

Cell Phone Policy

Ecole Foothills Composite High School/Alberta High School of Fine Arts

As you may have already heard, The Government of Alberta announced a new [Ministerial Order](#) this past June. The Order was informed by significant survey feedback provided by families, which overwhelmingly supported introducing restrictions on personal mobile devices in classrooms. Restricting access to personal mobile devices and social media is expected to improve student achievement and learning outcomes, while supporting student mental health.

Beginning September 1, 2024,

Instructional Time:

- Cell phones and smart devices must be powered off and not used during instructional time (instructional time is the time dedicated during the school day to teaching subject area and curricular content and that is supervised by a teacher or other member of the school staff team).
- Cell phones and smart devices must be powered off and not on the student's person during instructional time. This includes all spaces on the school premises.
- Cell phones and smart devices will be powered off and stored either in the student's locker or in a space designated by the teacher out of the student's reach.
- Wireless ear buds/air pods are not allowed in class.
- If students have permission from their teacher to listen to music in class, they need headphones that are wired into a computer.
- Bathroom breaks and student spares are considered instructional time, and cellphones are not to be powered on or accessed during these times.
- Should a student need to access a laptop during a spare for educational purposes, there are some available at the Learning Commons
- Students may bring their own laptops to be used for instructional purposes only.
- Students may only use mobile and smart devices during instructional time when the teacher gives explicit direction for their use as part of learning.

Devices must be powered off and stored by 9:00.

Non-Instructional Time:

- Cell phones and smart devices can be powered on and used by students during breaks from instructional time as well as before and after school.
- Students are allowed to power on and use their phones during the following non-instructional times are:
 - Morning break 10:20-10:30
 - Lunch break 11:50-12:40
 - Afternoon break 2:00-2:10
 - Before and after school

Exemptions:

- Exemptions for cell phone and smart device use for students during instructional time include only:
 - Students who require the use of these devices for medical documented purposes.
 - Students who require the use of these devices because of complex needs.
- Families can work with school staff and administration to assure requisite exemptions are in place.

Social Media:

- Social media access will be blocked on all FSD (Foothills School Division) routers throughout the school day.

Communication:

- Students can communicate with parents during non-instructional time with their cellphones.
- Students needing to contact parents regarding an urgent matter during instructional time can use the Student Phone in the Office.
- Parents who need to urgently contact their child during instructional time can call the school office and we will relay the message to them.

Consequences:

Staff are asked to follow the following progressive discipline framework for enforcing the use of mobile devices policy:

- On the first incidence of mobile device use during instructional time, the student will be reminded to power off and store the device in the teacher-designated area of the class or in their locker.
- Students who do not follow the protocols consistently will report directly to administration for follow up and parents will be contacted.
- Should there be further infractions, the administration will call parents with the student present to develop commitments to respect the policy moving forward. This may include requiring the student to leave the phone at home or dropping off the phone at the office for the day.
- Further incidences of use of mobile devices during instructional time could progress to include school suspensions, out of school suspensions, or other reasonable consequences.