



Wellspring

Phone-Free School Day Policy

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Review cycle: 3 years

Next Review: August 2029



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Phone-Free School Day Policy

Contributors to the 2026 Review:

Rita Zgheib - Head of School & Director of Learning and Teaching

Maha Safa Moukaddem – President of WPAC

Sally Abi Khalil – Vice President of WPAC

Kathleen Saleh – Secondary School Principal

Salman Sultan – Middle School Principal

Alain Gholam – Primary School Principal

Related Policies:

Educational Technology Master Plan

Data Safeguarding Policy

Bring Your Own Device Policy

Learning Behavior Policy

Academic Integrity Policy

Artificial Intelligence Policy

Student Handbook

Approvals – Names and Signatures:

Head of School

Chairperson of the Board

Wellspring Learning Community's Mission Statement

Wellspring aims to establish an inquiry-based learning environment in which students from diverse backgrounds are given every opportunity to optimize their social, emotional, and academic capacities and talents. Our students will become confident, resourceful, creative, caring, responsible global and local citizens prepared to use their education to contribute in meaningful ways towards improving society, both locally and internationally.

Rationale

Wellspring values the rich and deep learning experiences that technology provides while recognizing the necessity of protecting student attention, social-emotional development, privacy, and overall well-being. Aligning with regional and global educational standards as well as leading practices within international schools in Lebanon, Wellspring is adopting a comprehensive Phone-Free School Day Policy.

This document establishes the guidelines governing personal mobile phones, smart watches, and connected personal devices across Wellspring Learning Community's campuses. The primary goal of this policy is to cultivate a focused learning environment, mitigate safeguarding risks (including unauthorized media recording and cyberbullying), minimize classroom distractions, and foster authentic social interactions during school hours. Limited exceptions to this policy may be authorized strictly in accordance with approved institutional procedures.

Scope & Covered Devices

This policy applies to all students registered at Wellspring Learning Community during school hours, on school transport, and during school-sponsored activities.

Devices subject to this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Mobile phones / Smartphones
- Smart watches and wearable connected devices
- Wireless earbuds / Headphones (e.g., AirPods)
- Personal tablets, e-readers, or handheld gaming consoles
- Any personal electronic device equipped with cellular/Wi-Fi connectivity, messaging, recording, camera, or internet capabilities.

*(Note: Academic laptops and approved learning tablets used under the terms of the **Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy** are governed separately for classroom instructional purposes.*

Grade-Level Banded Policy Guidelines

Grade Levels	Policy & Storage Expectation	Usage Terms
KG – Grade 5	No phones or smart watches permitted at school. If brought for essential transport or safety needs, the device must be handed in immediately upon arrival and collected at dismissal.	Zero usage during the school day, including recess, lunch, corridors, or school buses.
Grades 6 – 12	Off and Stored. Phones brought for family/transport logistics must be switched off upon arrival and deposited into individual secure pouches throughout the day.	No usage from arrival to dismissal. Prohibited during breaks, lunch, transitions, bathrooms, buses, or after-school activities unless explicitly permitted.

Parent & Emergency Communication

To preserve the phone-free environment and prevent disruption to the learning day:

- Parents and guardians are requested **not to contact students directly** via personal phone calls, text messages, or instant messaging applications during school hours.
- Urgent family communications must be directed through the main front office or principal's office.
- If a student needs to contact a parent or guardian during the school day, they must do so via the relevant principal or front office, school nurse, school counselor, or designated administration staff.

Approved Exceptions

All exceptions to the Phone-Free School Day Policy must be formally requested in writing, reviewed, and approved by the administration. Approved exceptions will be regularly audited.

Terms of Use & Community Responsibilities

Student Responsibilities

- Students must comply with storage routines immediately upon entering campus.
- Personal devices must remain silent/off and out of sight at all times outside approved exception contexts.
- Students are strictly prohibited from using devices to record, photograph, or stream peers, staff, or community members without explicit administrative or teacher permission.

- Personal devices must never be brought into or used in sensitive areas, including bathrooms, changing rooms, or locker facilities.

Parent & Guardian Responsibilities

- Reinforce school expectations regarding digital well-being and device limits at home.
- Channel all routine and emergency communications through official school administrative channels rather than directly to student devices.
- Support administrative responses and enforcement steps in the event of policy breaches.

Staff & Institutional Responsibilities

- **Modeling Professional Practice:** Staff members model policy standards by refraining from non-essential personal phone use in front of students during instructional and supervisory duties.
- **Consistent Enforcement:** Faculty and administrators enforce storage routines and guidelines consistently across all grade levels.
- **Infrastructure & Support:** The school provides secure network filters and managed storage systems (e.g., locked grade boxes) to safeguard the physical security of stored devices during the day.

Enforcement Ladder & Policy Violations

In cases of non-compliance, Wellspring Learning Community applies a progressive enforcement ladder alongside the disciplinary framework outlined in the *Learning Behavior Policy* and *Student Handbook*:

- **First Breach:**
 - The device is confiscated and held securely in the principal's office until the end of the school day.
 - The student completes a reflection form on digital citizenship prior to retrieving the device.
- **Second Breach:**
 - The device is confiscated and held securely in the principal's office.
 - Parents/guardians are notified, and a parent or guardian must retrieve the device in person from the school office.
- **Third Breach:**

- The student forfeits the privilege of bringing any personal connected device to campus for a defined period (e.g., one semester or remainder of the academic year).
- A formal administrative meeting with parents/guardians is required.
- **Serious / Safeguarding Breaches:**
 - Unconsented audio/video recording, photo capture, cyberbullying, distribution of inappropriate content, or device presence in bathrooms/changing areas triggers immediate escalation to safeguarding protocols and formal disciplinary procedures under the Student Handbook and Learning Behavior Policy up to and including suspension or loss of technology access.

Liability & Storage Disclaimer

- While Wellspring provides dedicated, locked storage solutions (secure individual phone pouches) for student devices during school hours, **Wellspring Learning Community assumes no financial or legal liability** for the loss, theft, or physical damage of personal devices brought to campus or onto school transport.
- Families choosing to allow their children to travel with personal connected devices do so at their own risk and are advised to arrange private insurance coverage where appropriate.