

Parents and Students,

The Fresno High Community would like to inform you about an important school policy that will be in effect during the 2026–27 school year. All Fresno High School classrooms will be cell phone-free zones; this applies to cell phones, earbuds, smartwatches used for communication, as well as any other personal communication devices. Assembly Bill 3216 authorizes school governing boards to regulate the possession and use of electronic devices during the school day. In accordance with Fresno Unified School District Board Policy 5131.8 (Mobile Communication Devices), all personal communication devices must be securely stowed away during instructional time

Our school community believes that a consistent, school-wide policy limiting cell phone use during instructional periods will help students remain focused, engaged, and present in their learning. Our goal is to support every student's academic success by reducing a major source of distraction.

We ask that parents and families use the main office to communicate messages to students during the school day. If a student needs to make an emergency call, they may do so through the main office. Likewise, if you need to contact your child during school hours, please call the main office for a message to be relayed to your student.

When a student uses a cell phone or other mobile communication device in an unauthorized manner while at school or under the supervision of a district employee, the student may be subject to disciplinary action, and the device may be temporarily confiscated by a staff member. Confiscated devices will be stored securely and returned to the student or turned over to the principal or designee, as appropriate.

Students may also be subject to disciplinary action for off-campus use of a mobile communication device when such use poses a threat to the safety of students, staff, or district property, or substantially disrupts school activities.

However, students will not be prohibited from possessing or using a mobile communication device in the following circumstances:

- In the case of an emergency or in response to a perceived threat of danger.
- When a licensed physician or surgeon determines that possession or use of the device is necessary for the student's health and well-being.
- When possession or use is required by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or other legally authorized educational plan.

If a cell phone or other electronic device rings, vibrates, is visible, or is used without staff permission during instructional time, the device may be confiscated in accordance with district policy. We appreciate your partnership in helping create a focused learning environment where all students can thrive.

Policy Points

- Cell phones are prohibited from use in classrooms and any other area in which academic work is being done. School-issued devices will be the primary tool for instruction, needing technology/Applications
- Parents can communicate with students by calling the main office or Parent Square

Cell Phone Policy Consequences:*

- **1st Offense:** The student will receive an individual verbal warning from the teacher. The phone will not be confiscated if the student complies with the initial violation.
- **2nd Offense:** A cell phone slip is written, parents are contacted, an Atlas entry is made, and the cell phone or mobile device is held in the school office or REC room until the student picks it up after their last class.
- **3rd Offense:** A cell phone slip is written, parents contacted, and an Atlas entry; the cell phone or mobile device is held in the school office until a parent/guardian picks it up.**

Chronic Violations: A parent meeting will be held with an administrator. Students must check in their cell phones each day by the first school bell and pick them up after the last scheduled class for the remainder of the semester.

Students who do not follow teacher directives will be acting in defiance, which could result in disciplinary action

**Confiscated Cell Phones will be arranged to be picked up by parents/guardians and vice principals.

Why this Policy?

- **Mental Health:** Excessive phone use, particularly on social media, has been linked to increased anxiety, depression, and bullying. Declining learning outcomes, as reflected in overall GPA and graduation rates, are also of concern.
- **Academic Focus:** Limiting distractions helps students focus on learning. Students have shared that they appreciate time away from their phones and feel more engaged in school life when phones are put away.
- **Social Connection and Professional Communication Skills:** Students naturally engage more with peers and staff when not tethered to devices, strengthening our school community.
- **College and Career Readiness:** More colleges and testing centers are implementing phone-free policies. Preparing students to succeed in these environments starts now. Additionally, industry partners and employers have expressed concerns and don't allow devices during work hours.

Your Support Matters

- We recognize this is a shift and may require adjustments at home as well. This is a commitment to helping our students thrive.
- Talk to your child about the benefits of disconnecting during the school day.
- Use school communication tools like ParentSquare to stay in touch when needed.

"This policy is subject to revision as necessary, and any changes will be communicated to parents accordingly."

*It should be noted that neither the school nor any of its employees are responsible for the loss or damage to any student's phone or electronic devices, whether in the student's possession or confiscated by the staff. It is the responsibility of the student to adhere to this policy and to always secure his or her belongings. Classes and/or instruction will not be stopped to deal with or search for lost phones/devices.

Sincerely,

Amy Smith