

PURPOSE: To amend the handbook of outdated practices during study hours.

INTRODUCED BY: Jolanna Jackson

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL FOR MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE SENATE:

SECTION ONE (REASONING):

Assuming that these rules have been enforced since the school's beginning, telephones were all landlines and not so easily accessible. Back then, landlines and basic classroom tools were the norm, and it was realistic to control when and how students accessed technology. However, in today's world, smart devices are deeply integrated into education, communication, and everyday routines, making it increasingly difficult to separate students from them entirely. Because of this shift, trying to enforce the same strict limitations now feels outdated and often unrealistic, since technology is no longer an occasional tool but a constant presence in how students learn and function.

In the real world, like college settings and most workplaces, individuals are trusted to manage their own technology use without strict bans. By enforcing heavy restrictions in school, students are not being prepared for these environments but instead are being placed in an artificial setting that does not reflect reality. Instead of restricting access, MSMS should focus on helping students develop discipline and responsibility in their use of technology.

Additionally, our strict phone policies are inconsistent and unrealistic to enforce. With how integrated smart devices are into everyday life, students will find ways to use them regardless of restrictions, which leads to rules being unevenly applied or ignored altogether. When rules do not align with actual behavior, they become harder to respect. A more practical approach would be to set clear expectations for appropriate use rather than attempting to eliminate device usage, which is both difficult and ineffective in today's environment.

SECTION TWO (PROPOSED ACTION):

On page 47 of the Student Handbook (PDF page 52), under the section "CELLULAR PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES," the following would be changed to:

CELLULAR PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cellular phones and other electronic devices may not be used for spoken and/or text communication while inside the classroom. ~~These devices may only be used during study hours or academic purposes.~~ Students are advised to inform family members and friends of their class schedule so that phone communication can be scheduled outside of class/study time. In case of emergency during the academic day a parent or guardian should call the Office of Academic Affairs and ask that the student call home immediately. ~~In case of emergency during study hours the parent or guardian should call the students' residence hall and ask that the student call home~~

~~immediately.~~ Students are requested to respect the rights of others by turning off all electronic devices during assemblies and special performances.

On page 92 of the Student Handbook (PDF page 97), under the section “RL.37,” the following would be changed to:

RL.37. ~~During study hours, students are not allowed to play computer or video games. Cell phones may be used for academic purposes.~~ Conversation in designated study areas should be kept to a minimum. Students who desire to study with music must use headphones.

On page 105 of the Student Handbook (PDF page 110), under the section “RL.103,” the following would be changed to:

RL.103. Students may not use cell phones after lights out. ~~During study hours cell phones should only be used for school work related calls.~~