



August 25, 2025

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers,

I am writing to inform you about the new [Distraction-Free Schools Law](#) passed by New York State. This legislation, aimed at reducing distractions and promoting a more focused learning environment, will go into effect for the upcoming school year.

Under this new law, all New York State public schools must adopt policies that limit or restrict student access to cell phones and personal internet-enabled devices during the school day, such as smartwatches, tablets, e-readers, etc. The goal is to support student mental health, reduce social media-related disruptions, and improve overall academic performance. **Please note that school employees (administration and teaching staff) will be informing students of our school-wide expectations on the first day of school and discussing the importance of complying with this new law.**

What This Means for Your Child:

Starting Thursday, September 4th, 2025, students will be expected to follow the updated school guidelines on cell phone use, which include:

- Phones must be stored in lockers before the start of the school day and remain there for the entire day (7:20 a.m. – 2:16 p.m.)
- Parent communication goes through the school's main office and/or the student's school District-issued email account

To support the success of this policy, consistent consequences will be in place for students who do not comply. If a student is observed using a cell phone or internet-enabled device during the instructional day, the following steps will be taken under our *Code of Conduct*:

- **First Violation:** The teacher will confiscate the device, and it will be taken to the office. The student may pick it up at the end of the school day.
- **Second Violation:** The device will be confiscated and taken to the office. A parent or guardian must pick it up at the end of the day.
- **Third Violation:** The student will receive a discipline referral and face school-level consequences, as determined by the principal. Parents will be notified.

- **Fourth Violation:** The student will be required to use a school-sanctioned storage space or a personal locking device pouch (such as a Yondr bag) each day, for a period determined by the principal.

In cases where a student is insubordinate or violates other behavioral expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct, additional disciplinary measures will be applied in accordance with District policy.

We understand that cell phones can be important for family communication, especially before and after school. Please rest assured that we are working to implement this change in a thoughtful and student-centered way. Additionally, please refer to Mrs. Galenski's July 30, 2025, letter for information about medical exemptions to this policy, including the required documentation. You can access the letter here: [July 2025](#).

If you have questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to me at the school (contact information listed below).

Thank you for your continued support in helping us create a more focused and supportive learning environment for all students.

Sincerely,

Robert N. Julian, Jr.

Robert N. Julian, Jr.
Principal
JFK High School

RJulian@cheektowagasloan.org

(716) 891-6407