

ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC SCHOOL
CELL PHONE AND PERSONAL DEVICE POLICY
Updated 8.2025

Our personal electronic device policy reflects our commitment to creating an environment where students can develop to their fullest God given potential, spiritually, intellectually, morally, socially, and physically. Research shows that student use of cell phones in schools has negative effects on student performance and mental health. We strongly believe that cell phones distract students from classroom instruction, resulting in smaller learning gains and lower test scores. Increased cell phone use has led to higher levels of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders in children.

The administration discourages students from bringing phones and personal devices to school, but we realize it is a necessity for some. Middle school students who bring a device to school will be required to keep it **powered off and secured** in a **locked cabinet** in the student's homeroom from arrival until dismissal. Elementary students must keep personal devices powered off and in their backpacks.

PERSONAL DEVICE DEFINED

Personal devices include, but are not limited to, the following: cell phones of any kind, Smartwatches, headphones or earbuds, personal (not school-issued) laptops, and any non-school issued personal technology.

PERSONAL DEVICE POLICY

Middle school students will keep their cell phones or devices in a locked cabinet in their homeroom or they may leave devices at home. Backpacks, lockers or pockets ARE NOT an acceptable storage location. Random searches of student backpacks, lunchboxes, lockers, and pockets will be conducted (see the **Right to Search** policy in the school handbook).

FIELD TRIPS

Students are not allowed to take their phones or other devices on field trips. Parent drivers are required to enforce this rule in their car. Failure to comply with this rule will result in loss of chaperone/driver privileges for that parent for the remainder of the year. This applies to the children in the car with their parents.

DISCIPLINE

If a student violates this policy, a teacher or administrator shall take the following progressively serious disciplinary measures:

1st Offense: The phone/device will be confiscated, and a \$50 fine will be charged. The phone/device will need to be picked up at the school office by a parent.

2nd Offense: The phone/device will be confiscated, and another \$50 fine will be charged. The phone/device will need to be picked up at the school office by a parent.

The student will receive a one-day suspension.

3rd Offense: The phone/device will be confiscated, and a \$100 fine will be charged. The phone/device will need to be picked up at the school office by a parent.

The student will receive a three-day suspension. For the remainder of the school year, the student will not be allowed to bring his/her phone to school.

PARENT-SCHOOL AGREEMENT

A parent or legal guardian of each student will complete an [online form](#) indicating the following question:

___ *My child does not have a cell phone.*

___ *My child will not be bringing his/her phone to school this year.*

___ *My child might bring his/her phone to school occasionally. I understand it will remain in a locked box from 8:00-3:00. If my child breaks this rule, I understand and support the consequences listed in the Cell Phone and Personal Device Policy.*

___ *My child will be bringing his/her phone to school on a regular basis. I understand it will remain in a locked box from 8:00-3:00. If my child breaks this rule, I understand and support the consequences listed in the Cell Phone and Personal Device Policy.*

PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATION

As always, parents of middle school and elementary school students may contact the school office via phone or email to get a message to a child. Likewise, if a student needs to contact a parent, he/she may do so via the classroom or office phone with adult permission. Every classroom is equipped with a landline phone extension.

Students and parents **may not use email** to communicate during the school day. Students are allowed to use only their school issued email account during the school day, and only to communicate with members of the school network (faculty, staff, students).

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

- News story on CBS:
<https://youtu.be/eeyGeT0mIDc?si=zp21bpPEExAQYcKB>
- Digital Distractions: The Case for Phone-Free Schools
<https://www.youtube.com/live/5BTg5sl0iO0?t=1s>
- Article in Atlantic:
https://www.aderbabel.com/p/phone-free-schools?r=182klo&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=email
- Wall Street Journal Article:
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/can-we-save-our-children-from-smartphones-03eaf449>

- Books:
 - *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt
 - *Glow Kids: How Screen Addiction is Hijacking Our Kids and How to Break the Trance* by Nicholas Kardaras PhD.
 - *Digital Madness: How Social Media is Driving Our Mental Health Crisis and How to Restore our Sanity* by Nicholas Kardaras PhD.
 - *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in its Proper Place* by Andy Crouch
 - *Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked* by Adam Alter.