

2023-2024 Osceola School District Student Cell Phone Procedures

Frequently Asked Questions:

State of Florida House Bill 379 states that "a student may not use a wireless communications device during instructional time, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes. A teacher shall designate an area for wireless communications devices during instructional time."

Q: Can Osceola students have cell phones on school campuses?

A: Yes. Osceola School Board Policy 8.63 states, "A student may possess a wireless communication or electronic device such as a personal digital assistant (PDA), laptop computer, notebook, tablet, or smart phone, in school, on school property, at after school activities, and at school related functions under specified conditions."

Q: My student's coach/club sponsor uses Remind to communicate with my child regarding after-school practices or rehearsals. How will they contact my child during the day?

A: Coaches and club sponsors should use SDOC email during the school day to communicate with their students.

Q: What do students do with their cell phones or electronic devices when they are not in use?

A: Cell phones, wireless communication or other electronic devices must remain powered down, silenced, and stored out of sight during school hours unless permitted for academic purposes and on school vehicles.

Q: Can cell phones be used on campus when students are not in class?

A: According to the district's Code of Student Conduct, the cell phone or device may only be used by a student before (providing the conversation is terminated before the commencement of school) and after regular school hours. Lunch time is considered as school hours. The principal may require the device to be registered with the school prior to allowing students to use them in the manner described above.

Q: Can students use earbuds or headphones on the school campuses?

A: Earbuds and headphones are not permitted during the school day, unless part of an academic assignment. Listening to music while completing assignments is not considered part of an academic assignment.



2023-2024 Osceola School District Student Cell Phone Procedures (continued) Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What consequences will be given to those students who don't comply?

A: Discipline will be given according to the District's Code of Student Conduct. Confiscation of the device through the end of the day will take place for the first infraction. Continued infractions will require parent pick up of the device and include additional consequences for the student. Schools will conference with parents of students who habitually violate the policy.

Q: Will students receive a discipline referral for violation of the SDOC student cell phone policy?

A: Students who comply with consequences, turning over their phone once an infraction occurs, will not be issued a discipline referral. Refusal to turn in a device for confiscation, or deliberately misleading a school administrator by turning over a prop phone once a violation has occurred, will be treated as insubordination and subject to discipline and a written referral.

Q: Are there any exceptions to the School Board policy governing the enforcement of student cell phone usage?

A: Yes, the following exceptions are allowable given the parameters outlined in HB 379, Board Policy 8.63, and the SDOC Code of Student Conduct:

- Teachers may permit student use of wireless connection devices for academic purposes specifically within the lesson plan that the district-issued device cannot accomplish.
- Students who use an application on their cell phone to monitor medical conditions may use their personal device to do so, as prescribed, with school administration notification and notated previously in FOCUS.
- It is understood that during school-wide emergencies (not drills), such as lockdowns, the cell phone policy will not be enforced.

Q: What if parents need to contact their child during the school day?

A: Parents needing to contact their child will do so through the school's main office. Students may use SDOC classroom telephones or school office telephones to communicate with their parent. In case of emergency requiring parent contact, the office will dispatch staff to bring student to an area to receive a call from their parent. If it's not an emergency, school personnel will relay the message to the student. A parent reserves the right to not share the subject matter of the call no matter if its an emergency or not. Parents are reminded that the first hour of the school day and the last hour of the school day are high traffic times in school offices.

Q: Are there any exceptions for student use of cell phones on days before school breaks or student holidays?

A: Because standardized testing prohibits the use of cell phones and the expectation of having high-quality instruction delivered every day, there is no exception for days before breaks.

Still have questions? We are here to help!

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