



Cunard Junior High School

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Subject: Provincial Ministerial Cell Phone and Personal Technology Device Directive

Dear Parents, Students and Families,

We recognize the value of cell phones and personal mobile devices. We are also very much aware of the concerns, such as distractions, taking unsolicited photos/video, playing games, and sending messages to students in other classes. We believe it is our collective duty to ensure students are fully engaged socially, emotionally, and academically throughout the school day. Through our combined efforts, we aim to create an environment where students can thrive in all aspects of their education. We are excited to be able to provide a 1:1 ratio of student to Chromebooks this year so personal devices are not required for learning in the building.

During the 2023-2024 school year, multiple schools took a leading role by implementing a no cell phone and personal technology device policy, transforming the school environment. The results from last year were remarkable, with noticeable increases in student engagement. Students became more emotionally, socially, and academically involved throughout the school day, showing a greater commitment to their learning. Social interactions among students improved significantly, as they engaged more positively and respectfully with one another and with staff. Academically, students experienced a significant boost. Students became more invested in the learning process. Teachers and staff also observed that the policy made them more engaging educators, allowing them to form stronger relationships with their students.

Last spring, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development consulted with school advisory councils and ministerial advisory councils, as well as the Public-School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union on the use of cellphones and personal mobile devices in schools. The team also visited schools, spoke directly with principals and teachers and consulted with IWK public health experts. Responses overwhelmingly supported clear, consistent restrictions on cell phone and personal technology device use throughout the school day. We owe it to our students to do what we can to remove distractions and enable them to be fully present and engaged in the classroom. Students who use devices to monitor blood glucose will continue to be able to monitor throughout the school day.

The new Provincial directive is available online: <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/cellphones>

This year, as directed by the Province, cell phones and personal technology devices (including air pods, etc.) are not to be used during instructional time throughout the school day. This includes during class, during transition times between classes, in lobby's, stairwells, indoor spaces, while at lockers and including washrooms. Cell phones must be away when entering the building. This policy seeks to minimize distractions, allowing students to engage more fully with their studies and peers. Moreover, it empowers educators to deliver uninterrupted lessons and encourages face-to-face interactions, nurturing a sense of community within the school. We believe that this policy not only

supports academic growth but also cultivates valuable life skills, teaching students to manage their screen time and prioritize real-time connections.

Cunard Junior High’s Cell Phone/Personal Mobile Device Expectations

- **Cell phones and Personal mobile devices (air pods, headphones and smart devices) are to be turned off, located in backpacks/cinch bags BEFORE entering the building.**
- **Cell phones and Personal mobile devices (air pods, headphones and smart devices) are to be completely away, turned off, and stored in lockers or cinch bags throughout the day (Grade 7,8). Students are NOT PERMITTED to store personal devices in their pockets, sweaters or clothing.**
- **Students in grades 5 and 6 will turn off and store phones in lockers/locked cabinet for the entire school day including non-instructional time.**
- **Cell phones and Personal mobile devices (air pods, headphones and smart devices) are not permitted in lobby’s, stairwells, hallways, classrooms, gymnasiums, indoor spaces, or bathrooms. The grade 7-8 indoor lunch room during lunch is the only indoor exception.**
- **Pictures and videos are not permitted to be taken at school.**
- **Cell phones and Personal Mobile Devices are only permitted over lunch hour for grade 7 and 8 while in the lunch room and outdoors ONLY. Personal devices are not permitted in hallways, gymnasium, library or bathrooms during the lunch period.**
- **The Code of Conduct will apply to students who do not follow cell phone expectations**

The purpose of these expectations is to minimize distractions and disruptions during learning time. When a student is not following the expectations, the following steps will be taken:

Incident Number	Administrative Action
• 1	Student will be expected to turn phone or personal device into administration to be secured for the remainder of the day and parents/guardians will be notified.
• 2	Student will be expected to turn phone or personal device into administration to be secured, and parents/guardians will be notified. The parent/guardian will be responsible for retrieving the device from the school.
• 3	Student will be expected to turn phone or personal device into administration to be secured, and parents/guardians will be notified. Third violation will be subject to the application of the Provincial Code of Conduct. The parent/guardian will be responsible for retrieving the device from the school.

Students are responsible for respecting the privacy of others and must not make others' personal information or images public. Students are not permitted to take pictures/videos/recordings unless authorized by school staff. The Nova Scotia Provincial School Code of Conduct will be applied to all students who use cell phones or personal mobile devices inappropriately or unexpectedly during the school day. Students are not permitted to answer cell phones during class time, including text messages. Phones must be turned off in accordance with the provincial policy throughout the school day.

Students in Grade 7 and 8 are able to check messages in the lunch room or outdoors at lunch.

If students are feeling unwell, they are expected to come to the office immediately. Together we will develop an immediate plan for notifying parents/guardians. This way students can be monitored to ensure their safety while waiting for a parent/guardian to arrive.

If there is an emergency, we ask you to please contact our main office at 902-479-4418 and press 0. We kindly ask for your support. Cell phones are required to be off during the school day, so please call the main office in lieu of calling or texting your child's cell phones during the school day.

With gratitude,

The Administration and Staff of Cunard Junior High