



Response to **Distraction-Free Schools**

This document outlines Summit Nyack’s plan to address Governor Kathy Hochul’s phone ban: Distraction-Free Schools.

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The Plan

Devices: Allowed vs. Not Allowed

Students are only permitted to use school-issued devices during the school day. Personal phones, tablets, and computers are not allowed as per Summit’s policy. This ensures a consistent and distraction-free learning environment for all students. Any personal electronic devices must remain turned off and stored away in Homeroom throughout the day, as all necessary technology for instruction will be provided by the school.

Storage & Timeframe

At the start of the day, phones should be placed in the homeroom locker, where they will be charged and securely stored. They must be kept on silent with Bluetooth turned off. Students may retrieve their phones after 4th period (during lunch and recess), and must return them to the Homeroom before 6th period begins. During instructional time, the expectation is that phones are left in Homeroom. If phones are used during class time or passing time, students will be unable to earn their WISE points during that class period. Students are permitted to take their phones to off campus work sites and BOCES programs. However, phones are only able to be used during transportation time and must be handed in during work/instructional time. Additionally, students must turn their phones in to their homeroom locker immediately upon returning to campus.

Exceptions and Accommodations

Medical Exceptions

Students who require access to their phones for documented medical reasons will be permitted to keep them during the school day. Proper documentation must be provided to the school administration, and accommodations will be made to ensure the student's medical needs are met while maintaining the integrity of the phone policy.

CSE Decisions

Students whose school districts determine that access to a phone is necessary must have this accommodation formally included in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). This decision must be made during a Committee on Special Education (CSE) meeting, and the IEP must clearly outline the specific need for phone access as part of the student's educational supports.

Rewards and Natural Consequences

Rewards

Students can earn up to 8 points each day by turning in their phones in the morning as part of their daily routine. These points are awarded to encourage responsibility and support a positive learning environment. Earning points throughout the day ensures that students are on level and able to participate in the recreational program.

Natural Consequences

If students choose not to hand in their phones, they will not earn the allotted phone points for the day and may drop in their level, which can lead to natural consequences within the WISE program. This policy is designed to reinforce accountability and support consistent participation in classes, as well as adherence to the device policy.

Summit's Support Strategies

For students who are struggling without access to their phones, supportive alternatives are available to help them manage their needs throughout the day. These include access to fidget toys, monitored music through school-issued Chromebooks on Youtube Music, use of approved MP3 players, and the opportunity to take a walk with staff permission. These options are in place to support student well-being while maintaining a focused and distraction-free learning environment.