**January 8, 2020**

**Dear Sutton Families,**

**Happy New Year! I hope that you and your loved ones had an amazing Winter Break. I am excited for second semester as our first semester was marked by incredible achievements in academics, athletics, arts and extracurricular activities. Sutton Middle School has demonstrated that we have a diverse and talented student population and an exceptional staff that supports instruction and growth of the middle school learner. None of this would be possible however, without the generosity of our parents and community. I thank you for your engagement and financial support of our PTA that allows us to offer a vast array of experiences for each student.**

**Before the break, I had the opportunity to meet with a variety of stakeholders to discuss our current cell phone policy and protocols. Previously, we allowed cell phone use for instructional purposes; however, now that device distribution is complete, access to technology is no longer an issue. This, along with an increase in inappropriate cell phone use led us to reexamine our cell phone policy within the context of our mission and vision. I gathered input from staff, GO Team, my student advisory council, The Sutton Voice, and the PTA Executive Board. All agreed that student use of cell phones during the school day was unnecessary, and, after careful research and discussion, we revised the policy which will take effect beginning Monday, January 13th.**

**Students will learn all about the new policy and expectations (see reverse) during Social Emotional Learning on January 8. As with any change, I remain open to additional feedback, and we will appropriately address any unforeseen challenges. I do encourage you to read recent research on the interference cell phone and social media use causes for adolescents during the school day and ask that you support us in the implementation of this new policy.**

**We are aware of most of our students who use their cell phones for medical reasons, and they will be provided with a special pass. However, if you have a need for your student and the school is unaware, please contact Dr. Nardiann Mighty at** [Nardiann.mighty@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:Nardiann.mighty@atlanta.k12.ga.us)**. In addition, it is of vital importance that you communicate afternoon plans to students before they leave for school in the morning. We will be unable to communicate transportation changes to students unless it a bona fide emergency.**

**Again, I ask for your support and patience as we truly believe this change will absolutely benefit student achievement at Sutton Middle School. In addition, I am open to feedback and available via email to answer any questions.**

**Sincerely,**

**Gail Johnson**

**Gail Johnson, EdS**

**Principal**

[gail.johnson@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:gail.johnson@atlanta.k12.ga.us)

**Sutton Middle School Revised Cell Phone Policy**

**Atlanta Public Schools Board Policy JCDAF prohibits the use of cell phones and personal portable electronic devices during the school day, except as directed by authorized APS employees. As such the following protocols will be instituted beginning, Monday, January 13, 2020:**

* Unless used for documented medical reasons, the sight, sound or use of cell phones is forbidden for ALL students at ALL times during the school day. The day begins upon entering the building and includes, but not limited to lunch periods, class changes, and any other structured or unstructured instructional activity that occurs.
* Devices must be stored in lockers upon arrival to school.
* Students are allowed to use their cell phones, as permitted, during after school activities, clubs, and/or sports.
* Cell phones may not be retrieved from lockers for use during the school day.
* In the event a student needs to make a phone call, he/she will need to get a pass from their classroom teacher and go the grade level office. Phone calls are only permitted for emergencies.
* If a student is not feeling well he/she may retrieve a pass to the nurse. Students may use the phone in the nurse’s office to call home.

**Actions & Disciplinary Consequences**

If a student is found in possession of a cell phone either by sight, sound or use:

* The device will be collected by the staff member, labeled with the student’s name, and the staff member will contact the parent/guardian that same day. Students will not be permitted to use a phone to call a parent to let them know his or her phone was confiscated.
* Parent/Guardian may retrieve the phone from the front office beginning the **following** school day between the hours of 4:30 pm - 5:00 pm. This allows time for the staff member to turn the phone into administration and have available for retrieval.
* Identification will be required to retrieve the cell phone and the adult retrieving it must be an authorized contact in Infinite Campus/Parent Portal.
* Confiscation and parent retrieval will occur any time a cell phone is taken from a student.
* If a student refuses to turn their phone in upon request to a staff member, an administrative referral for insubordination will occur which will result in additional consequences. (See student handbook)