



# OKANAGAN MISSION SECONDARY SCHOOL

## *Cell Phone Use and Guiding Principles*

**If...**

we know that cell phones and personal digital devices, while inarguably valuable as tools for communication and connection, have been found through significant and replicated research to be disruptive to the process of learning...

**then...**

it is our responsibility at OKM to promote a healthy, balanced approach to their use during the school day, including setting reasonable classroom limitations and expectations.

**Approach:**

- It is expected that during class time, student devices will be housed in cell phone “hotels” or remain in student’s bags.
- Devices should not be visible on desks or comparable working areas.
- Students may access personal devices as directed/approved by classroom teachers (for learning opportunities or as learning resources).
- Students may access personal devices during breaks and lunches. Cell phone breaks will not be offered or available during class time.
- Students who do not align with school expectations may have their device confiscated by a teacher or staff member; repeated occurrences will result in escalating consequences.
- Parents will not expect their children to contact them during instructional time. Emergency messages may continue to go through the front office.

<b>Our Collective Responsibilities</b>			
<b>Students</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>School</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To adhere to classroom expectations.</li> <li>● To develop personal responsibility regarding cell phone use, including healthy engagement with social media</li> <li>● To be reflective about personal habits and behaviors in regards to cell phones.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To actively promote alignment with school approach.</li> <li>● To provide contextual learning opportunities on this topic, promoting healthy balance of use</li> <li>● To prioritize use of other devices, such as Chromebooks, whenever possible, recognizing that these have not been found to be as disruptive to learning.</li> <li>● To continue to utilize classroom time in meaningful ways without promoting cell phone time as a reward for completion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To support school approach, including not expecting student contact via cell phone/personal devices during class time</li> <li>● To utilize school’s front office for emergency contact as necessary</li> <li>● To promote healthy digital boundaries at home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To provide education to parents and students, including research-based material on this topic</li> <li>● To support classroom teachers in their efforts to maintain productive, engaging learning environments</li> <li>● To hold students accountable for poor decision-making in regards to cell phone use at school</li> <li>● To promote incentives for healthy digital boundaries</li> </ul>

## **Potential Questions:**

### **What about students who use their phones for music purposes?**

*Decisions may be made on an individual basis, according to context. Generally speaking though, the value and intention of separating from phones is a major part of this approach and intervention.*

### **What about phone use in common areas/break-out spaces outside of the classroom?**

*During instruction and work time, no matter the location, unless the phone is being used as a learning tool, as directed by the teacher, then phones should not be visible or in use.*

### **What about parents? How do we get them on board?**

*Parents strongly indicated a desire for an approach that positively impacted learning. The school will need to communicate with them so they understand the philosophy and limits of our guidelines. There will be a learning curve.*

### **Where can I find out more about the research and rationale?**

*The SBRT drive has a folder called “Cell Phone/Screen Time Resources” where articles and resources are housed for staff to access.*

### **What does “promote incentives for healthy digital boundaries” mean?**

*The school can create opportunities to promote student awareness of the value of reducing cell phone use through activities, small and large. Individual teachers can also access funds to incentivize student reduction of device use in the classroom as well.*

### **How will students be held accountable for not aligning with these guidelines?**

*Classroom teachers will be the initial point of contact for infractions and can determine responses that best fit a particular classroom environment. If a student continues to show difficulty aligning with expectations, then the process of referring to the WIN room and behavior support would be next. If there are continued concerns, then these are moved to the student’s administrator.*

***These responses will be in accordance with the “Response to Behaviours” section of the [OKM Code of Conduct](#).***