



NEWELL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

# CELL PHONE POLICY

2024/25

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# Newell Christian School Cell Phone Policy

(subject to change as this is an evolving policy)

Newell Christian School recognizes that technology has become essential for students of all ages to be introduced to it as well as trained in its benefits simultaneously with its disadvantages and dangers. Along with this comes the heavy responsibility of teaching students to use it as a tool to achieve the goal of enhancing understanding and achieving the age/developmentally appropriate learning outcomes set out by the province of Alberta while warning them that we are not to be controlled by anything but rather we are to be self-controlled.

*2 Peter 1:5 – “Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness.” (Proverbs 2, Romans 12:2)*

## **Definitions**

Personal Mobile Device - includes but is not limited to any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate with or access the internet such as: cell phone; tablet; laptop; Chromebook; smartwatch; gaming device (including electronic toys).

Instructional Time - refers to the time allocated in the school day or school year specifically dedicated to delivering planned educational programs and activities; this includes guest or visitor presentations. This time is focused on teaching students the prescribed curriculum and achieving learning outcomes set by Alberta Education. It typically excludes breaks, recess, lunchtime, and other non-instructional activities.

Social media - refers to digital platforms and tools that enable users to create, share, and interact with content and information online. These platforms include but are not limited to Facebook, X, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok.

**Student use of cell phones, personal devices, or other electronic devices during the school day is a privilege.** Adherence to the guidelines below is essential to maintaining an appropriate academic environment and the integrity of the classroom.

**Abuse of this privilege will result in consequences such as, but not limited to** confiscation of the device, call to parents, suspension or loss of other privileges such as participation in school trips or activities, sports teams, extra-curricular activities and potentially graduation exercises.

## **1. Restrictions on Personal Mobile Devices and Social Media:**

- a. If a locker has been assigned to you, your phone should be powered off and stored in your locker.

- i. If the student does not have a locker, then the cell phone should be powered off and stored in the student's backpack.
- b. No cell phones are to be used during instructional time (class time: this includes gym, field trips or any time that is spent in the classroom during school hours)
- c. No personal use airpods or headphones are to be used during class.
- d. No smart watches are to be used during class for messaging or apps
- e. Cell phones are not to be charged during school hours in the building.
- f. If in non-instructional time (recess, lunch, etc.), cell phones must be on silent mode.
- g. No social media is to be accessed during the school day.
- h. If a student is found to be leaving the classroom during instructional time to go use their cell phone, immediate consequences will occur.
- i. These devices are not to be used in settings such as change rooms, washrooms, or private counseling rooms that have the potential to violate a person's reasonable expectation of privacy.
- j. cell phone use is not permitted during school provided bussing with the exception of parental communication.

## **2. Information Dissemination:**

- A. All classrooms will address the policy during class time once per school year.
- B. This must also be communicated home to parents via an email once per school year.
- C. The document will be posted on our website.
- D. The policy will also be addressed during a school assembly once per school year.

## **3. Progressive Consequences:**

### **A. After school wide assemblies in September, the policy will go into place.**

- 1. The phone must be powered off and in their assigned locker OR backpack if no assigned locker.

**B. First Offense:** The cell phone will be powered off and put away and the student will be sent to the principal. An email will be sent home to parents notifying them of the infraction and then the future consequence of a subsequent suspension. Log entry will be made by the principal. If immediate cooperation does not occur, other consequences will be put in place.

**C. Second Offense** (Automatic one (1) day Suspension following the infraction) If a student refuses to follow the rules listed above, consequences will be immediate.

- 1. Under the Alberta Education Act, Section 31, students are expected to:

(f) comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the board

- (g) cooperate with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services
- (h) be accountable to the student's teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct

**Substitute teachers:**

- a. Any infractions in the presence of a substitute teacher will be handled by an administrator. Students will be asked to report directly to the office.

**4. Exceptions to these guidelines will be made for students who may have Medical Management Plans (MMPs)** and require their phones for medical reasons. This will be completed and notified through the Principal with a parent meeting.

1. Personal mobile devices must be permitted, as determined by a principal, for health or medical reasons or to support special learning needs with this allowance documented in a signed IPP.

Contacting your Child in an Emergency- If you need to get a message to your child during the school day, please contact the office by email (monitored throughout the day) or phone (403-378-4448).

We know this transition will be challenging for many youth (as well as many adults) who may be experiencing an addiction to technology. We are committed to educating and working with students and families as we explore topics related to technology and social media as well as any anxiety that students may have with this new policy.

**We hope to:**

1. Promote Digital Literacy: Educate students about the potential risks and benefits of technology and social media. This includes understanding online privacy, recognizing misinformation, and practicing safe online behavior.

2. Encourage Open Communication: Foster an environment where children feel comfortable discussing their online experiences. Regular check-ins can help identify any issues early and provide support as needed.

3. Model Healthy Behavior: Demonstrate balanced tech use in our own lives. Kids often mimic the behavior they see, so setting a good example can have a positive impact.