

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope this message finds you well. We are writing to inform you about the New York City Public School's policy regarding the use of cell phones in schools, and to explain why our school, in alignment with district and city guidelines, does not permit students to bring or use cell phones during school hours.

Why Cell Phones Are Not Allowed:

The NYCDOE has established this policy with the well-being and academic success of our students in mind. While cell phones have many positive uses in our daily lives, research has shown that when used in school settings, phones can significantly distract students from their learning and disrupt the school environment. Our school's primary focus is to provide an environment where students can engage deeply with their studies, collaborate with peers, and participate fully in all aspects of school life. The presence of cell phones has been shown to undermine these goals.

Research and Statistics on the Impact of Cell Phones in Schools:

1. **Increased Distractions:**

According to a study by the *Pew Research Center*, 75% of teachers report that students' use of smartphones during class has a negative impact on their learning. Students who have access to their phones are more likely to become distracted, which detracts from their ability to focus and retain information.

2. **Decreased Academic Performance:**

Research from the *Journal of Educational Psychology* found that students who use their phones during class score significantly lower on tests and assignments. Specifically, students who engage with their phones are 20% less likely to retain information compared to those who are not distracted by technology.

3. **Mental Health Concerns:**

Studies have shown that cell phone use among students is linked to an increase in anxiety and stress. A study by *Common Sense Media* found that 50% of teens feel addicted to their phones, and overuse is associated with higher levels of anxiety and poor sleep quality, both of which can impact students' well-being and their ability to perform academically.

4. **Social and Behavioral Effects:**

Furthermore, a study published in *Computers in Human Behavior* found that students who frequently use their phones for social media during school hours tend to have lower social interactions and struggle more with face to face communication. Limiting phone access helps foster stronger interpersonal skills and a more focused school culture.

Our Solution:

Each day, beginning at 8:20am, Design Works High School students will turn in their phones, watches, iPads or any other internet enabled device before entering the building for breakfast and first period.

Students entering late will be asked to turn in their devices to school staff before heading to class also. Parents of any student refusing to turn in a phone, or claiming not to have a phone, will be contacted before the student enters the building. When asked to hand in their phone, “I did not bring it today” will not be an acceptable answer. Refusal to comply or the use of a second or “burner” phone may result in loss of campus privileges, parent conferences or further consequences.

We understand that cell phones can be important for communication before and after school hours. To accommodate this, students will be given their phones directly after the last bell at 2:45pm, so that they can contact parents while traveling home. Students can find the same staff members in the same place in the front of the school when they are ready to pick up their devices in the afternoon. Should there be any emergencies or special needs during the school day, our staff is always available via [JupiterGrades](#) to assist with communication to students. Design Works High School will use the same communication system, JupiterGrades, to communicate with families in the event of an emergency. Families can contact the following staff members for any concerns, whether related to internet enabled devices or otherwise:

- Ms Patterson, school secretary: **spatterson5@schools.nyc.gov**
- Ms Cueva, Parent Coordinator: **pcueva@schools.nyc.gov**

Additionally, we encourage parents to contact the school directly for any urgent matters during the day via phone or JupiterGrades. Students being dismissed early from school can obtain their devices from the main office while signing out.

Our goal is to create an environment where all students can succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. By limiting distractions and encouraging face to face engagement, we are helping students focus on their education and fostering a sense of community. We appreciate your understanding and support of this policy. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to the school administration.

Thank you for your cooperation and for helping us create the best possible learning environment for all students.

Warm regards,



C. Hunter
Principal, Design Works High School

Student Name: _____
Student Signature: _____
Parent Signature: _____