



Carmel Clay Schools

Frequently Asked Questions: Student Cellular Device Expectations

Per new board policy 4210 (based upon new legislation), students will not be permitted to use personal devices during the school day. This policy applies only to the school day and does not prohibit device use before or after the school day. During the school day, student personal devices must be stored away, powered off, and inaccessible to the students. Though cellular devices are not prohibited from staff, we ask staff to please model appropriate and limited use.

This FAQ is intended to help you understand the law and to understand how staff who interact/supervise students can consistently enforce this expectation while maintaining positive relationships with students and avoiding unnecessary confrontations.

What is the expectation for enforcement?

Our goal is compliance, not confrontation.

Staff should focus on:

- Preventing use of devices during the school day
- Redirecting students calmly and consistently
- Maintaining instructional time and positive relationships
- Avoiding escalated interactions over possession checks

What should I do if I see a student using a phone?

Use a calm, direct redirection such as:

- "Please put your phone away."
- "Remember, phones should not be out during the school day."
- "Please place the device in the designated location."
- If a student continues to use the device, confiscate the device.
 - When confiscating a device, tell the student to place the device on a desk/table, etc.
 - Do not physically remove the device from the student's person. Remove it only after the student has placed it on another surface such as a desk or table.
 - If a student refuses, contact administration.

What if I suspect a student has a phone?

Possession alone is not the focus. The expectation is that phones are not being used during the school day. If a device is not in sight, is not being used, and is not creating a disruption, staff should not aggressively investigate whether a student may have a cellular device.

Am I expected to search students for phones?

NO!

Enforcement should be based on observable use or visible possession, not investigative searches.

Staff should NOT:

- Physically search students
- Ask students to empty pockets
- Pat down students
- Demand to inspect personal belongings without administrative involvement

- Physically check wrists or sleeves for smartwatches

What about smartwatches?

Staff are not expected to inspect students' wrists or determine whether every watch is a cellular device. If a smartwatch is visibly being used, redirect the student just as you would with a phone.

If use is not disruptive to class, staff should not physically inspect or challenge students over the device.

Confiscating the device

If the student continues to use the device after redirection, ask them to place the device on your desk. Place the device in a secure location. If the device case is also a wallet (as seen frequently with phone cases), allow the student to remove all items from the wallet before securing the phone.

DO NOT access the contents of the phone, read messages, or look through photos/apps.

Return the phone to the student at the end of class and make a referral to administration when necessary.

Special Circumstances

What if a student says they need their phone to communicate with family?

Parents have been instructed to contact the main school office if an urgent message needs to reach a student during the school day. Likewise, if a student has an urgent need to contact home, they should request permission to use an office phone.

What about students with medical or educational accommodations?

Some students may have approved accommodations through an IEP, Section 504 Plan, individualized health plan (e.g., monitoring blood sugar), or other formal administrative authorizations. Staff can review in powerschool those students in their classrooms who have approved exceptions to this policy.

Summary for staff

We are aiming for:

- Consistency
- Calm redirection
- Reasonable enforcement
- Reduced classroom distractions
- Positive student interactions

We are NOT asking staff to:

- Conduct searches
- Physically inspect students
- Engage in confrontational enforcement
- Turn every suspicion into an investigation

Thank you for helping create a focused learning environment while maintaining respectful and appropriate interactions with students.