

Adopted: February 25, 2016

507 CELL PHONE POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to address student cell phone use during school hours.

II. OVERVIEW

Kato Public Charter School recognizes that there are valid reasons for students to have cell phones. However, throughout the course of the school day, especially during direct instruction or academic time, cell phones serve limited purposes and can cause unnecessary and unwanted distractions. Such distractions not only may hinder student progress on academic subject matter, but also may make it difficult for others to focus on the subject matter at hand.

III. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. Possession of cell phones by students at school is a privilege that may be forfeited through willful disregard to school policy. As an academic institution, Kato Public Charter School recognizes that part of our mission is to prepare our students for life after graduation. This mission includes promoting responsible citizenship, providing opportunity for students to make appropriate choices, and advocating self-restraint. It is with this mission in mind that we establish the following cell phone use policy.

This policy statement serves as an initial warning, detailing the prohibitions, disciplines, and expectations associated with the cell phone use policy at Kato Public Charter School.

B. Kato Public Charter School requires that students who choose to bring cell phones to school adhere to the following policy:

1. Cell phones must remain turned off/silent and secured out of sight during school hours except during the designated lunch period.
2. Cell phones may not be used during passing time between class periods.
3. Cell phones may not be used in the restrooms.

C. Cell phone use during school hours may be allowed when a request has been made to, and permission has been granted by, the instructor, for the following purposes:

1. For use as a graphing/scientific calculator if no such device is available
2. For use to research a topic during project time if no computer is available

D. If students choose to bring cell phones to school, it is their responsibility to ensure all requirements in this policy are followed. Students who violate this policy shall be deemed to have created a disruption within the overall educational/instructional environment, and will be subject to disciplinary measures as outlined below.

1. First offense: The cell phone will be confiscated and returned no earlier than the end of the school day.
2. Second offense (Refusal to Comply/Level 1): The cell phone will be confiscated and returned only to the student's parent/guardian (for students under the age of 18), and the student will not be allowed to have a cell phone at school for a two-week period.

3. Third offense (Insubordination/Level 2): The cell phone will be confiscated and returned only to the student's parent/guardian (for students under the age of 18), the student will receive an out-of-school suspension, and a team meeting will be held and/or a behavioral contract will be issued.

NOTE: Willful refusal by a student to adhere to the disciplinary measures outlined in Section D of this policy will be construed as insubordination regardless of whether it is the first or second offense.

IV. LIABILITY & RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Under no circumstances will Kato Public Charter School be liable for damage, theft, loss, or unauthorized use of personal cell phones. Liability for damage, theft, loss, or unauthorized use of the device (including but not limited to air time charges and /or replacement costs) will be the responsibility of the owner (student/parent/guardian).
- B. While they may serve legitimate purposes, cell phone cameras can pose threats to personal freedoms and privacy and have been used to exploit personal information, exasperate issues that may already require sensitivity in handling, or even compromise the integrity of educational programs. As such, use of cell phone cameras by students during the school day is prohibited except under the following circumstances:
 1. An advisor/teacher may approve student requests to use cell phone cameras for the purposes of completing or documenting the progress of an academic project.
 2. An advisor/teacher may approve student requests to use cell phone cameras to document the happenings and/or artifacts displayed while on a field trip or during a special school event.

V. COMMUNICATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS/EMERGENCIES

All classrooms at Kato Public Charter School are connected via telephone to the main office and business office. In the case of an emergency during school hours, or for circumstances that require the immediate attention of a particular student/staff member, calls made to the main office will be connected to the appropriate classroom. For all other phone calls, a message may be either given to the receptionist or recorded via voicemail to be delivered to the appropriate personnel.

(Legal and Cross References are constantly changing: these items shall remain under review)

Legal Reference:

Cross Reference: