

Student cell phone access

Student cell phone access and usage in school from the time they enter until the time they leave will be much more limited than in the past.

While we acknowledge there can be positive uses of cell phones, our experience working with youth has shown us that the cons outweigh the pros when it comes to cell phone usage in the school. We want our students' focus to be on what their job was designed to be when coming to school – being a student.

Our two main priorities are school safety and student achievement. The decision to prohibit the use of cell phones at school will help us with each of these priorities. The social- emotional well-being of our students is an important piece of school safety. Research shows that anxiety, addiction, and social avoidance are all issues that increase when adolescents have access to cell phones. Our goal at school is to set our kids up for success, and the social avoidance behaviors and reliance on a cell phone is counterproductive to our goal of equipping our students for the future. Knowing the negative impact cell phones have on our kids has resulted in our decision to update our school-wide procedure.

Secondary students will not be allowed to have cell phones on them (including bags and backpacks) while in class. Furthermore, cell phones will be banned from all restrooms and locker rooms.

Many students can't resist the urge to see what is on their phone during instruction instead of giving their undivided attention to the lesson. Research shows that even when a student isn't viewing their phone, they can be distracted by wondering what they are missing on their phone. Add the amount of time teachers spend redirecting students about cell phone use in class, and it now becomes a constant battle for who will receive attention, the teacher or the cell phone. Here are just a few of the issues we frequently deal with when it comes to student cell phone use: students texting during class; parents texting or calling students during class; students taking pictures or videos of people without permission and posting it on social media; students using devices in the bathroom during class; cyberbullying; students acting like they are doing research for an assignment but are actually doing something else on their phone, and students using cell phones to cheat on assignments and tests.

We understand there are legitimate reasons for a student to have a cell phone. If you have an emergency message for your student, you can call the main office at 303-648-3030. We have staff who can deliver important messages to classrooms. The other option is to text your student, knowing he/she will see the message during passing periods, lunch times and/or at 4:06. We will, of course, allow students with documented medical reasons to carry cell phones as needed. We encourage you to read the "Cell Phone Procedure FAQ" document on our website, www.elbertschool.org, for details and information that explain more about the specifics of this procedure.

We appreciate your support of Elbert being as distraction-free as possible and protecting our learning environment. Our goal is student success. We are confident this change in procedure is a giant step in the right direction based on our research, observations, and everyday interactions with students. Thank you for your continued support of Elbert School.