

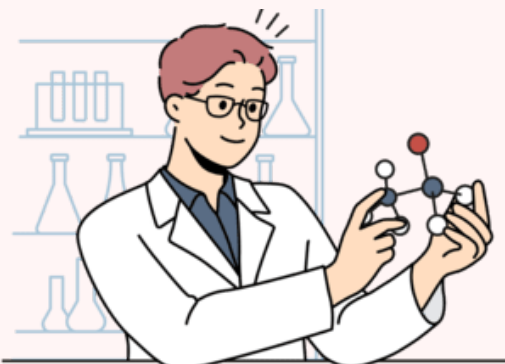
# NAVIGATING SCHOOL LIFE: POLICY AND SURVIVAL TIPS

*2nd Edition*

## CONCISE GUIDE FOR SUCCESS DURING THIS ACADEMIC YEAR

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### BONUS SECTION!

- SCIENTIFICALLY-PROVEN STUDY STRATEGIES!

# ADAPTING TO THE NEW PHONE POLICY

## - BY ABEL B.

Unless you live under a rock, you are probably aware of the new phone policy - phones are not allowed during instructional periods. Consider yourselves lucky, Middle and Elementary school students aren't even allowed their phones at school (though why elementary school students have phones at all puzzles the author).

The policy states students are not allowed their PDD (Personal Digital Devices) during instructional times. Now, each teacher can decide what “instructional times” means. Some teachers won't allow phone usage in their classes, while other teachers may allow some usage, but with limitations. As per common sense, don't bring out your phone, without explicit permission. Teachers' have different restrictions, make sure you know their unique rules.

### **Now, how to survive this:**

- Put your phone in your backpack. You are less likely to be tempted to use it if it's not on your person.
- Put your phone on silent, or at the very least vibrate. If you hear the notifications, you are enticed to look at them. Putting your phone on silent helps avoid that issue.
- If you are bored and you can't use your phone, do something else. Get a book to read, draw, do some homework, or make something, engage with others (if permitted and willing).
- Have patience, with time, it will get easier, it is a skill to be practiced. Use this policy as a means to develop this skill. There will be times when you can use your phone, during or after class. Class periods last no more than 80 minutes, in your future endeavours, there will be times when you can't use your phone for extended periods, for a lot longer than 80 minutes.

Not following the new phone policy could lead to stricter rules. In writing things have changed, yet in practice, with due time you will notice things have not significantly changed for us high schoolers. Be respectful and we can keep it that way.

# STAFF PERSPECTIVES ON THE NEW PHONE POLICY:

## MR MCCARTY - INTERVIEWED BY ARAV K:

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE NEW PHONE POLICY?

- THE NEW PHONE POLICY IS A HUGE CULTURAL SHIFT FOR THE COMMUNITY, BUT IT'S BASED ON A WEALTH OF CAREFULLY ANALYZED DATA. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE NEW POLICY (IF FOLLOWED) WILL IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING AND MENTAL HEALTH. IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THAT MANY JURISDICTIONS IN THE WESTERN WORLD ARE ENACTING SUCH POLICIES, SOME WITH AN EVEN BROADER REACH.

PROS: IMPROVEMENTS IN LEARNING AND MENTAL HEALTH.

CONS: A SLIGHT IMPEDIMENT IN INSTANTANEOUS COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS AND FRIENDS.

## MR PEARCE - INTERVIEWED BY ABEL B:

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE NEW PHONE POLICY?

- MR. PEARCE: WHEN THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THE REGULATIONS FOR CELLPHONES, I THINK IT WAS APPROPRIATE AS STUDENTS BECAME LESS ENGAGED WITH SCHOOL. WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT IS THE ENGAGEMENT IN THE ENTIRETY, BELL TO BELL, OF THE CLASS. WITH CELL PHONES, THAT WASN'T HAPPENING; STUDENTS WOULD BE ON THEIR PHONES DURING DISCUSSIONS OR GROUP WORK. THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY AIMED TO PUT STUDENTS BACK AT THE FOREFRONT OF LEARNING.

ARE THERE CONS TO THIS POLICY?

- MR. PEARCE: WE NEED TO RETEACH OUR COMMUNITY THE IDEA OF NOT HAVING INSTANTANEOUS CONTACT. SOCIETY GOT USED TO CONSTANT CONTACT AND TRACKING, SO WE HAVE TO REINTRODUCE OLD PRACTICES. IT'S NOT A DOWNSIDE BUT A CHALLENGE FOR THE NEXT 2-3 YEARS.

SHOULD THERE BE IMPROVEMENTS?

- MR. PEARCE: IT'S NEW, AND WE'LL NAVIGATE IT FOR THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO. THERE WILL BE FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS AND STAFF, AND WHILE IT'S GOOD TODAY, IT MAY CHANGE AS WE SEE WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T.

## MRS. BLASCHEK - INTERVIEWED BY MARIA T:

WHAT IS IT LIKE NOW WITH THE POLICY?

- SHE'S HAD "THE BEST TEACHING DAY" OF HER CAREER. SHE DESCRIBES HER STUDENTS AS MORE ENGAGED, ABLE TO HAVE BETTER RELATIONS AND DEEPER, MORE INTERESTING CONVERSATIONS. SHE HAS NOT BANNED PHONES OUT RIGHT, SHE CLAIMS SHE IS NOT A LUDDITE: SOMEONE WHO IS AGAINST NEW TECHNOLOGY.

# SOME STUDENT OPINIONS ON THE NEW PHONE POLICY:

**WE ASKED THREE STUDENTS WHAT THEIR THOUGHTS WERE ON THE POLICY, AND IF THEY NOTICED A CHANGE IN CLASS WITH OTHERS OR THEMSELVES. HERE IS WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY:**

JARED G: SAID HOW HE NOTICED THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE THERE WERE LESS PEOPLE ON THEIR PHONES AND AS SUCH THEY WERE PAYING BETTER ATTENTION IN CLASS. "NOT REALLY" WHEN ASKED IF IT HAS AFFECTED HIMSELF (THIS STUDENT ALSO HAD A LENGTHY OPINION ON THE NEW HAND IN POLICY).

STUDENT: "PHONES ARE AWESOME" SAYS THAT THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE FROM LAST YEAR AND BELIEVES THAT THIS POLICY HAS DONE NOTHING AND IS IN FACT GOING BACKWARDS. HE SAYS THAT THE POLICY ONLY COMES INTO EFFECT WHEN THE TEACHERS CARE TO PAY ATTENTION TO THE STUDENTS THAT ARE ON THEIR PHONES, AND IT CAN FEEL LIKE THE STUDENTS ARE GETTING INTO TROUBLE WHEN OTHERS GET AWAY WITH IT MAKING IT SEEM AS THOUGH IT IS FOR NO REASON.

STUDENT: HE SAID HE NOTICED NO DIFFERENCE FROM LAST YEAR, THEY'RE JUST STRICTER OF TAKING HIS PHONE. STATES THE RULES HAVEN'T REALLY CHANGED AND THAT THEY DON'T REALLY INTERFERE.

# STUDY STRATEGIES

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SCHOOLS ARE OPEN, AND WE KNOW THE PRESSURE IS ON. THE MSS GAZETTE HAS GOT YOUR BACK - WHETHER YOU'RE JUGGLING MULTIPLE SUBJECTS OR JUST LOOKING TO BOOST YOUR GRADES! IN THIS SECTION, WE'RE SHARING 5 STUDY STRATEGIES THAT WILL HELP YOU STUDY SMARTER, NOT HARDER. FROM TIME-TESTED TECHNIQUES TO CREATIVE HACKS, THESE TIPS ARE DESIGNED TO HELP YOU STAY ON TOP OF YOUR GAME, REDUCE STRESS, AND MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR STUDY SESSIONS. SO GRAB YOUR NOTEBOOKS, POWER UP YOUR BRAIN, AND ACE THOSE EXAMS TOGETHER!

## 1. Active recall

instead of rereading notes, test yourself regularly. It forces your brain to retrieve information, which in the end improves retention.

## 2. Mind Mapping

Visualize relationships between concepts by creating mind maps or diagrams. This technique is especially great for subjects like History, where you need to focus on the “big picture”.

## 3. Feynman Technique

This involves explaining a concept in simple terms as if you were teaching someone else. This helps in identifying gaps in your understanding.

## 4. Get a good nights sleep

As obvious as it sounds, a good nights sleep can go a long way, so do your best to get a restful sleep whenever you can, it rests your mind, specially after a long day.

## 5. Pomodoro Technique

Break study sessions into segments of 25-30 minutes, with 5-10 minute breaks in between in each segment. This technique has been proved time and time again, and is highly effective.

## Come Join Us!

If you want to express your ideas and sharpen your writing skills, this is the place for you. Join the Newspaper Club now! We meet every Wednesday after school in Portable 5. We write, edit, and bring creative stories to life. If you're into writing, editing, or just want to try something new, this is the place to be. It's a dynamic, inclusive environment where you can make your mark. Come check it out. We'd love to see you there!