

Subject: FW: No Cell Phone Policy Update

Date: Monday, April 10, 2023 at 8:08:56 AM Alaska Daylight Time

From: Scott Lefebvre

To: Terri Walker

CC: Jazmine Camp

Hi Terri,

Bunny wanted me to get a write up about Kiana's "no cell phone" policy for our committee meeting today.

Here it is.

Scott Lefebvre
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From: James Stewart <jstewart@nwarctic.org>

Date: Saturday, April 8, 2023 at 4:47 PM

To: Scott Lefebvre <slefebvre@nwarctic.org>

Subject: Re: No Cell Phone Policy Update

Assistant superintendent Lefebvre,

My staff and I recognized that cell phones were the number one distracting element in the classroom and they were also the number one element causing student conflict with staff. We strongly felt that eliminating cell phones at school would be the number one thing we could do to improve our school climate.

Late January during our meetings in Anchorage I spoke briefly with Superintendent Walker about not allowing students to have cell phones at school. She wanted to make sure that our ASC approved it first. I agreed.

When I met with our ASC February 2nd, we discussed the problem cell phones were causing in the classroom and I proposed that we eliminate student cell phones entirely from our school. I explained that if there was an emergency at home, family could call the office and we would have the student come to the office and speak with their family. Also, if the student had an emergency they could come to the office and call home. Just like we did before cell phones. Our committee chair Delores Barr, whose daughter is a sophomore at Kiana, was concerned that some parents, including herself, would like their child to have a phone at school. I pointed out to her that we are not going to frisk kids, we are not searching their backpacks or lockers looking for phones, unless the student has had their phone out. If we were to see a phone, we would take it and call their parents and parents would have to come get the phone. A child that brought a phone to school that was never taken out of their backpack and was never turned on, would never have their phone taken away. Because we would never know it was there and we would never care that it was.

Our ASC unanimously approved for us to ban student cell phones from school.

We met as a staff and talked about the new policy. We also talked about us needing to all be on board and enforcing the no cell phone policy 100%. We also spoke to the need of setting the example in the classroom. Teachers and aids committed to not having their phones out during class. If they need to make an emergency call, they will leave their classroom with another staff member and step out in the hall and make their phone call.

If a student does bring a phone to school, they can turn it into a teacher when they first arrive at school. The teacher will turn the phone into the office and the student can pick the phone up at the office at the end of the day no questions asked. When staff get the student's phone they put the phone in a quart size zip locked baggie with the student's name on it (this includes all electronics, including earbuds.) Phones stay locked up in the office until the students ask for them at the end of the day.

If a student has a phone and doesn't turn it in, and a teacher sees or hears the phone, their phone is confiscated. I keep it in my office until a parent comes and meets with me and gets the phone. When the parent comes in, I explain to them that we no longer allow phones at school.

Parents have 100% supported us. The first few comments I got from parents were "It's about time." "Why didn't you do this at the first of the year?" and "Finally."
Of course, we have had some student "test the waters." I have had a few parents come in upset that they had to come to the school to get the phone, because their student wasn't supposed to have a phone. I have one parent who refuses to come get the phone because they don't want their student to have the phone, so that phone now lives in my office.
The no phone policy has made a HUGE difference in our classrooms. We no longer have students disrupting their own education or those around them with their phones. We also have some students that walked around grumpy and depressed, who now have their heads up and are pleasant to be around. At lunch time, our students now talk and laugh with each other instead of staring at their phones or playing video games. At first, we would have a dozen or so phones turned in. Now it's usually only three or four. We don't know if students are just leaving them home or leaving them turned off and in their backpacks. We don't really care. We do know they are no longer disrupting school.

James Stewart /PK-12 Principal

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From: Scott Lefebvre <slefebvre@nwarctic.org>
Date: Friday, April 7, 2023 at 4:10 PM
To: James Stewart <jstewart@nwarctic.org>
Subject: No Cell Phone Policy Update

Hi James,

Will you write up a little piece on your no cell phone policy in Kiana. How is it going? What is the feedback from community, parents, students, staff?

Our Policy Committee will be reading your response Monday.

Have a great weekend!

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