



Madras Middle School

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Cell Phone Policy

Dear Parents,

The Coweta County Board of Education voted on September 11, 2007, to change the School System's policy regarding student possession of cell phones and similar electronic communication devices. Prior to the Board's vote, student possession of a cell phone on school campuses was strictly prohibited. Effective September 12, 2007, students are now permitted to have cell phones, though student use of cell phones and other electronic communication devices is strictly prohibited during the instructional school day. Furthermore, the Board's policy requires principals to apply very strict consequences to any students who use cell phones during school hours.

The School Board's new policy is:

- Students may possess cell phones, pocket pagers, or similar electronic devices.
- Students observed using cell phones, pocket pagers, or electronic communication devices during the instructional day, except for health or unusual reasons approved by the Board of Education, will face serious consequences and will forfeit their ability to have such devices:
 - Upon any infraction of the policy, cell phones will be confiscated immediately. Phones confiscated will only be released to parents. On the first infraction the phone will be confiscated and the student will be warned.
 - On the second infraction the student will be given three days of in-school suspension.
 - On the third infraction the student will be referred to Student Support Services for further disciplinary action.
 - The instructional day is defined as the time period between a student's arrival on campus and the final dismissal bell for all students. The instructional day includes lunch periods and class changes. **School buses are extensions of the instructional day, and use of the devices mentioned above is prohibited while students are on buses or while waiting for buses at the end of the day. The final bell or dismissal time will vary from school to school. Each principal will define the dismissal time at each school for students. The final bell for Madras Middle School will be 4:00 p.m. (after buses leave).**
 - The use of cell phones includes making phone calls, receiving phone calls, ringing or other sounds, playing music or video, text messaging, use of cell phone cameras, or any other electronic function. **Cell phones should remain off at all times to avoid student infractions.**

The Board made this change in policy in part to respect the wishes of many parents who want their children to keep cell phones for communication after school hours. However, we ask parents to recognize that the school system must strictly prohibit cell phone use in order to operate our schools in an orderly way and to maintain the academic integrity of your child's school.

If you have any concern about your child's ability to follow this policy, I recommend that cell phones and electronic devices be left at home. However, if you choose to allow your child to have a cell phone, please stress that the phone must remain "off" at all times. We will stress these rules to students at school. The above policy is effective immediately, and we will work to make sure students and parents fully understand the new policy over the next two weeks.

As always, I appreciate your support. If I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Johnson
Principal