

The WHY

High school students struggle with high levels of distraction and misuse of smartphones and social media. Research shows an overall negative impact on student learning and mental health when cell phones are in use in the classroom. Furthermore, conflicts, bullying, and harassment issues between students during the school day can often be traced directly or indirectly to phone use.

Carver STEAM will continue to implement the policy that classrooms are No Phone Zones. In addition to cell phones, **personal electronic devices such as tablets, wireless earbuds, and headphones are not allowed in the classroom.**

This policy, which limits the presence and use of cell phones during the school day, is supported by current research about healthy use of phones, makes our school community safer, and helps students focus on the reasons we're at school: to learn, to build relationships with others, and to be fully present members of our school community.

The HOW

- 1) **Continuing our classroom entry procedures from last year, cell phones will be collected by teachers.** During class, students may NOT use their phones for calculators, to check the time, music, to read a book, to check grades, or for any other reason. If there is a medical reason to use a cell phone, that will be allowed per a 504 or health plan.
- 2) **Tablets, earbuds, and headphones will not be collected but must remain out of sight and out of the ears during learning time.** Earphones that are wired and plugged into the laptop may be used if needed for coursework.
- 3) Phones may only be accessed before and after school, while in the hallway during transitions, and at lunch. Also, if students request to use the restroom during class, cell phones remain in the classroom.

Student and Parent Questions

Can students bring or use phones during trips to the restroom, water fountain, etc.?

No, students must leave their phone behind in class when excused to use the bathroom, get water, etc. If a staff member sees a phone in use in the hallway, restroom, etc. during class time, the phone will be collected and stored in a secure phone locker for the remainder of the day.

What about lunch and transitions?

Phone use during transitions and lunch is permitted. Please use phones responsibly, in ways that follow our community expectations, during lunch and transition times. This includes adhering to the Student Code of Conduct regarding photographing or recording others, cyberbullying, and sending or receiving sexually inappropriate electronic communication.

What if there's an emergency/issue and a student and guardian need to reach each other?

Students may use their phones during passing transitions and at lunchtime. If a student has an emergency, they can tell their teacher that they need to call home, and ask them for a pass to the office, where they can call on an office landline. We can look up phone numbers if a student can't remember them and provide students with a quiet space to talk to their parent/guardian if privacy is needed.

Parents who need to reach their students can do so by calling our Main Office at (404) 802-4400. Office staff will quickly get families in touch with their students.

If it is not an emergency, you can text or email your student, and they will be able to read and respond during passing periods or lunch.

Student Accountability

What happens if I am found using a phone during class?

Any unauthorized use of a cell phone during class will result in confiscation.

- First collection: The cell phone will be collected and the parent contacted. Students may retrieve their phones from the grade level administrator at the end of the day. Cell phones will be stored in a secure phone locker.
- Second collection: The cell phone will be collected and the parent contacted. Students may retrieve their phones from the grade level administrator at the end of the day. Cell phones will be stored in a secure phone locker.
- 3+ collection: Parent contacted. The student will be required to turn in their cell phone to the grade level administrator at the beginning of the day for the length of time specified by the grade level administrator. Cell phones will be stored in a secure phone locker and may be retrieved at the end of the school day.

What if a student refuses to turn over their phone when directed by staff?

If you refuse to store the phone appropriately when asked by staff, the staff member will notify the culture team so that an administrator or culture team member can support you in

getting the phone to an acceptable location and, if necessary, contact your caregiver. If a student refuses an administrator's request, this is considered insubordination and consequences will be given based on the Student Code of Conduct. We strongly encourage students to turn over their phones without argument or debate, if found with it in use, so that it can be addressed straightforwardly and safely secured with the grade level administrator for the remainder of the school day.

Can teachers still allow students to use phones for educational purposes?

Teachers may allow use of phones for educational purposes such as responding to quiz platforms, videoing for a class project, and etc. However, phone use should be rare.

What if a student has a medical condition or an IEP that involves the routine use of a personal device?

If a personal device is part of a medical response/management plan or an IEP, that will be permitted. However, if a student with such an exception is found to be abusing access to their personal device, a parent conference or team meeting will be scheduled to examine other options or to develop a clear agreement about phone use to prevent further misuse.

What if I disagree with the phone policy?

We understand that not all parents and students will agree with this policy but we are committed to limiting cell phone distractions in the classroom so all students can focus on learning. Cell phones only become a concern if they are seen or heard in the classroom. Please speak with your scholar about following our policy. Scholars who follow the policy will have access to their cell phones during transitions and lunchtime. If you anticipate your scholar will not be able to adhere to the policy, we recommend keeping cell phones at home.

Final Disclaimer:

APS Policy states that schools are not responsible for the lost, theft, or damage of cell phones.