

# Why cell phones should not be allowed in a school setting

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In this modern world everyone has a cellphone. By 2010 seventy-five percent of twelve to seventeen year olds owned mobile phones and in the past two years that number has increased (Ludden). Recently, the use of cell phones for cheating on tests, a new method of passing notes, and even cyber bullying have become major issues. Brevard County already has strict policies regarding phone use in schools, if caught with a cell phone students get a referral, their phone is confiscated, and after repeat offenses they can lose their phone privileges (Student/Parent Contract).

But are these rules strict enough? If fifty-four percent of students admit to using phones in schools where similar rules are in place, they obviously are not (Ludden). For the good of the students cellphones need to be banned from schools. What would you rather go a week without; your cellphone or your toothbrush? Forty percent of iPhone users answered toothbrush to this question (Ludden). As a society we are addicted to our cell phones and students are by far the worst offenders sending more texts a day than any other age group, an average of three hundred and thirty-three per month in 2010 (Watters). When the dismissal bell rings at just about any school you are sure to witness dozens of students whipping out their phones almost instantaneously. " If you can't go six hours without your phone, you're addicted," says Diane Phillips, 2011's Brevard County Teacher of the Year, at the 2011-2012 Brevard Future Educators conference when speaking about the distractions of phones while studying (Phillips).

It would be beneficial not only to the education of students but to their health as well to separate them from their phones for the time that they are at school. A study by Gaby Badre shows that teenagers who use their phones  
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constantly often experience “ increased restlessness with more careless lifestyles, more consumption of stimulating beverages, difficulty in falling asleep and disruptive sleep, and more susceptibility to stress and fatigue.” (Excessive Mobile Phone Use Affects Sleep) Many people who use cell phones too much also experience headaches and even a phantom ringing sound distracting them and keeping them awake at night. (Braff) Health effects aside, it is well know that texting in class has become a growing epidemic. When students are allowed to have their phones with them in class, many will take this as an opportunity to use them. This leads to disruptions in class, bullying, and even cheating on tests.

(Cohen) There has also been some discussion on whether texting effects spelling and writing in the classroom setting. If students are texting in class, “ computer talk” can affect their grades. In a survey on edutopia, fifty-four percent of people found that texting was having an effect on the writing habits of young people. (Watters) One of the most common reason that parents like their kids to keep their phones with them at school is so that in the case of an emergency, their kids can call them. However, in an emergency situation, cellphones can sometimes create as many problems as they solve. Phone systems are only designed to take so many signals at once and too many signals can cause the system to crash.

Take the recent earthquake in Virginia for example; as many people hurried to call their friends and family the cell and landline systems were down for up to an hour. For a short time this created mass panic and people thought cell towers and telephone poles were knocked down by the earthquake. In

the case of an emergency like this it could render the school's phone system useless if hundreds of kids start making calls all at once. (Rush) Not only can cell phones escalate emergencies in school they can even cause them, students have been known to call in bomb threats in order to get out of class. Last year Jefferson had a bomb threat, the entire school was evacuated and the hazmat team had to search the school.

All of that started because of a post on Facebook by a disgruntled student who didn't want to go to school that day. If a student has their phone on at school when a classmate or teacher makes them angry they could make a post like this; sending the school into a frantic state of emergency. Although the student would later be expelled for the bomb threat but if phones weren't allowed in the first place cases like this could be prevented, saving valuable class time. Allowing cell phones in school is a danger to the health and education of students.

Banning cell phones is in the best interest of everyone; it will help student's grades, separate them from the negative effects for a few hours, and it helps the school to keep students safe in an emergency, and even prevent bomb threats. Schools have the power to help prevent all of these things cell phones can cause by simply banning them from their campus.