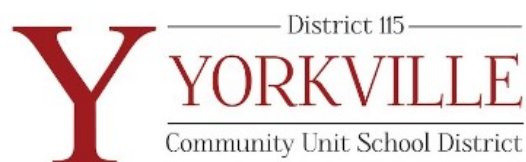




Every Fox Needs a Den. Welcome to Yours!

A message from your principal, Dr. Travis



Yorkville High School • 797 Game Farm Road • Yorkville, Illinois 60560 • 630-553-4380 • y115.org

Exciting Start to the New School Year and Important Update on Personal Technology Use

Dear Yorkville High School Students and Parents,

Si está interesado en revisar el contenido de esta actualización en español, haga clic [aquí](#).

Welcome to the new school year at Yorkville High School! We are thrilled to begin another year filled with growth, learning, and achievement opportunities. Reflecting on the past year, we are incredibly proud of the numerous accomplishments and achievements of our students, faculty, and entire school community. Your hard work and dedication have set a high standard, and we are excited to build on this success in the coming year.

As we look forward to the future, I am pleased to share an important update regarding our school's approach to personal technology use during instructional times. This change is designed to enhance our learning environment and ensure every student can engage and participate fully in their educational experience.

The Origins of the Change: Beginning at the onset of the second semester, YHS staff engaged in a collaborative review of students' personal technology use in the classroom. After a thorough process that included a comprehensive literature review, policies, practices, and consultation with numerous area high schools, a representative staff stakeholder group developed a proposed universal practice. The proposed new practice was reviewed with staff at the conclusion of the 2023-2024 school year.

Unlike our past practice of allowing each classroom teacher to determine student access to personal technology, we have adopted a more restrictive universal practice, reflecting the conditions present when staff administer assessments in their classrooms. Our research indicates that most area high schools are

moving towards similar restrictive practices to enhance the learning environment.

Research on the Impact of Cell Phone Use: Our decision is supported by research indicating the negative impact of cell phones on the learning environment. Studies have shown that personal devices, such as cell phones and earbuds, can significantly limit student engagement and the development of positive relationships in the classroom. According to Fox et al. (2009) and Smale et al. (2021), reserving cell phones outside the classroom fosters in-person connections and enhances communication among peers and teachers. Additionally, Monk et al. (2008) and Thornton et al. (2014) have found that the mere presence of a cell phone can be distracting, leading to decreased attention and task performance. (see references on page 5 - I encourage families interested in learning more to click [here](#) - a excellent resource obtained from another school district)

New Universal Practice: Students are expected to place their cell phones in designated caddies (Device Den) at the beginning of each class, where they will remain until the end of the period. Earbuds and other listening devices must also be removed from ears and stowed away for the class duration. This practice aims to create a positive learning environment where all students can engage and participate fully, free from personal technology distractions.

Expectations for Students, Staff, and Parents: The purpose of the YHS Cell Phone Practice is to create a positive learning environment where all students have equal opportunity to learn/engage and participate with focus, as well as to model to students when and where our technology (phones) help us and where they hinder us when attempting to learn new skills and content.

Students

- Place cell phones in the Device Den in each classroom (or in their P.E. lockers) at the beginning of class.
- Remove earbuds, headphones, or other non-academic electronics for class duration.
- Use devices only during passing periods, lunch, Access, open Flex, study hall, and asynchronous blended time.

Staff

- Monitor students to ensure they place their cell phones in the Device Den at the beginning of class.
- Lead by example and model appropriate phone usage.
- Enforce the practice consistently to include collaboration with families when issues arise for it to be effective.

Parents/Guardians

- Support the practice by reinforcing the importance of responsible cell phone usage with their children at home.
- Understand that student phones will be stored in the Device Den and not confiscated by staff.
- Contact the school's main office (Main Campus) at 630.553.4380 or (Academy) at 630.553.4385 in the event of an emergency or if a need to get in immediate contact with your student arises. The main office staff will communicate the necessary information with your student's classroom teacher.

Challenges and Support: We recognize that any change from past routines can be challenging for all stakeholders, especially when it involves restricting access to personal technology for teenagers. We are committed to supporting students, staff, and parents through this transition and helping everyone adjust to the new practice.

YHS will implement the following steps to establish, monitor, and reinforce universal expectations:

Communication of Expectations:

- July 31st: Letter to the community.
- August 2nd and 9th: Letter re-posted in the weekly community update.
- August 11th: Parent open forum in YHS Library (12:30 p.m.).
- August 14th: Review of staff expectations at the Faculty meeting.
- August 15th: Deans' review of expectations with students during a whole-school Google Meet.
- Quarterly Reviews: With the student body during Advisory/Student Senate meetings.

Reinforcement of Expectations:

Restorative Practices: Creating an environment that promotes engaged learning and positive relationships. Staff will follow up with students about school-wide expectations and build upon the relationship for future positive interactions.

Steps for Staff to Engage Students:

- Remind the class to put devices in the Device Den at the beginning of class.

- If a student doesn't put their phone in the Device Den, have a conversation, and provide a final chance to place their phone in the Device Den.
- Prior to referral or removal, first contact with guardians should come from the classroom teacher. Parent contact about inappropriate personal technology usage with a focus on problem-solving together.
- If the student refuses, staff may call for a campus monitor to escort the student to the Dean's office.

Progressive Discipline is a step-by-step approach to correcting student behavior by increasing consequences, promoting responsibility, and encouraging improvement.

- Parent notification by the Dean
- Restorative conversation between the student and staff member who wrote the referral
- Parent/Student intervention conference
- Progressive discipline consequence
- Loss of privileges (i.e., Flexblock, Off Campus Privilege)

We are confident that this change will positively impact student learning by reducing distractions and increasing focus during instructional time. I am sure this change will prompt some questions from our community; therefore, I encourage everyone to review the [frequently asked questions](#) below to help build their understanding.

The success of this new practice relies on the universal commitment of all stakeholders. Consistency is vital to ensuring that the learning environment is free from distractions and conducive to student engagement and interaction. By fostering an environment that promotes engagement and interaction, we aim to enhance the overall educational experience for our students.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we can create a focused and productive learning environment for all students.

With **PRIDE**,

Dr. David S. Travis
Principal, Yorkville High School

Frequently Asked Questions:

Is this a cell phone and earbud ban? - No, this is not a ban. Students will have access to their phones and earbuds outside of classroom instructional times. This includes passing periods, FlexBlock, Access, lunch, and before and after school. Parents can communicate with students at their convenience, and students will be able to respond during non-instructional time.

What happens in classes when students need their cell phones for a lesson? - We are a 1:1 school district, and all students have district-issued Chromebooks; the need for cell phones for instructional purposes is limited.

Where will my phone be stored? - Student phones will be stored in a Device Den that is accessible in the classroom.

What if my student needs to leave school early for a family emergency? - You should contact the school's main office (Main Campus) at 630.553.4380 or (Academy) at 630.553.4385. The main office staff will communicate the necessary information with your student's classroom teacher.

What if a sport, club, or extracurricular activity is canceled? - The coach and/or sponsor will communicate this to students via email and school-wide P.A. announcements.

What if there are school-wide emergencies (fire, weather, active intruder)? - This will be communicated school-wide from the administration through a P.A. announcement. Students will have access to their phones if an emergency occurs.

What if I need a ride home? - You can contact your guardian during the appropriate times: passing periods, lunch/access, Flex, study hall, or blended time.

What if I forgot my class materials? - You can contact your guardian during the appropriate times: passing periods, lunch/access, Flex, study hall, or blended time. Students also have access to email throughout the school day. There are landline phones in the main office that students may use to communicate their needs to families.

What if I forgot my Chromebook or charger? - You can check out a loaner Chromebook or charger in the Main Campus or Academy library for the school day.

Will I be able to use my phone as a calculator? - No, students cannot use their phones as calculators. Students must purchase a TI-84 graphing calculator at the beginning of the school year.

What if I need to charge my cell phone? - Cell phones can be charged during ACCESS, lunch, or Flex. However, they must remain in the Device Den during class, so they may not be charged during class unless the specific Device Den has charging capabilities.

Can I text my student during the school day? - As parents, you can text your student at any time, but students will respond during a passing period, such as FLEX, Access, lunch, or other approved time. Students will not be accessible to parents via cell phone during instructional/classroom time.

References

Fox, A. B., Rosen, J., & Crawford, M. (2009). Distractions, distractions: Does instant messaging affect college students' performance on a concurrent reading task? *CyberPsychology*, 12, 51-53.

Monk, C. A., Trafton, J. G., & Boehm-Davis, D. A. (2008). The effect of interruption duration and demand on resuming suspended goals. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 14, 299-313.

Smale, W. T., Hutcheson, R., & Russo, C. J. (2021). Cell phones, student rights, and school safety: finding the right balance. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, (195), 49-64.

Thornton, B., Faires, A., Robbins, M., & Rollins, E. (2014). The mere presence of a cell phone may be distracting: Implications for attention and task performance. *Social Psychology*, 45(6), 479-488.

In addition, Evanston Township High School curated resources were referred to by our working group in consideration of the practices above. That list of resources can be found [HERE](#).

Visit our Website

STAY CONNECTED



Yorkville High School | 797 Game Farm Road | Yorkville, IL 60560 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!