



Cell Phone Procedure

At Columbus Arts and Technology Academy, we are committed to maintaining a focused, safe, and engaging learning environment. To support this goal and in alignment with our mission to ignite students' passion for learning and community, the use of cell phones by students during school hours is limited.

As of May 2024, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed House Bill 250 into law, requiring all public schools to implement policies that reduce cell phone use during the school day. This legislation was developed in response to growing research that links excessive student phone use with lower academic performance, higher anxiety, and disruptions to healthy peer interactions.

I. Purpose and Rationale

This policy is designed to minimize classroom distractions, increase student engagement, and promote positive mental health. Additionally, the policy ensures that our school remains in compliance with House Bill 250, which requires Ohio public schools to implement restrictions on student cell phone use during instructional hours. While we understand and respect the importance of students being able to communicate with families, our policy prioritizes uninterrupted learning and school safety.

II. Applicability

This policy applies to all students while on school property during school hours.

III. Device Storage & Access

- Students will turn in their phones daily to designated staff upon arrival. Devices are then stored securely in labeled, locked, mobile storage boxes, organized by homeroom or advisory.
- These boxes are housed in the main office, but are easily relocatable to classrooms in emergency scenarios to ensure quick distribution if needed.
- Each phone slot is labeled, and students must unlock their device in front of a staff member to confirm proper identification when phones are returned.
- Students may access a school phone during the day on an as-needed basis if they need to contact a parent or guardian.



IV. Exceptions

Cell phone use is permitted when:

- Required by a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan.
- Necessary to monitor or address a health concern, as determined by school officials.

IV. Consequences

If a student violates the policy, the following progressive steps may be taken:

1. Verbal warning and phone held in the main office until the end of day.
2. In-School Suspension and phone held until picked up by a parent/guardian.
3. Parent meeting and Out of School Suspension.
4. Continued non-compliance may result in further disciplinary action, up to a 10-day suspension or expulsion.

IV. Emergency Protocol

In the event of a school emergency, CATA has established and practiced emergency response and family reunification protocols. Communication with families is prioritized, and students will have supervised access to communication methods when needed.

This policy was enacted in response to Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signing [House Bill 250](#) in May 2024. The new law requires every school district in Ohio to establish an official policy governing cellphone usage during school hours and seeks to minimize student cell phone use in K-12 schools. All students are expected to abide by the school's policy as this is a state mandate.