Dear Parents and Students,

Before we settle into the trimester, I wanted to share with you about my classroom cell phone policy. Since I began teaching, cell phones have become an increasing distraction for students. I’ve always had a “no cell phone” policy for while we are learning or working, but it is nearly impossible to police in a class of 30 or more students who all have phones. There is added trouble because students often prefer to have their phones on the desk as they fall out of pockets or there is just nowhere to put them during class. When a notification pops up, students become easily distracted.

In an effort to help students with this distraction, I’ve started using small Tupperware bins for each group of 4 students. I ask students to place their phones in the bin during class so that they have a safe place to store them where they won’t be distracted by notifications popping up. The bins sit under the desk of one of the team members where it is visible and within reach at the end of the hour. This way I don’t have to try and discern if a student is using their phone or just has it sitting out on the desk.

If students do not use the bins and end up having their phone out at all during class (whether they are using it or not), I have laid out the following consequences.

1. I will send an email home or give a phone call to let you know that the student has been warned.
2. A second offense will result in a referral to administration, which usually results in detention being assigned.
3. Further offenses will also be referred to administration…I hope not to have to find out what happens here!

Please make sure you touch base with your student to make sure they understand the policy and the consequences that could result from not using the bins as storage. It’s also a great time to discuss proper cell phone etiquette in general since many high schoolers are entering or preparing to enter the work force.

Please let me know if you have any questions along the way!

Thank you,

Matt Smude

Math Teacher

Blaine High School