

## Cell Phone Policy

Enforcing the Darlington County School District Cell Phone Policy has become more challenging as new technology develops and as our students become more creative in attempting to "get around" the policy. The most troubling aspect of this situation that has developed recently involves students who, when found to be in violation of the cell phone policy, have simply defied the authority of school personnel by refusing to surrender the cell phone as required by the policy. We cannot provide the organization and order necessary for a safe school climate and good classroom learning environments when students are refusing to comply with the instructions of faculty and staff who are doing their jobs by enforcing school policy. Therefore, please be advised of points 6 and 7 listed below relating to the Darlington County School District Cell Phone Policy, effective Monday, March 16, 2009. Points 1-5 simply state the policy as it has been since May 8, 2006.

1. A student is allowed to have a cell phone in his/her possession on campus.
2. During the school day (from the time a student arrives on campus until the end of school) the cell phone must be turned off and cannot be visible.
3. While students are riding DCSD buses the cell phone policy is in effect just as if the student was in a classroom during the school day.
4. The only reasons for school personnel to ask a student to surrender a cell phone would be:
  - a - if the cell phone rang or vibrated (which would mean that the phone was turned on), or
  - b - if the teacher saw the cell phone (which would mean that the phone was visible).
5. When a cell phone is confiscated after a second violation, the phone is kept by school personnel until the end of the school year. This is according to Darlington County School District Board Policy.
6. If a student is found to be in violation of the cell phone policy and refuses to surrender the phone to the school employee when asked, the procedure and resulting consequences will be as follows:
  - A campus supervisor or an administrator will be called to escort the student to the office of an administrator.
  - A parent or guardian will be called and asked to come to the school at that time to discuss the situation and instruct the student to surrender the cell phone to the administrator.
  - If the student then surrenders the cell phone to the administrator, proper procedure will be followed according to the policy (see #5 and #6 above, and #7 below).
  - If the parent or guardian is unable to convince the student to comply with DCSD policy, the student will be suspended from school and referred for an expulsion hearing with the DCSD Hearing Officer.

- If a parent or guardian cannot be reached immediately, the student will be assigned to In-School Suspension for the remainder of that day, and will be suspended from school (Out-of-School Suspension) until a parent is contacted and an appointment is made with an administrator to resolve the situation.
7. As a result of the student initially refusing to surrender the cell phone, the following consequences will be assigned:
- Sunset School, after school detention or Saturday School
  - Loss of cell phone privileges on the school campus/bus for the remainder of the school year. If the student is found to be in possession of a cell phone on campus during the remainder of the school year, the phone will be confiscated, and he/she will be referred for an In-House Hearing with the principal, or - if the student is already on probation - will be referred for an expulsion hearing with the DCSD Hearing Officer.

# CELL PHONE POLICY

Darlington County School District policy allows the possession of cell phones by students on campus during the regular school day.

***However, during the school day (defined as being from the time a student arrives on campus each morning until school is dismissed for the day), cell phones may not be used by students and cell phones must be turned off and not carried in a visible manner.***

***If a student is carrying a cell phone in a visible manner or is discovered with a cell phone turned on during the school day, the phone will be confiscated and returned during a parent conference.*** A second violation during the same school year will result in confiscation of the cell phone, and ***it will not be returned until the end of the school year, regardless of contracts, monthly payments, etc.*** This is also according to Darlington County School District Policy.

Not only are cell phones a potential distraction to the classroom learning environment, but the technology available on many cell phones makes it possible for students to photograph and send copies of tests to other students, text message test questions to other students, and otherwise compromise the integrity of our teachers' assessments and grading of student learning.

***There is no reason that a student should need to use a cell phone during the regular school day.*** There would not be an instance requiring an emergency communication with a student in which our school would fail to assist a student, parent, or other responsible adult with that situation by using a school telephone.

All cell phones that are confiscated (for the first time) on the school campus/bus may be returned to parents.