



TMS Essentials: *Cell Phones and “Smart” Devices*

Hello TMS Parents/Guardians and Students!

With the start of a new school year, we would like to inform and/or remind you of our “Away for the Day” policy regarding cell phones and other “smart” devices. While we recognize that these devices have become an integral means of communication, they also disrupt instruction, distract students and provide a multitude of opportunities for their inappropriate use including violations of privacy, cheating, and bullying. And in the event of an emergency, experts advise that cell phones can actually make students *less* safe.

TMS “Away for the Day” policy requires that all students turn off their cell phones and put them in their lockers prior to the start of the school day, and keep them in their lockers until after dismissal.

As outlined in the student handbook, and discussed with all students, failure to follow this policy will result in the student’s phone being confiscated. The student may pick up his/her phone at the end of the school day and detention will be assigned. A second violation will result in detentions and “digital day care” and **will require that a parent pick up the phone from school. Please also note that possession of phones, smartwatches and other digital devices in bathrooms and locker rooms is strictly prohibited and will result in more significant consequences.**

Please be assured that any student who needs to reach a parent/guardian during the school day may use the student phone in the main office at any time. Similarly, if you have an urgent need to reach your child, please phone the main office and we will call him/her from class.

Studies have shown that just knowing they have their phones on or near them is distracting to many students. Other studies have shown that it may take a student up to 10 minutes to re-engage after a cell phone pings an alert or notification. As adults, it is challenging for many of *us* to resist checking our phones. For our middle school students, whose brains are not yet fully developed, the temptation is just too great. Our goal is provide students an optimal environment for academic, social, and emotional learning through face-to-face interaction and engagement with minimum distractions.

We greatly appreciate your support in maintaining an optimal learning environment at TMS (so please don’t text your children during the school day ☺).

Sincerely,

John D. Fabbo
Principal

Daryl L. George
Vice Principal

Miriam d’Adolf
TMS Student Supervisor

Cell Phones and “Smart” Devices – Checklist:

- Cell phones and any other “smart” devices must be turned off prior to the start of homeroom.
- Cell phones and any other “smart” devices must be kept in a student’s locker – not in clothing pockets or bags.
- If a student needs to make an emergency call during the day, he/she is to come to the main office and use the student phone.
- If a student is not feeling well during the school day, he/she is to come to the Health Office. The nurse will contact home as needed.
- Cell phones and any other “smart” devices may not be accessed in a classroom, library, common area, or restroom during the school day.
- Cell phones and any other “smart” devices may not be accessed during lunch, recess, study hall, transition times or between classes.
- Cell phones and any other “smart” devices can be turned back on after the dismissal bell to communicate directly with parents/friends.