

Cell Phone Policy *** Important *** Please Review

Dear Middle School Parents,

I would like to ask that you review the policy below and reinforce expectations with your middle schooler. We are seeking to establish a school climate where face-to-face interaction is valued and the business of learning is the priority.

"During the school day, from 7:45 a.m. – 3:20 p.m., the school expects our students to be focused on the challenges of their classes and activities. We therefore do not allow use of cellphones during the academic day. Upon arrival at school, students are expected to silence their cell phones and place them in their backpacks/book bags. If a parent needs to communicate an essential message to a student during the academic day, he or she should contact the Middle School office by e-mail (marian_tobia@fa.org) or by phone (516-393-4239) not later than 1:00 p.m. Parents are asked to refrain from texting messages to their children during the school day. If a student is found using their cell phone during the day, it is confiscated and given to the principal and may be picked up at end of day. Students also receive a disciplinary consequence."

I urge parents to become more aware of the research that speaks to the impact cellphone and screen use is having on our youth. Consider the research shared by Dr. Jean Twenge's in her book i-Gen (<http://www.jeantwenge.com/igen-book-by-dr-jean-twenge/>). Inappropriate use or overuse of cellphones and screens can cause significant disruption to a child's social emotional well-being and ability to learn at school. Consider looking into the "Wait until 8th" parent movement (<https://www.waituntil8th.org/>). "The Wait Until 8th pledge empowers parents to rally together to delay giving children a smartphone until at least 8th grade. By banding together, this will decrease the pressure felt by kids and parents alike over the kids having a smartphone." Another excellent parent resource is Common Sense Media (<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>). "Common Sense Media provides independent reviews, age ratings, and other information about all types of media." Please review the sample of a "Cell Phone Contract" that you might consider modifying for use with your family. It is important that your child understands and abides by the boundaries you establish at home. There are many different samples of contracts on-line.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best,

Deb Schoman

MS Principal