

# Cell phones and electronics

As with many things, cell phones and electronic devices can simultaneously be helps and hindrances. Committing to wise uses, according to community needs, is an exercise in obedience and self-discipline.

*He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much;  
and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. Luke 16:10*

## **Purposes: relating to electronics to promote community and character**

Cell phones and electronic devices can be helpful for communicating and connecting, but they can just as easily be distracting and divisive. They distract the group and isolate the user, and neither result benefits learning.

Today's young people have grown up with devices. They can be conditioned – addicted? -- to device use. LPA focuses upon human interaction, a very different orientation than other education forms, and the ministry's core value of "community" seeks to redeem a humanity-honoring educational discourse through face-to-face interaction between teachers, students, and parents. To achieve uninterrupted human connection, disruptions must be minimized. Communications use is therefore prohibited during class times. This means a student is required to "fast" from electronic and communication devices for the reasonable period of 2-4 hours. Despite what students say or believe, they can endure -- and even greatly benefit -- from this short deprivation. Parent support is vital, since much text and cell communication is between parents and students. (see essay, Unplugged?)

## **Important character principles exercised**

- Focus: To focus on the people right in front of someone, it's important to block out the other distractions. (Lk 10:41-42)
- Patience: Messages and missed calls will wait. They're recorded. People do not need to be available 24/7.
- Self-control: "E-fasting" disciplines the will in voluntary denial of a "good," for a finite time, in order to grow (Mt. 6:16-17)
- Being above reproach: Since devices in can be used for cheating, a student should guard himself.
- Obedience: Overcoming habit and temptation requires prayer, purpose, and diligence.

## **Usage policies: Cell phones and electronics are highly limited**

For this policy, a "cell phone" refers to any personal communication device, including smart phones, smart watches, and pagers. An "electronic device" refers to the host of computers, tablets, mp3's, e-readers, games, etc., many of which have cell and wi-fi capabilities. Cell phone and device use on campus is a privilege and not a right. Students are to use devices respectfully, in a way that communicates gratitude for the privilege, along with a demonstrated appreciation for the opportunity of community.

### **Cell phone use**

A student may possess a cell phone on campus by meeting the following conditions:

- Students are allowed to use cell phones during three times:
  1. Before the start of first period (e.g., mom, I arrived safely)
  2. During lunch time (limited) (e.g., dad are you the one picking me up today?)
  3. After their final class period (e.g. mom, I'm finished with classes now?)
- Students are not allowed to use a cell phone during any other times during the school day, including connection assembly, breaks between classes, etc. without the expressed in-the-moment permission of an admin staff member.

During non-allowed times (class periods, class changes, etc.), student cell phones must be:

- Turned completely OFF – not merely on vibrate or silent mode.
- Stowed in a book bag. It is not allowed in a purse on campus, since those enter bathrooms.
- Not carried in a pocket, holster, or elsewhere on the student's person where there might be access to use.

### **Locations for cell phone and communications use**

- Cell phone use is limited to designated campus public areas, which are monitored.
  - 1) Main building lobby.

- 2) The area immediately outside of the two buildings' glass entrance doors.
- Cell phones are specifically prohibited from use in restrooms and classrooms at any time.

### **Land line phone use during the school day**

- Parents needing to reach a student during class times should telephone the school office. A message will be delivered to the student during the next break, unless the administrative team deems the message's urgency necessary to interrupt the class.
- Students are NOT allowed to leave class to use the school phone except in an emergency, as determined by faculty and staff. Thus if a student needs to call home, he or she must call before or after class (e.g., forgot lunch).
- During class breaks (times of cell phone prohibition), lunch, and before and after school, students may use the school phone, based upon availability. Students remain responsible for on-time arrival to class.

### **Use of electronic devices**

Computers, tablets, i-pods, etc. are only allowed for academic use and other approved uses, such as clubs or other activities. In all cases, the intent that they are used and enjoyed in both wholesomeness and community. Since the desire for students is to connect to others in relationship, these devices should be used as a way to include others, and not to exclude them. For this reason, MP3 players and other devices should not be used with ear buds or headphones, since they cover the ears and communicate, "I'm not listening."

Gaming devices may not be used on campus during school hours without direct permission of a staff member.

### **Special uses and circumstances:**

- While cell phones and devices contain useful tools and applications (calculator, calendar, Bible reader etc.), this is not an excuse for having the device out during unauthorized times. Students should make provision for alternate tools.
- Teachers are granted latitude to interpret the electronics policy in light of their specific class needs. The teacher's direction in the classroom may therefore override other limitations, according to the spirit of the policy, which seeks to maximize human interaction and to minimize distractions from it. At the discretion and specific directions of the instructor or staff member, students may be allowed to use their cell phones or e-devices in special cases, such as to use the camera capabilities to capture a class activity or lab.
- Consequently, a teacher or staff member may require students to not use their cell phones at a time when they might ordinarily be used. The direct instructions of the supervising staff member shall be followed.
- For emphasis, although redundant, students are warned that all messaging during class is strictly forbidden.
- Because most cell phones and devices have camera and video capabilities, devices are expressly forbidden in restrooms, locker room, and dressing areas, whether or not those capabilities are used.
- A student in good conduct standing may apply for written administration variance permission to use a device for a one-time or reoccurring specific academic or student life purpose.

### **Study hall device usage**

At the discretion of the staff monitor, students in study hall may be extended the privilege of the following uses:

1. Mp3-style devices (with ear phones) may be used to cancel surrounding noise for better concentration.
2. Laptops, tablets, and e-readers may be used for academic work. Any other non-academic uses, including communication, social media, e-mail, games, etc., are not allowed.

### **Audio, video, image, and text content**

It is the parent's responsibility to oversee the content on a student's electronic and communication devices. The expectation is that any content on a student's device would represent a student's desire to pursue godliness, according to Philippians 4:8-9 and other Scriptural admonitions of holiness, beauty, and wholesomeness. When questionable content is observed, especially when a student shares content directly or indirectly with other students -- then the matter becomes the school's business. LPA reserves the right to examine content on any device brought to campus.

### Audio and image recording

Nearly every electronic device now seems to have audio, photo, and/or video recording features. This versatile capability must be handled with careful discretion. As the saying goes, "Just because you can doesn't mean you should." The following policies govern any recording of LPA activities both on and off campus, including audio and photographs, video or other images.

- All recordings are expected to be used for wholesome purposes and to support LPA's stated mission, including the encouragement of others, which would include portraying them in a positive light.
- No recording is allowed in any class session without the expressed permission of the teacher of record.
- No recording is allowed of any one-on-one or small group conversation or activity without the expressed permission of all parties involved.
- Students desiring to record broader, more common events should seek permission of the leader. It is rude to record a speaker / presenter without first asking permission.
- Cell phones and electronic devices with camera and video capabilities are expressly forbidden from being carried into restrooms, locker room, and dressing areas, whether or not those capabilities are used.

### Consequences violation of cell phone or electronic device policy

Staff may use discernment to issue a warning, in unusual situations. This will be recorded. Correction is expected.

1. First offense: The device will be confiscated and held at the school office until the student's time on campus for the day is complete. It is up to the student to politely request its return at that time. The offense will be recorded. An administrative team member may choose to discuss the issue with the student. Parents will be notified.
2. Second offense: The device will be confiscated as above and held until the student's parent/guardian chooses to pick it up at his/her convenience. The student will meet with an administrative team member to discuss the issue. Parents will be notified of the consequences and, depending upon the situation, an administrative team member may choose to discuss the issue with the parent.
3. Third offense: The device will be confiscated as above and held until the student's parent/guardian chooses to pick it up at his/her convenience. The student loses his or her cell phone privileges for the rest of the school year. Parents will be notified and an administrative team member will meet with the student and parent to discuss the trend of disobedience and to explain the consequences. Suspension from classes shall be considered.
4. Further violation: If the student without privileges is found in possession of a communications device on campus, the device will be confiscated as above and held until the student's parent/guardian chooses to pick it up at his/her convenience. The student will be suspended indefinitely, pending a meeting with parents and student and a review to determine if the student should be allowed to return to classes.
5. Because of the serious implications involved, students found to possess an activated recording device will be automatically reviewed for suspension.

Activated" means the device is turned "on" or in "airplane" mode and/or is operable

A recording device is any device that includes the capability of photography, audio, and/or video.

