank you to everyone that took the time to complete the Smart Device Survey before the end of the school year. We appreciate your feedback, thoughts, and ideas. It is clear that some of you are excited about this NYS requirement while others are not so enthusiastic. Working together to implement this new legislation will ensure a smooth transition for our jr./sr. high school students.

Effective starting with the first day of school on Thursday, September 4, 2025, all students will be required to keep their personal phones and other Internet-Enabled Devices, in their lockers from the start of the school day until dismissal. At no time should these devices be used or on their person (e.g. book bags, pockets, etc.) and at no time should they be using them at their lockers during the school day. Jr./Sr. High School students traveling on buses for BOCES programs or field trips will be allowed to take their phones/smart devices on the bus provided that device use is responsible, appropriate, and non-distracting.

The number one concern shared from the parent and student surveys regarding this new law is the loss of the convenience of immediate parent to child and child to parent communication for any reason via text-messaging during the regular school day. Parents may call the main office, nurse's office, school counselor's office, or the athletic director's office at any time. Detailed contact information may be found in the attached Policy and on our webpage at remsend.org. Likewise, students may ask to use the main office student phone or report to the nurse's office when they need to get in contact with their parent/guardian during the regular school day. RCS will also ensure that practice/game/activity reschedules, time changes, and/or cancelations are communicated to parents as soon as possible via Parentsquare during the school day. Please also note that jr./sr. high school students will still be allowed to have and responsibly use their smart phones/smart devices before school and after school on campus each day.

Soar to Success!



For more detailed information, the required *Prohibition of Student Smart Devices* District Policy and the related District Code of Conduct updates (highlighted in green) are attached. A direct link will be available on our webpage to reference this information and may also be found at <https://www.remsencsd.org/our-district/district-documents/student-use-of-personal-internet-enabled-devices>. Our principals will be going over this information with students in their orientations during the first few days of school. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to reach out to your building principal.

For those interested in learning more, *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt, is a very informative read regarding the impact of children's overuse of social media on their smart devices. In his book, Haidt shares many alarming trends in the "great rewiring of childhood" and how it is causing an "epidemic of mental illness".

As always, thank you for your support and thank you for helping us work to ensure that all of our students *Soar to Success*. We are here to serve and support you any way we can. Wishing everyone a wonderful remaining few weeks of summer.

Sincerely,

Timothy Jenny
Superintendent